Georgia Professional Standards Commission
Institutional/Agency Report
for Developmental Approval Review of the
Professional Education Unit and Educator Preparation Programs

THOMAS UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF EDUCATION
1501 Millpond Road
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http://www.thomasu.edu/gpsc2011
# Table of Contents

Institutional/Agency Overview ........................................................................................................3

Conceptual Framework ....................................................................................................................7

Responses to the Georgia Standards for the Approval of Professional Education Units and Educator Preparation Programs ........................................................................................................12

  Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge Skills and Dispositions ........................................12

  Standard 2: Assessment System .......................................................................................20

  Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice .................................................29

  Standard 4: Diversity ...............................................................................................40

  Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Development ......................47

  Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources ...............................................................57

  Standard 7: Requirements and Standards Specified in Rule 505-3-.01 ...............71

  Standard 8: Alignment with PSC-Adopted Program Content Standards ..........75

Index of Linked or Attached Exhibits and Tables .................................................................76
Institutional/Agency Overview
This section sets the context for the approval review. It should clearly state the mission of the institution/agency. It should also describe the characteristics of the unit and identify and describe any branch campuses, off-campus sites, and distance learning programs for professional school personnel.

A. Thomas University/Division of Education

A.1. Describe the historical context of the institution or agency.

Thomas University is an independent, nonsectarian, regionally-accredited, comprehensive university serving the post-secondary educational needs of Southwest Georgia and North Florida. For over fifty years, the college has successfully provided capable students the opportunity to pursue a rigorous post-secondary education.

The Primitive Baptist Church founded Thomas University as Birdwood Junior College in 1950 on the winter home property of Cameron Forbes, U.S. Ambassador to Japan. The first classes began in 1954 with seven students. In 1977, the college officials decided to convert the institution to Thomas County Community College. In 1979, the school became completely nonsectarian, private, and independent. In 1984, the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) granted the college accreditation as a two-year, Level I institution. In 1986, the college changed its name to Thomas College, and in 1990, SACS granted the college accreditation as a four-year, Level II college. In 1995, SACS reaffirmed Thomas College’s accreditation for the next ten years. In January 2000, the official name of the college was changed to Thomas University, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools approved Thomas University as a Level III institution to offer university level graduate degrees. The first graduate degree offered during the 1999-2000 academic year was the Master of Business Administration degree. The university now offers five master’s degrees, twenty bachelor degree programs, and two associate degrees. The university has three satellite campuses offering the RN-BSN program at regional hospitals, and has partnerships with Southwest Georgia Technical College, Darton College, Tallahassee Community College, Bainbridge College, and the District Boards of Education in Thomas, Decatur, and Grady counties.

A.2. Describe the mission of the institution or agency.

Mission
Thomas University is the school of choice for students in undergraduate and graduate programs to prepare for successful careers and responsible leadership in a rapidly changing and complex world. The faculty and staff value a student’s individual strengths, capabilities, and will to succeed, provide the means by which he or she will achieve personal and professional transformation.

Vision
Thomas University will be a national leader in innovative teaching and interactive technology that engages students in creative problem solving for the Information Age.
**Brand Statement**
Education that Engages…Empowers…TRANSFORMS

**Values**
Thomas University values...
…dynamic learning environments that engage students in their intellectual and personal development;
…rigorous intellectual studies that require creativity, discipline, and personal responsibility;
…diversity and its use as a learning tool to teach that the world is a better place when respect for the individual is central to our relationship with others;
…community involvement, including cultural and artistic experiences, that enrich the lives of our students, as well as their fellow citizens;
…individual attention to all students;
…a lifetime connection with our students.

A.3. Describe the characteristics of the institution or agency. [e.g., control (e.g., public or private) and type of institution/agency such as private, land grant, or HBI; location (e.g., urban, rural, or suburban area)]

Thomas University is a private four-year co-educational university that serves the post-secondary educational needs of South Georgia and North Florida. The university is located in Thomasville, Georgia, a relatively small town of over 20,000 people in rural Southwest Georgia. The town is 35 miles north of Tallahassee, Florida; 55 miles south of Albany, Georgia; and 45 miles west of Valdosta, Georgia. Thomas University, as an employer and educational provider, is vital to the educational, economic, cultural, and societal strength of the Thomasville community and Georgia’s rural southwestern region. Since its founding in 1950, the university has grown to an enrollment of 1050 undergraduate and graduate students.

Thomas University provides quality education through a dynamic learning environment. Innovative models for reaching learners by our caring faculty and staff change the lives of students in our local, regional, and global communities. Offering associate’s, bachelor's, and master's degrees, our highest goal is to provide an educational experience that explores and develops each student's full potential. Most of our students are commuting adults who eventually become employed in the surrounding local area.

Approximately 150 students are enrolled each year in the education programs. Teacher preparation programs are a critical part of Thomas University’s educational mission. Thomas University awards about 25 undergraduate degrees in education, 5 post-
baccalaureate certificates, and 8 M.Ed. degrees each year. Our graduates provide a pipeline for well-prepared teachers committed to service in the communities of Southwest Georgia.

A.4. **Describe the institution’s/agency’s service area to include regions/counties served and the demographics of the general population.**

The majority of education students at Thomas University commute from communities within the 13-county service area in Southwestern Georgia. Thomas University’s 13 county service area is comprised of many economically distressed and disadvantaged counties: this is reflective of the high number of public schools classified as Title 1 schools (72 of 90). Thomas University’s student demographics are reflective of the ethnic diversity elementary and secondary students from the surrounding region. Approximately 35% of education majors are African-American and 1% are Hispanic, mirroring the percentage of the university’s student body as a whole. In 2009-2010, in Thomas County, the average percent of African-American/Black students was 31.4%, and the range was 2.9% for Hispanic students. The number of Asian students was less than 1%. In the surrounding counties, in Thomas University’s service area the percent of Hispanics and Asian students was slightly higher, within a few percent.

In the 2009-2010 school year, Thomas University’s education division graduated 43 students, rising above previous numbers. Of those students, 9 are African-American/Black, reflecting approximately the same percentage as the surrounding demographics.

**B. The Unit**

**B.1. Define the professional education unit at your institution/agency and describe its relationship to other units at the institution or agency that are involved in the preparation of professional educators.**

The [Division of Education](#) is the unit responsible for all educator preparation programs at Thomas University. The Division of Education has the authority to oversee all teacher education licensure programs, with input and advice from its internal and external committees. The unit provides leadership for all educator preparation programs, including coordination of accreditation and state program approval activities and oversight of curriculum and policies. The Division of Education chair reports directly to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The education faculty members are under the leadership of the Division of Education Chairperson. The division works closely with faculty in the Division of Arts and Sciences to review teacher candidate proficiency data for the goal of unit and candidate improvement. Faculty members of the Division of Arts & Sciences sit on the division’s Advisory Committee and the Assessment Review Committee along with unit faculty and partner school faculty and administrators.

**B.2. How many professional education faculty members or agency employees support the professional education unit (or will support the unit if they have not yet been hired)? Please complete Table 1 or insert a hyperlink to your own table at Prompt B.6**
### Table 1
**Professional Education Faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Professional Education Faculty</th>
<th>Full-time in the Unit</th>
<th>Full-time in the Institution / Agency, but Part-time in the Unit</th>
<th>Part-time at the Institution / Agency &amp; the Unit (e.g., adjunct faculty)</th>
<th>Graduate Teaching Assistants Teaching or Supervising Clinical Practice</th>
<th>Total # of Professional Education Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6*</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Two new hires scheduled for Fall 2012.*

### What programs are proposed at your institution or agency to prepare candidates for initial educator certification or for educator endorsements? Please complete Table 2 or insert a hyperlink to your own table at Prompt B.6.

### Table 2
**Initial Preparation Programs Proposed for Approval**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Name</th>
<th>Delivery Mode(s) (e.g., face-to-face, online, or hybrid / blended)</th>
<th>Award Level(s) (e.g., Bachelor’s, post-baccalaureate / certification-only, Master's/M.A.T., *Specialist, *Doctoral, or Endorsement)</th>
<th>GaPSC Educator Preparation Rule #</th>
<th>GaPSC Certification Rule #</th>
<th>Proposed Start Date (Semester / Year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Bachelors of Science</td>
<td>505-3-.16</td>
<td>505-2-.59</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Grades Education</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Bachelors of Science</td>
<td>505-3-.26</td>
<td>502-2-.84</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Baccalaureate Middle Grades Education</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>certification-only</td>
<td>505-3-.26</td>
<td>502-2-.84</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary English</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Bachelors of Science</td>
<td>505-3-.17</td>
<td>502-2-.62</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Baccalaureate Secondary English</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>certification-only</td>
<td>505-3-.17</td>
<td>502-2-.62</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Mathematics</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Bachelors of Science</td>
<td>5050-3-.25</td>
<td>502-2-.82</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Baccalaureate Secondary Mathematics</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>certification-only</td>
<td>5050-3-.25</td>
<td>502-2-.82</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B.5. Which of the initial teacher preparation, endorsement and advanced preparation programs listed above will be offered off-campus or via distance learning technologies?

No programs are offered off-campus or via distance learning.

B.6. (Optional Attachments) Tables, figures, and a list of links to key exhibits related to the unit context may be attached here. [Limited to 3 attachments.]

**Conceptual Framework**

This section provides an overview of the unit's conceptual framework(s). The overview should include a brief description of the framework(s) and its development.

C.1. How does the unit's conceptual framework address the following structural elements? [Please provide a summary here. A more complete description of the conceptual framework should be available as an electronic exhibit.]

- The vision and mission of the unit
- Philosophy, purposes, goals, and institutional/agency standards of the unit
- Knowledge bases, including theories, research, the wisdom of practice, and educational policies that drive the work of the unit
- Candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, including proficiencies associated with diversity and technology, that are aligned with the expectations in professional, state, and institutional/agency standards
- Summarized description of the unit's assessment system

The vision of the Education Division is to be a national leader in the preparation of highly effective teachers using innovative teaching and interactive technology strategies. We envision a division with faculty who improve the intellectual lives of students and create an academic environment recognized nationally for excellence in teaching that leads to the personal and professional transformation of our students. Quality teaching is our paramount concern, and we believe our students must be prepared to engage in creative problem-solving to compete in a global market.

The mission of the Education Division is to provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs that result in the personal and professional transformation of our students. Our programs combine classroom and field-based experiences in various programmatic areas to promote the acquisition of essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to teach successfully in a variety of educational settings. The division fosters relationships with our PK-12 partners and with highly regarded educators in an effort to achieve our mission. Our partnerships are a critical component of our ability and strategy to cultivate, nurture, and prepare future educators.

The mission of the Education Division is echoed in its strong commitment to pedagogical practice that is inclusive and constructivist. The division aims to prepare teacher candidates to work with diverse populations by remaining committed to the deep-seated disposition that all students can learn. Candidates are encouraged to model a constructivist view of
knowledge and see learning as a self-regulated process (Vygoyski, 1986; Lincoln, 2001). The mission of the division, ultimately, however, is to prepare caring, competent, committed, and community-active professionals who:

- demonstrate a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences that affords students the skills and intellectual knowledge base upon which mature and in-depth study can be undertaken;
- value experiential learning and interdisciplinary study;
- possess content knowledge (knowledge about the subject they are teaching), pedagogical knowledge (knowledge of general instructional strategies), pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge of specific strategies for teaching a particular subject), and context knowledge (knowledge of community, district, and school);
- possess an unwavering respect for learning, diversity, cultural difference, and multicultural education;
- strive to differentiate instruction so that all students;
- personify an ethic of caring;
- uphold the ideals of justice, equity, and opportunity for all people;
- think creatively, reflectively, and critically in grappling with a myriad of educational challenges;
- act collaboratively and professionally;
- maintain high standards of excellence for themselves and for their students; and
- honor critical life-long learning.

The Education Division’s vision and mission statements clearly embody Thomas University’s branding statement:

“Education that Engages…Empowers…TRANSFORMS.”

The Education Division is dedicated to producing the highest quality professional educators. Currently, the division offers Bachelor of Science degree programs in early childhood education, middle grades education, secondary grades education (mathematics and English), and a post-baccalaureate certification program in middle grades and secondary education (mathematics and English). The Education Division’s philosophy is focused on using principles of effective teacher preparation programs including, but not limited to: small class size, frequent one-on-one interaction between teacher candidates and faculty, field experiences in school classroom that begin early and take place throughout the program, courses taught by highly-qualified professors, advisors who provide academic and personal support, and technology-integrated classrooms.

Thomas University's philosophy, inherent to the conceptual framework for it's teacher preparation programs, is founded upon the principles of a constructivist paradigm.

We believe that learning is a socially mediated process in which learners use new knowledge and apply what they have learned (Vygoyski, 1986; Lincoln, 2001). These beliefs
emphasize “minds-on” learning. This endorses our belief that all learners, including the candidates we prepare, must be intellectually engaged in the learning process by building on their previous knowledge and experiences, and by applying their new learning in meaningful contexts. To become a constructivist (mediator of learning) the teacher preparation candidate must be guided by the development of the child, motivation, and learning.

The adoption of a developmental approach (Fuller 1970; Conway & Clark, 2003) to teacher preparation provides the rationale to personalize the education of both traditional and non-traditional age professionals, as well as supporting the constructivist paradigm for teaching and learning. Learning experiences are designed that are cumulative in nature and move the teacher candidate from “exploratory” performance towards “empowered” expertise.

The purpose of the programs in the Division is to develop teachers who are self-directed decision makers: recognizing the need for personal and professional growth, having the skills necessary to pursue them, and secure enough to engage in personal and professional self-evaluation. Candidates can recognize and meet the needs of young people, use their liberal arts background, content preparation, and the principles of education in attempting to meet those needs, and facilitate the acquisition of knowledge. They can provide an educational environment to enhance the social, emotional, cognitive and physical development of individuals so that they can make sense of their world by making effective decisions. The candidate will also interact effectively within the community and the school environment by having the skills and willingness to communicate with people of all ages and backgrounds. By analyzing emerging trends and thinking critically about them, the teacher candidates will effectively and ethically balance the needs of the child and society as well as use intellectual skills and knowledge to think critically and pursue self-directed goals.

The Division has adopted a developmental approach to teacher preparation. Each developmental stage represents knowledge of general and disciplinary content, and pedagogical content from a prescribed sequence of courses. Candidates are assessed at multiple transition points to ascertain their worthiness to continue with the program.

To accomplish our mission, the goals of the Division of Education are to:

- Provide programs at both undergraduate and graduate levels based upon sound pedagogical and clinical practice.
- Prepare teachers and educational leaders for Georgia who believe “all students can learn”.
- Employ and support faculty members who are committed to excellence in teaching.
- Provide a variety of teaching venues incorporating the latest technologies to a range of diverse student interests, backgrounds, and aspirations.
- Maintain resources and facilities that allow each program to meet its expected outcomes.
- Collaborate with PK-12 school partners to enhance students’ knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and to influence the ongoing exchange of ideas for mutual benefit.
- Engage in outreach services:
To address specific needs in the broader community,
To enhance student learning,
To instill commitment to service, and
To promote the reputation of the university.

The faculty recognizes the need for learner-centered education. That is, faculty empowers graduates with the ability to customize their teaching to meet the needs of their individual students. Faculty promotes this by utilizing an inquiry-focused pedagogical model wherein candidates learn by solving real world problems. These include adapting practice for different learning styles and incorporating diverse perspectives to make their practice relevant to students from different racial and cultural backgrounds. Candidates also learn to include accommodations to modify lessons for advanced students as well as students with special needs.

The Division of Education’s conceptual framework of professional practices includes candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions that are aligned with the expectations of professional and state standards. Teachers must be critical thinkers, respect and understand diversity, communicate effectively, and possess strong pedagogical abilities. Candidates also need to develop deep content knowledge and classroom management skills. They must demonstrate a passion for life-long learning, effectively use technology; and exemplify professionalism. Teacher candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions include:

Critical Thinking
- The successful candidate provides learning experiences which encourage critical thinking, problem solving, informed decision making, and creativity.
- The successful candidate uses performance data to reflect and improve practice.

Diversity
- The successful candidate plans lessons that indicate a respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.
- The successful candidate plans lessons for differences in individual student needs, abilities, and interests, believing that all students can learn.
- The successful candidate modifies instruction to create a student-centered classroom and believes all students can learn.

Communication
- The successful candidate demonstrates oral, written, and/or nonverbal communication consistent with the expectations of a teacher candidate.
- The successful candidate collaborates with supervisors and colleagues on lessons and integrates feedback, as appropriate.
- The successful candidate establishes, communicates, and maintains high expectations for student achievement and participation.
Pedagogy

- The successful candidate plans appropriate and logically sequenced lessons.
- The successful candidate develops learning objectives which are appropriate for the subject and grade level and are connected appropriately to state performance standards.
- The successful candidate provides learning experiences that allow students to form connections between the specific subject area and other disciplines.
- The successful candidate uses a variety of instructional strategies to actively engage students.
- The successful candidate uses a variety of instructional materials.
- The successful candidate assists students in connecting subject matter to everyday life.
- The successful candidate plans appropriate assessment strategies to assess student learning.
- The successful candidate uses formative assessment to explore student learning and recognizes modifications that demonstrate knowledge of instructional judgment.
- The successful candidate utilizes appropriate assessment strategies to assess student learning and uses data to plan future lessons.
- The successful candidate implements meaningful introductions and closures in lessons.
- The successful candidate uses self-reflection to evaluate instruction.

Content Knowledge

- The successful candidate demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter taught.
- The successful candidate selects meaningful, engaging, and standards-driven content.
- The successful candidate links subject matter with other disciplines.

Classroom Management

- The successful candidate maintains a positive and safe classroom environment.
- The successful candidate maintains effective rules, procedures, and routines.
- The successful candidate provides for smooth transitions between activities.

Technology

- The successful candidate integrates technology appropriately into student learning activities.
- The successful candidate uses a variety of technological tools to implement instruction.

Life Long Learning
• The successful candidate engages in professional reflection.
• The successful candidate defines purposeful professional goals.
• The successful candidate examines and uses research.

Professionalism
• The successful candidate presents self in a professional manner in terms of appearance, attitude, attire, and conduct.
• The successful candidate maintains an appropriate level of professional ethics in terms of personal conduct, academic integrity, and emotional maturity in the school setting.
• The successful candidate demonstrates a positive rapport with students, parents, colleagues, administrators, supervising teachers, and university supervisors.
• The successful candidate is receptive to constructive criticism from the supervising teacher, university supervisor, and administrators and incorporates this feedback.

C.2. How was the conceptual framework developed and who was involved in its development?
Areas of pedagogical and professional practice were identified as the conceptual framework prior to the 2002 GaPSC program review. These were developed by unit faculty in collaboration with university and PK-12 partners. Minimal review of the conceptual framework has been conducted since that time. What has been missing is an understanding of how those identified areas of pedagogical and professional practice align with the broader structural elements of a conceptual framework; the vision and mission of the university and division, and the philosophical underpinnings and the knowledge base which undergird the framework and lead to a coherent purpose and set of goals. To that end, work has begun with the new Division Chair to discuss each of these critically important structures that together serve as the framework that guides and drives the work of the unit. Discussions since September 2010, have led to the present presentation of the division’s conceptual framework. Future work will continue to refine the Thomas University conceptual framework so that the philosophical principles on which we do our work are clearly articulated.

Responses to the Georgia Standards for the Approval of Professional Education Units and Educator Preparation Programs (2008)

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

1a.1. Describe how candidates will be prepared to pass the state content assessment for each program.

The unit uses the following procedures and assessments to ensure that program content prepares teacher candidates in Early Childhood Education, Middle Grades Education (MGE), Secondary (SEC) Math and English Education, and Post Baccalaureate MGE, SEC English and Math with the applicable content knowledge in their areas of specialization, as well as the pedagogical knowledge and skills to enable them to be effective instructors.
**Syllabi/course Alignment with Georgia’s PSC Program Standards:** All Division of Education syllabi, as well as the syllabi of the Division of Arts and Sciences content courses that the teacher candidate takes as part of their course progression are aligned. The Assessment Review Committee meets as needed to facilitate this process and makes recommendations to the Curriculum Committee, Advisory Committee, and Administrative Council regarding program improvement, e.g., the addition of necessary course offerings, and/or redesign of courses.

**Teacher Candidate Advisement:** The teacher candidate meets with an assigned advisor each semester for advisement regarding registration for the next term’s classes. Course requirements are clearly delineated on progressions sheets (ECE, MGE, SEC English, SEC Math, MGE Post Baccalaureate, SEC English Post Baccalaureate, SEC Math Post Baccalaureate) for each program to ensure that all prerequisite and program course requirements are completed.

All programs require the teacher candidate to successfully complete (grade of “C” or better) content knowledge courses specific to the teacher candidate’s program, as well as pedagogical coursework which includes instruction in presentation of content, instructional strategies, integration of technology, and differentiating instruction for diverse learners. Required upper division courses include:

**Content Knowledge Courses**
- Required content specialization courses, as well as elective possibilities.

**Content Specific Pedagogical Courses**
- Teaching Math in the Elementary/Middle/Secondary School
- Teaching English/Language Arts in the Elementary/Middle/Secondary School
- Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary/Middle School
- Teaching Science in the Elementary/Middle School

**GACE Workshops:** GACE workshops, which offer strategies for GACE exam preparation, are offered on campus once each semester. These workshops are provided by the Georgia Association of Educators. Study guides are located in the library for student use.

The teacher candidate’s content knowledge is evidenced through multiple assessments and can be found in the chart entitled Key Assessment Target Behaviors for Content Knowledge for the Teacher Candidate.

1a.2. Describe the other key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates in initial preparation programs demonstrate the content knowledge delineated in professional, state, and institutional/agency standards.

Target behaviors on eight key assessments and a Brief Description of the Key Assessments that are used to demonstrate that the teacher candidate can demonstrate the content
knowledge and skills delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards can be found in the linked documents.

1a.4. Describe plans for the use of follow-up studies of graduates and employers and how they will be used to inform graduates’, or program completers’, preparation in the content area.

The unit’s plans for follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and use of the data to inform the unit and stakeholders of graduates’ and program completers’ preparedness to help all students learn include the use of the following surveys:

**New Teacher Hire Survey.** Administrators who have hired recent Thomas University Division of Education graduates are surveyed each year. The target behaviors for content knowledge listed on the survey are:

- New teachers from Thomas University demonstrate critical thinking skills as related to content, planning, presentation, and decision making that is necessary to be successful in the classroom.
- New teachers from Thomas University have in-depth knowledge of the content they plan to teach.
  - Reading/Language Arts content ______
  - Mathematics content ______________
  - Social Studies content______________
  - Science content __________________

**Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey.** Recent graduates are surveyed each year. The target behaviors for content knowledge listed on the survey are:

The Thomas University Teacher Education Program:

- Helped me develop the critical thinking skills as related to content, planning, presentation, and decision making that is necessary to be successful in the classroom.
- Provided me with in-depth knowledge of the content I plan to teach.
  - Reading/Language Arts content ______
  - Mathematics content ______________
  - Social Studies content______________
  - Science content __________________

Scores from the above assessment instruments are entered into LiveText for future analysis. Members of Division of Education Assessment Review Committee review teacher candidate performance data reports and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee and
Curriculum Committee, as needed. Additionally, a report to Faculty Council is provided each semester so that program changes can be made, as necessary.

1b.1. Describe the key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates in initial preparation programs demonstrate the pedagogical content knowledge and skills delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards.

Target behaviors on eight key assessments and a Brief Description of the Key Assessments that are used to demonstrate that the teacher candidate can demonstrate the pedagogical content knowledge and skills delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards can be found in the linked documents.

1c.1. Describe the key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates in initial preparation and advanced preparation programs demonstrate the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills delineated in professional, state, and institutional/agency standards to facilitate learning.

Target behaviors for ten key assessments and a Brief Description of the Key Assessments that are used to demonstrate that the teacher candidate demonstrates the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills delineated in professional, state, and institutional/agency standards to facilitate learning can be found in the linked documents.

1c.2. Describe the key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates in initial preparation programs will consider the school, family, and community contexts and the prior experiences of students; will reflect on their own practice; will know major schools of thought about schooling, teaching, and learning; and will be able to analyze educational research findings.

Target behaviors for ten key assessments and a Brief Description of the Key Assessments used to demonstrate that the teacher candidate will consider the school, family, and community contexts and the prior experiences of students; will reflect on their own practice; will know major schools of thought about schooling, teaching, and learning; and will be able to analyze educational research findings as described in the linked documents.

1c.4. Describe the plans for the use of follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and how they will be used to inform graduates,’ or completers,’ preparation related to professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills.

The unit’s plans for follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and how they will be used to inform graduates’ and program completers’ preparation related to professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills include the use of the following surveys:

New Teacher Hire Survey. Administrators who have hired recent Thomas University Division of Education graduates are surveyed each year and asked to rate the degree to which they believe the new teacher in their school who graduated from the Thomas University has
the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills to help all PK-12 students to learn. The target listed on the survey:

- New teachers from Thomas University are able to relate to, plan for, and teach with consideration given to the diversity of the students in the classroom, culturally and academically. T.U. teacher candidates relate to the school, family, and community contexts in connecting to students’ prior experience to provide meaningful learning experiences and help all students learn.

- New teachers from Thomas University demonstrate the ability and willingness to reflect upon their practice and make necessary adjustments to facilitate learning for all students.

**Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey.** Recent graduates are surveyed each year and asked to rate the degree to which they believe the T.U. Education program has helped them to develop the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary to help all students learn. The target listed on the survey is:

The Thomas University Teacher Education Program:

- Prepared me to relate to, plan for, and teach with consideration given to the diversity of the students in the classroom, culturally and academically, and prepared me to relate to the school, family, and community contexts in connecting to students’ prior experience to provide meaningful learning experiences and help all students learn.

- Helped me develop the desire and skills to reflect upon my practice and make necessary adjustments to facilitate learning for all students.

Scores from the above assessment instruments are entered into LiveText for future analysis. Members of the Division of Education Assessment Review Committee review teacher candidate performance data reports and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee and Curriculum Committee, as needed. Additionally, a report to Faculty Council is provided each semester so that program changes can be made, as necessary.

**1d.1 Describe the key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates in initial preparation programs can assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustments to instruction, monitor student learning, and develop and implement meaningful experiences to help all students learn.**

Target behaviors on nine key assessments and a Brief Description of the Key Assessments used to demonstrate that the teacher candidate can assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustments to instruction, monitor student learning, and develop and implement meaningful learning experiences to help all students learn are described in the linked documents.
1d.3 Describe plans for the use of follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and how they will be used to inform graduates’, or completers’, preparedness to help all students learn.

The unit’s plans for follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and use of the data to inform the unit and stakeholders of graduates’ and program completers’ preparedness to help all students learn include the use of the following surveys:

**New Teacher Hire Survey.** Administrators who have hired recent Thomas University Division of Education graduates are surveyed each year and asked to rate the degree to which they believe that the new teachers have the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and professional behaviors to help all PK-12 students to learn. The target listed on the survey:

- New teachers from Thomas University demonstrate that they can assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustments to instruction, monitor student learning, and develop meaningful learning experiences to help all students learn.

**Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey.** Recent graduates are surveyed each year and asked to rate the degree to which they believe the T.U. Education program has helped them to develop the content knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. The target listed on the survey is:

- The Thomas University Teacher Education Program prepared me to assess and analyze student learning, make appropriate adjustments to instruction, monitor student learning, and develop meaningful learning experiences to help all students learn.

Scores from the above assessment instruments are entered into LiveText for future analysis. Members of Division of Education Assessment Review Committee review teacher candidate performance data reports and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee and Curriculum Committee, as needed. Additionally, a report to Faculty Council is provided each semester so that program changes can be made, as necessary.

1g.1 Describe the professional dispositions candidates are expected to demonstrate by completion of programs.

The unit acknowledges and emphasizes the critical importance of professional dispositions throughout the teacher candidate’s experiences in on-campus classes and in each field and clinical experience. The unit’s 13 professional dispositions that the teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate are clearly defined in the **Teacher Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment** instrument.

The unit’s Advisory Committee and additional PK-12 partners worked alongside the faculty to develop the Teacher Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment instrument. The unit faculty, including adjunct faculty who have recent administrative and instructional experience in local PK-12 schools, met to discuss, analyze, and make appropriate changes to
the instrument. An initial draft of the revised instrument was sent to each faculty member for
comments and feedback prior to the division’s meeting to finalize the instrument. After
piloting the instrument, the unit faculty met to discuss each item and made changes, as
appropriate.

The potential teacher candidate is introduced to the unit Teacher Candidate Core Professional
Dispositions Assessment instrument in EDU200: Introduction to Education in an activity
that requires each candidate to reflect upon the qualities a favorite teacher demonstrated.
Associations with the unit’s dispositions are subsequently made, followed by discussions
related to the importance of each category for effective classroom teachers. The unit
dispositions are revisited and encouraged in each Core I, II, and III education course
throughout the program.

The teacher candidate is assessed by the unit faculty each semester. Unit faculty make
annotated notes each semester related to the teacher candidate’s performance on each
component of the Teacher Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment instrument
using the Teacher Candidate Professional Disposition Log. This instrument provides a
method for faculty to make annotations related to teacher candidate professional disposition
concerns and can be used in the end-of-semester meeting when faculty discuss the
candidate’s performance related to professional dispositions. Assessment of the teacher
candidate is based upon faculty consensus. The evaluation of the teacher candidate is entered
into LiveText and the teacher candidate receives feedback. The candidate with an
unacceptable rating is required to meet with the faculty to discuss the concerns and possible
strategies for improvement. A Professional Development Plan is developed by the teacher
candidate, approved by the advisor, and placed in the teacher candidate’s file.

1g.2: Describe how candidates will demonstrate that they are developing professional
dispositions related to fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

The teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate behaviors in both university courses and in
field and clinical experiences that are consistent with the dispositions related to fairness and
the belief that all PK-12 students can learn. During the teacher candidate’s second and third
semesters in the education program, he/she takes EDU 320, Understanding Diversity, and
EDU 468, Exceptional Learners. EDU 320 and EDU 468 help the teacher candidate develop
an awareness of diversity in teaching and learning, and help the teacher candidate develop
knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions so that they can adapt instruction for diverse
populations including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with
exceptionalities.

The teacher candidate is assessed in each course on their level of commitment to this belief.
Initially, the teacher candidate completes a self-evaluation of this and other dispositions in
EDU 200, Introduction to Education. As the teacher candidate progresses through the
program, the Teacher Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment is used every
semester to ascertain the teacher candidate’s rating on dispositions. The unit faculty works
collaboratively to discuss and evaluate each individual teacher candidate on the Teacher
Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment, which uses a qualitative analytic
rubric that allows the division to aggregate and disaggregate the data to identify individual student concerns as well as program and unit trends that indicate potential areas for program improvements.

In methods course work, the teacher candidate must demonstrate the ability to plan effectively to meet the needs of all students, attending to differentiation for ability levels, learning styles, and student interests. The unit **Lesson Plan Assessment** allows for scoring the teacher candidate on the ability to differentiate instruction to help all students learn.

The **Field Experiences/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment** (Early Childhood Education provided as example) which is completed collectively by the mentor teacher and university supervisor, assesses the teacher candidate on being sensitive to diverse cultures, planning for and teaching the diverse population of learners in the classroom, having a positive impact on PK-12 learning, and demonstrating a belief that all PK-12 students can learn.

In EDU 400 E-folio Workshop, the teacher candidate acquires the technological skills to complete E-folio assignments in LiveText related to diversity and all elements of the Thomas University Conceptual Framework. The E-folio Assignments in each of the unit’s methods courses and field courses require the teacher candidate to address this element of diversity using the **Portfolio Rubric**. During Clinical Practice, the teacher candidate’s completed E-folio project is evaluated by unit faculty advisors using the Portfolio Rubric on the dispositions related to fairness and the belief that all PK-12 students can learn.

1g.3. Describe the key assessments that will be used to indicate that candidates demonstrate the professional dispositions listed in 1.g.1 as they work with students, families, colleagues, and communities.

Target behaviors for seven key assessments and a brief **Description of the Key Assessments** used to indicate that the teacher candidate demonstrates professional dispositions when working with PK-12 students, colleagues, and families are described in the linked documents.

1g.4. Describe plans for the use of follow-up studies of graduates/completers and employers and how they will be used to inform graduates’, or completers’, preparedness to demonstrate the desired professional dispositions.

The Division of Education receives feedback from partner school administrators, mentor teachers, and graduates through annual meetings and surveys. The bi-annual Clinical Teacher Program provides an avenue for partner school administrators, mentor teachers, and clinical faculty to meet with unit faculty and the University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to discuss ways to enhance the unit’s teacher education programs. Follow up surveys of program graduates and principals include:

**New Teacher Hire Survey.** Administrators who have hired recent Thomas University Division of Education graduates are surveyed to gain their assessment of the graduate’s
professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. The target behaviors listed on the survey are:

- New teachers from Thomas University have the appropriate teacher dispositions needed to be successful; professional in attitude, appearance, and work habits
- New teachers from Thomas University demonstrate behaviors that are consistent with the idea of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

**Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey.** Recent graduates are also surveyed and asked to rate the degree to which they feel they have developed professional dispositions as a result of their Thomas University preparation, necessary to help all students learn. The target behaviors listed on the survey are:

The Thomas University Division of Education Program:

- Encouraged my development of appropriate teacher dispositions needed to be successful and professional in attitude, appearance, and work habits.
- Encouraged my development of behaviors that are consistent with the idea of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

Scores from the above assessment instruments are entered into LiveText for future analysis. Members of Division of Education Assessment Review Committee review teacher candidate performance data reports and make recommendations to the Advisory Committee and Curriculum Committee, as needed. Additionally, a report to Faculty Council is provided each semester so that program changes can be made, as necessary.

**Standard 2. Assessment System and Unit Evaluation**

2a.1. Describe the process used to design an assessment system that will collect information on candidate proficiencies outlined in the unit’s conceptual framework, state standards, and professional standards. Who was involved in developing the assessment system and how?

The assessment system was designed by a leadership team consisting of the Division Chair of Education, the university’s Director of Institutional Assessment, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment for the Education Division. This team drafted the overarching structure of the system to ensure alignment with the GaPSC Standards and the Thomas University Division of Education Conceptual Framework. The structure was then manifested in admission and transition standards, assessment instruments, aligned learning outcomes, and organizational groups charged with specific activities for collection and analysis of evidence of learning, aggregated, and disaggregated data. All of the faculty of the Division of Education, including instrumental adjunct faculty, participated in the creation of the above through regular meetings, individual work assignments, and working retreats to refine instruments
and align outcomes. Members of the Arts and Sciences faculty were also included in the process, meeting with Education Division faculty and the leadership team to understand the standards, align and revise content syllabi. Regional PK-12 teachers who serve as clinical supervisors, along with regional PK-12 school administrators, met with Education Division faculty to give feedback and participate in norming exercises to ensure interrater reliability. T.U. administration ensured commitment to the resources required in terms of personnel and technology to enable the full functioning of the system.

2a.2 Unit Assessment System: Transition Point Assessments
Displayed in Table 4 are current unit-level evaluation measures at five transition points (all programs use the same instruments).

Transition Point #1: Admission into Program
Teacher candidates applying for admission to initial teacher preparation programs must apply and interview by the date specified and provide the following evidence of knowledge of basic skills and content (in addition to other requirements):

- Minimum 2.5 GPA
- Passing score on or exempt GACE Basic Skills Exam.
- Passing score on the University’s Critical Writing, Reading, Thinking Exam (CWRTE).
- Passing score on the verbal and written portion of the admissions interview.
- Successful completion of any recommended introductory courses.

- CSC 120 Computer Applications (ECE, MGE, SEC).
- EDU 200 Introduction to Education (ECE, MGE, SEC).
- HIS 451 Georgia History (ECE and MGE).
- PSY 125 Lifespan Development (ECE, MGE, SEC).
- MTH 120 Mathematical Modeling (MGE, SS and LA).
- MTH 140 College Algebra or MTH 150 Pre-Calculus (MGE Math and Science).
- MTH 160 Concepts of Mathematics (ECE).
- MTH 210 Trigonometry (SEC Mathematics).
- STA 250 Intro to Statistics (MGE Math).

The Admissions/Advising Committee reviews all candidates applying to the teacher education programs to ensure that all requirements are met prior to admission. An admissions requirements checklist is used with each candidate to document successful completion of these entry requirements and is stored in their advising files. Additional requirements for entry into all programs are also documented (50 hours working with PK-12 children, three letters of recommendation, and a clear criminal background check).

Transition Point # 2: Entry to Student Teaching/Clinical Practice
Approval for student teaching provides a key assessment point for the teacher candidate. For approval to student teach, candidates must make application to the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment who checks to ensure that the candidate has met the necessary program requirements, including successful completion of required courses, maintenance of a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA, completion of the Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey and acceptable scores on the following key assessments:

- **Field Experience Midterm/Final Summative Assessment** (Professional Core III field/method courses checkpoint).
- **Lesson Planning Assessment** (Professional Core III field/method courses checkpoint).
- **Professional Core Disposition Assessment** (end of the semester Professional Core III).
- **PK-12 Alternative Assessment** (Core II EDU 350, Assessment Strategies to Improve PK-12 Learning).
- **Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance** (Professional Core III field/method courses checkpoint).

The Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment also facilitates the criminal background check process, which requires the school district in which the candidate is placed to review and clear the candidate’s criminal background check.

**Transition Point # 3: Student Teaching/Clinical Practice Exit**

Exit from student teaching includes the candidate’s completion of the Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey and acceptable scores on each of the following:

- **Field Experience Midterm/Final Summative Assessment**
- **Student Teaching Work Sample**
- **Electronic Portfolio**
- **Professional Core Disposition Assessment**
- **Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance**

**Transition Point # 4: Program Exit**

To successfully complete one of the teacher education certification programs (Early Childhood Education, Middle Grades, Middle Grade Post Baccalaureate, Secondary English, Secondary Mathematics, Secondary English Post Baccalaureate, or Secondary Mathematics Post Baccalaureate) the teacher candidate must pass the appropriate GACE Content State Licensure Examination. Program exit begins when the teacher candidate applies for graduation and certification.

**Intent to Graduate Application**

In consultation with the candidate’s faculty advisor, the candidate completes and submits the Intent to Graduate Application. After the candidate applies for graduation, the Registrar’s Office conducts a graduation Degree Audit Report and certifies that the candidate has completed all requirements of the approved teacher education program, including passing the appropriate GACE Content State Licensure Examination, and is considered ready for graduation.
The Registrar issues a list of all program completers to the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment, who uses the list to complete the paperwork required for recommending a teacher candidate for the appropriate Georgia certification.

**Recommendation for Certification**

The final step in the program exit process requires the teacher candidate to complete the *Georgia PSC Certification Application* and return it to the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment. The Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment completes the *Georgia PSC Approved Program Recommendation Form*, selecting the appropriate certification decision. The unit’s Certification Officer reviews each *Georgia PSC Approved Program Recommendation Form* and accompanying certification application and signs certifying the applicants recommended certification status.

**Transition Point # 5: After Program Completion**

Unit-wide alumni and employer surveys are administered to assist the unit in examining its programs from the perspective of former candidates and their current employers; *The New Teacher Hire Survey* and the *Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey*. These surveys are aligned to the Georgia Professional Standards.

2a.3 Describe plans for evaluating the unit’s assessment system. Who will be involved and how?

Structures are in place to ensure systematic evaluation and refinement of the assessment system by unit faculty, professional community members, and college administrators. Once a year at the end of each spring semester, all program faculty meet with PK-12 stakeholders to review assessment data and the assessment system. A required outcome of these annual assessment retreats is the completion of the Annual Program Report which, among others, includes the following questions:

- What changes need to be made in your program’s candidate assessments and scoring guides or assessments of program operations in order to provide more meaningful and useful data?
- Overall, how can the assessment system be changed to provide more meaningful and useful evidence regarding candidate performance and program operations?

The professional community stakeholders who participate in the assessment retreats are members of the unit’s advisory committee and include PK-12 teachers, administrators, and Arts and Sciences faculty. These Annual Program Reports are reviewed by the Administrative Council along with the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment, as well as the Director of Institutional Assessment. The Administrative Council along with the Assessment Review Committee is responsible for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the unit assessment system.

2a.4 Describe how the unit plans to ensure that its assessment procedures will be fair, accurate, consistent, and free of bias.
The unit takes effective steps at both the unit and program levels to eliminate sources of bias in performance assessments and works at both levels to establish the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures. Assessments are fair when they assess what has been taught. To that end, at the beginning of the assessment system development process, program faculty reviewed the curriculum to ensure that candidates were provided opportunities to learn, practice, and demonstrate the expected proficiencies identified in standards. In addition, faculty constructed state professional standards matrices as part of state program review. These matrices are charts showing where in the curriculum the teacher candidate has opportunities to learn and practice what is specified in the standards. Fairness also means that candidates understand what is expected of them on the assessments. Instructions and timing of assessments are clearly stated and shared with candidates, as can be seen in Standard 1 of this document. In addition, candidates are given information on how the rubrics are used to score the assessments and how they count toward completion of their program.

Assessments are accurate when they measure what they purport to measure. To this end, the unit has aligned assessments with the standards and learning proficiencies that they are designed to measure; that is, the same or consistent categories of content appear in the assessments that are in the standards. For example, the Field Experience/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment is aligned directly with the state standards for teacher performance and the unit’s conceptual framework. Assessments are reviewed annually during the Assessment Retreat to determine if they are well-aligned with standards, appropriate for the standard being assessed; if revisions are indicated, they are so noted in the Annual Program Reports.

Closely related to accuracy is the elimination of bias. To ensure that the results of assessments adequately reflect what candidates know and can do, the unit and programs work to remove problems with the assessment instruments that introduce sources of bias and thus adversely influence candidate performance. Assessment instructions and scoring guides are reviewed by program faculty to identify and eliminate problems with assessments such as missing or vague instructions, poorly worded questions, and poorly reproduced copies that make reading difficult.

The unit aims to ensure that assessments are consistent and produce dependable results or results that remain constant on repeated trials. Several strategies are systematically employed to help ensure that unit and program assessments are trustworthy. At each semester’s faculty retreat, key assessment reliability training is conducted. All university supervisors are trained every semester in the use and application of the Field Experience/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment. Mentor teachers are trained during clinical teacher training sessions and school-based orientation meetings each semester with the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment. Each teacher candidate is evaluated independently and cooperatively by the university supervisor and the mentor teacher.

2a.5 Describe the assessments and evaluation measures that will be used to manage and improve unit operations and unit programs.
The unit’s system includes a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that are used to monitor candidate performance and manage and improve program and unit operations. The unit assessment system provides regular and comprehensive information on applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, competencies of graduates, unit operations, and program quality; it uses the data and its analysis for the purposes of improvement of both program and unit operations. The assessment system begins with an alignment to unit and state standards. All unit programs are aligned to the unit’s conceptual framework and to the Georgia Standards Commission Professional Standards. Next, assessment data are gathered at multiple points; multiple assessments are used including both internal and external data; data are regularly compiled, summarized, analyzed, and used; and information technologies are used to maintain these data.

Multiple assessments are utilized in the division to monitor teacher candidate entrance, progression through, and exit from the program. These include multiple admissions criteria, including a passing score on the GACE Basic Skills exam. The [Standard 1 X Transition Point X Key Assessment Matrix](#) shows the multiple assessments of teacher candidate proficiency that are collected, analyzed and used at five transition points to improve unit and program operations. All data are housed in LiveText, the University CAMS system, and the offices of the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment and the Division Chair. Faculty committees meet monthly to review program data, discuss needs for improvement, and make suggestions to improve the program.

The unit’s assessment system includes a strong component focused on faculty quality that involves both university and unit level assessment. It begins in the hiring process where the unit is committed to recruiting high quality faculty who are exemplary, reflective teachers and scholars who serve the community. All potential faculty members are screened thoroughly before hiring, and oversight is provided by the VP for Academic Affairs. Thomas University systematically completes a comprehensive evaluation process of full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty with the goal of continuous improvement. The formal evaluation process requires faculty to annually submit a [Reflective Self Profile](#) demonstrating teaching effectiveness, scholarship/professional development, and service activities. During fall and spring semesters and summer term, student evaluations of all full and part-time faculty members are administered by the university’s Office of Institutional Assessment. Results of student evaluations are analyzed and course summaries are distributed to the faculty and Division Chairs as aggregated and disaggregated data after each semester ends. Peer evaluations are organized by the Division Chair and are conducted annually as a part of the annual review process. The performance of the faculty member is reviewed annually by the Division Chair (or in the case of the Division Chair by the Provost/VPAA) in relation to the submitted Profile, course evaluations, and the supervisor’s observation and review of evidence. As part of the annual evaluation process, the faculty member identifies one to three goals in each area for the following academic year. The Division Chair discusses the faculty member’s annual performance and goals and the Division Chair completes the Thomas University [Faculty Evaluation Summary](#). The faculty member is given the opportunity to review the Chair’s evaluation. If a corrective action plan is required (one or more areas not meeting expectations), it is developed with the faculty member. Both the
faculty member and the Division Chair sign the evaluation and submit it to the Provost/VPAA. Additionally, faculty who supervise field and clinical experiences are evaluated by both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate.

2b.1 Describe the processes and timelines that the unit plans to use to collect, compile, aggregate, summarize, and analyze data on candidate performance, unit operations, and program quality. You may address this prompt in narrative form, or in a table.

1. How will the data be collected?
2. From whom (e.g., applicants, candidates, graduates, faculty) will the data be collected?
3. How often will the data be summarized and analyzed?
4. Whose responsibility will it be to summarize and analyze the data (Dean, assistant dean, data coordinator, etc.)?
5. In what formats will the data be summarized and analyzed (reports, tables, charts, graphs, etc.)?
6. What information technologies will be used to maintain the unit’s assessment system?

In general, the assessment system is based on an annual cycle of data collection, analysis, evaluation, and use. For each of the five essential assessment domains (applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, competencies of graduates, unit operations, and program quality), the assessment system specifies clearly the data to be collected, the frequency of data collection (timeline), who is responsible for collecting the data, and who is responsible for analyzing and evaluating data and monitoring its use to support candidate learning, and effective program and unit operations and quality. **Table 5. Assessment System: Processes and Timelines** describes the timeline and processes for the unit assessment system.

2b.2. Describe how the unit plans to disaggregate candidate assessment data for candidates on the main campus, at off-campus sites, and in distance learning preparation programs.

All teacher education programs at Thomas University are located on the main campus. There are no off-campus sites or distance learning programs. The unit has developed and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is systematic and reflects professional and state standards. Candidate performance data from key assessments at transition points is housed in LiveText. Faculty have constant access to aggregated teacher candidate performance data analyzed through LiveText through each faculty account. The system allows disaggregation by various variables, a critical feature to support ongoing program improvement.

2b.3. Describe how the unit plans to address and resolve formal candidate complaints, and maintain records of their resolutions.
Thomas University is concerned that every student has a positive educational experience. The T.U. grievance policy, as provided in the university catalog, is followed. Candidates initially report complaints to their respective advisors. Following the university policy for grievances, the candidate meets with the course instructor in an attempt to resolve the issue. The Division Chair becomes involved if the instructor and candidate cannot satisfactorily resolve the complaint. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved at the division level, the Dean of Advising reviews the concern. Records of all complaints and resolutions are confidential and stored in the office of the Division Chair.

For complaints regarding decisions related to admissions to any teacher education program, continuation in the program, or entry to clinical practice, candidates pursue an appeal through the Division of Education Admissions/Advising Committee. This committee is composed of the program chair of each division program. Records of those complaints are maintained in the office of the Coordinator of Field Placement and Assessment and Division Chair. The Coordinator of Field Placement and Assessment compiles these data (complaint and resolution) and the summarized data are imported into the LiveText system.

2c.1. Describe the unit’s plans to regularly and systematically use data to evaluate the efficacy of its courses, programs, and clinical experiences. Describe the unit’s plans to ensure use of these data to initiate changes to its courses, programs, and clinical experiences.

The unit has developed and implemented a comprehensive assessment system that is systematic and reflects professional and state standards. The outcomes-based assessment model enables evaluation of teacher candidates’ mastery of all required knowledge, skills, and content as defined by the unit’s Conceptual Framework and the standards of the Georgia PSC. Analysis of aggregated and disaggregated performance data enables program assessment and ongoing program improvement. Data from all key teacher candidate assessments are entered in the LiveText system for the purpose of aggregating, disaggregating, trending, and analyzing data regarding candidates’ performance related to standards to enable program improvements. The university’s Director of Institutional Assessment assists the unit’s Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment in the production of meaningful reports from the LiveText system and provides statistical analysis of candidate performance data.

Each May, an assessment retreat is held that involves all program faculty together with program stakeholders in review of data, discussion of what the data mean, and consideration for what changes the data may indicate. Participants in the annual assessment retreat are provided with relevant data regarding applicant/candidate qualifications, candidate proficiencies, graduates’ competence, and program operations and quality. They are also provided with a template for the Annual Program Report that includes questions related to candidate proficiencies, program operations, and the assessment system. For example, in the section on Candidate Proficiencies, faculty and stakeholders are asked to consider: “What do the summarized key assessment, exit survey, and graduate follow-up survey data sets show about candidate performance on each standard that was assessed? Please address each program standard separately by providing a brief analysis of the data findings; and
interpretation of how those data provide evidence for meeting the standards.” Then they are asked to consider the action implications of those data: What specific short-term actions will be taken during the following academic year in order to improve candidate performance? What are long-term action implications? Please specify tasks and timelines for planned actions.” The completed Annual Program Reports are reviewed and monitored by respective program coordinators, the Division Chair, and the division’s Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment.

Throughout the year, multiple committees review teacher candidates’ performance. The Division of Education Assessment Review Committee meets twice a semester to review all teacher candidate performance data reports from LiveText and presents findings to Faculty Council for the purpose of program improvement. They also make recommendations to the Advisory Committee and to the Curriculum Committee, as needed. The Division of Education Curriculum Committee meets twice a semester to consider programmatic improvements related to curriculum based on analysis of data provided through the LiveText system. An ongoing audit of all course syllabi, with particular focus on course outcomes and assessments aligned with GaPSC professional and content standards is a central task of the committee. Before any changes in programs become final, such as adding a new course, deleting existing courses, or amending program admission requirements they must go through the Division and University Governance Structure.

The Field Experience Committee evaluates all aspects of operations related to field and clinical experiences. The Coordinator of Field Experience oversees the collection of evaluation data of the field/clinical experience trial. Each participant; the teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and university supervisor evaluate one another. The Field Experience Committee uses these data, along with teacher candidate data reports from LiveText, to determine the appropriate changes needed to field and clinical experiences.

The unit’s assessment system includes a strong component focused on faculty quality that involves both university and unit level assessment. Thomas University systematically completes a comprehensive evaluation process of full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty with the goal of continuous improvement. The formal evaluation process requires faculty to annually submit a Self-Reflective Profile demonstrating teaching effectiveness, scholarship/professional development, and service activities. During fall and spring semesters and summer term, student evaluations of all full and part-time faculty members are administered by the university’s Office of Institutional Assessment. Results of student evaluations are analyzed and course summaries are distributed to the faculty and Division Chairs as aggregated and disaggregated data after each semester ends. If a faculty member is evaluated as not meeting expectations in one of the performance areas of Teaching Excellence, Scholarly and Professional Involvement and Achievement, or Service to Student Body, University, and Wider Community, the Division Chair develops a corrective action plan in discussion with the faculty member to which he/she agrees. Action plans typically align the faculty member with a university support person such as the Academic Technology Specialist, a senior academic advisor, or a peer mentor to meet regularly with the faculty member to address areas of improvement needed. Action plans require statement of measurable changes in behavior or productivity and these targets are addressed by the faculty member with the support person and progress is closely supervised by the Division Chair over the following academic year. Progress is formally evaluated in the next year’s annual
evaluation. Additionally, faculty who supervise field and clinical experiences are evaluated by both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate.

2c.2 Describe plans to give faculty members access to candidate assessment data and/or data systems.

Faculty have constant access to aggregated teacher candidate performance data analyzed through the LiveText through each faculty account. The system allows disaggregation by various variables, a critical feature to support ongoing program improvement. Program-level data collected and analyzed are shared at regular meeting times with various division governance structures: Administrative Council, Faculty Council, Assessment Review Committee, and the Advisory Committee, several of which involve PK-12 school partners and Division of Arts and Science faculty.

Each May an assessment retreat is held that involves all program faculty together with program stakeholders in review of data, discussion of what the data mean, and consideration for what changes the data may indicate. Participants in the annual assessment retreat are provided with relevant data regarding applicant/candidate qualifications, candidate proficiencies, graduates’ competence, and program operations and quality. They are also provided with a template for the Annual Program Report that includes questions related to candidate proficiencies, program operations, and the assessment system. For example, in the section on Candidate Proficiencies, faculty and stakeholders are asked to consider: “What do the summarized key assessment, exit survey, and graduate follow-up survey data sets show about candidate performance on each standard that was assessed? Please address each program standard separately by providing a brief analysis of the data findings; and interpretation of how those data provide evidence for meeting the standards.” Then they are asked to consider the action implications of those data: What specific short-term actions will be taken during the following academic year in order to improve candidate performance? What are long-term action implications? Please specify tasks and timelines for planned actions.” The completed Annual Program Reports are reviewed and monitored by respective program coordinators, the Division Chair, and the division’s Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment.

2c.3 Describe plans to share assessment data with candidates, faculty, and other stakeholders to help them reflect on and improve their performance and programs.

The unit’s assessment system has program/unit improvement at its core. Assessment data are shared with candidates, faculty, and other stakeholders in many ways. All individual candidate performance data submitted through the LiveText system is immediately available to the candidate once the assessment is complete. This feature allows candidates to receive immediate feedback, reflect on the feedback, and improve their performance. Throughout all programs in the unit the teacher candidate is required to reflect and improve practice from entry through induction. For example, during field experiences and student teaching in all programs the teacher candidate is required to record lessons for analysis and reflection. Faculty provide ongoing feedback and mentor each candidate in ways that support and encourage professional and personal growth.
Faculty have constant access to aggregated teacher candidate performance data analyzed through the LiveText system is available to faculty through each faculty account. The system allows disaggregation by various variables, a critical feature to support ongoing program improvement. Program-level data collected and analyzed are shared with various division governance structures: Administrative Council, Faculty Council, Assessment Review Committee, and the Advisory Committee, several of which involve PK-12 school partners and Division of Arts and Science faculty. Each May an assessment retreat is held where faculty receive data reports tables. Advisory members participate with faculty in the May assessment retreat.

There are established processes through which faculty continuously use data to reflect on and improve their own practice. Course evaluations completed by candidates serve as an important source of data for the annual evaluation as do peer evaluations. Faculty work with their mentors, peers, and the Division Chair to reflect on their performance and to develop ways to improve their teaching, scholarship, and service.

Standard 3. Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

3a.1. Who are the unit’s partners in the design, delivery, and evaluation of the unit’s field and clinical experience?

The unit, in cooperation with its partner school districts and the unit’s Advisory Board Committee; designs, delivers and evaluates field experiences and clinical practices to help the teacher candidate develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in the unit’s Conceptual Framework and in State and Professional Standards.

The field experiences are designed to allow the teacher candidate to apply the theory learned in division coursework to the classroom setting, providing them the opportunity to practice and improve as they progress through their teacher education programs.

The unit partners with 41 schools from 12 school districts in Southwest Georgia to place teacher candidates in field and clinical experiences. The Partner Schools’ Demographic table provides details regarding the wide diversity of student populations in our partner schools that ensures that the teacher candidate has broad and diverse field and clinical experiences. Of the 41 partner schools, 80% are identified as Title I schools. The economically disadvantaged student population averages 65% in the partner schools. The African American population averages 42%, white 49%, Hispanic 7%, and Asian 1%. The population of students with disabilities ranges from 6% - 37%, averaging 12%. The schools provide services for students through the Early Intervention Program, the ESOL program, and gifted programs. Several of the unit’s partner schools provide services for a significant number of migrant students. These diverse populations make for rich field and clinical placement opportunities for the unit’s teacher candidates.

3a.2 In what ways have the unit’s partners contributed to the design of the unit’s field and clinical experiences, as well as plans for their delivery and evaluation?
The unit works collaboratively with its Advisory Committee and participants in its clinical teacher program to design, deliver, and evaluate the unit’s field and clinical experiences.

**Unit Design**
The unit works with the Advisory Committee and the Field Experience Committee to design and monitor the clinical teacher program. Feedback and suggestions from all partners regarding program design are discussed at monthly faculty meetings in order to make changes that reflect and benefit the unit and partner schools.

The unit is fortunate to have retired teachers and administrators, as well as a district administrator as university supervisors for the clinical program. Their expertise and intimate knowledge of partner schools bring intangible strengths to the unit. They have long established relationships with their respective school districts and, consequently, provide excellent insight and perspective to the unit. The unit’s PK-12 partners in the schools make suggestions for improvements based on their experiences in the schools with the unit’s teacher candidates and university supervisors.

Through the unit’s clinical teacher program, mentor teachers and administrators from partner schools meet twice yearly for training. Feedback from the **Field Experience / Student Teaching Mid-term/ Final Summative Evaluations** and surveys from **mentor teachers, principals, recent graduates, and teacher candidates** are discussed in order to make continuous improvements for field and clinical experiences. University field and clinical supervisors communicate with partner school principals and mentor teachers through frequent school visits, conferencing during pre-planning days and when observing teacher candidates throughout the experience.

**Unit Delivery**
Mentor teachers from our PK-12 partner schools attend the T.U. Clinical Training Program to become knowledgeable of program requirements and receive training on the unit’s evaluation instruments. All evaluation instruments have qualitative rubrics that allow for fairness and reliability among mentor teachers and university supervisors. The unit uses training videos of classroom teachers in order to train mentor teachers and university supervisors to use **systematic observation instruments** and the summative evaluation. Clinical faculty from the unit and PK-12 classrooms independently score the video’s teacher using the summative evaluations and discuss their scoring with the training group. After group discussions, the participants watch a second training video and score the teacher in order to move toward 80% reliability using the observation and evaluation instruments.

**Unit Evaluation**
In the unit’s partner school classrooms, the mentor teacher and university supervisor complete a minimum of four observations of the teacher candidate using the unit’s systematic observation instruments and formative evaluation. The summative evaluation instrument is completed at mid-term and at the end of the experience. The mentor teachers and university supervisors confer to complete the Final Summative Evaluation. Mentor teachers and
teacher candidates complete surveys at the end of the field and clinical experiences to provide the unit with feedback to help the Division make program improvements. All evaluation instruments are aligned with the unit’s conceptual framework and Georgia Professional and Content Standards. Feedback from the surveys and trends identified by the data from the summative evaluations is discussed with program stakeholders in order to address, consider, and make changes indicated by analysis of the data.

3a.3 What are the proposed roles of the unit and its school partners in determining how and where candidates will be placed for field experiences, student teaching, and internships?

Field experience and clinical experience placements are determined by the unit and partner school districts’ personnel, following a planned sequence of division coursework and the field experiences associated with each of the courses. Beginning in Professional Core I, a defined course sequence for Early Childhood Education and Middle Grades Education and Secondary Education provides the candidate with the grade levels required. The field experience sequence defines the types of placement experiences (grade level, exceptionality, SES) required by the Georgia PSC Professional Standards. Along with the field experience classes, selected courses have field components to ensure that the teacher candidate has the required placement experiences. These include EDU316 Methods & Strategies, EDU 320 Exploring Diversity, EDU468 Exceptional Learners, and EDU 340 Assessment strategies to Improve PK-12 Learning. The fields and methods courses provide the teacher candidate with experience planning for and teaching small groups, as well as whole class instruction. Student teaching provides the teacher candidate the opportunity for full immersion into the teaching profession for 15 weeks during Professional Core IV. The unit faculty works with the Field Experience Coordinator and the Field Experience Committee to determine the types of placement recommendations. At the beginning of each semester, the following takes place:

1. On the first day of any class that has a field experience, the professor hands out the T.U. Field Experience Placement Form.
   - The teacher candidate and the professor complete the form.
   - The professor may request a specific school and teacher and add that information to the form.
   - If no request is made, the Field Experience Coordinator, in collaboration with program faculty and district school partners, will select a school and teacher.
   - The professor collects the T.U. Field Experience Placement Forms during the first class period.
   - Collected forms and a course syllabus (digital) are given to the Field Experience Coordinator.

2. The Field Experience Coordinator compiles the information and confirms all clearance requirements have been met (e.g., Professional Liability Insurance, Level II Background Check).
3. The Field Experience Coordinator provides a list for the district’s school personnel.
4. The Field Experience Coordinator secures approval of placement requests from appropriate school personnel. The district will make adjustments to the lists if necessary and send the approved lists back to the Field Experience Office.

5. Final adjustments, if needed, are made. A copy of the professor’s roster is emailed back to the professor and to the School District’s School Board personnel. After the professor receives this “clearance” email, teacher candidates are cleared for their field experience.

3a.4 Describe how the unit and its school partners plan to share expertise and resources to support candidates’ learning in field experiences and clinical practice.

The unit communicates and collaborates with its partner schools’ personnel through frequent school visits, phone calls and emails to keep abreast of school and mentor teachers’ needs and concerns.

Mentor teachers participate in clinical teacher program workshops twice a year to become familiar with and discuss the use of the unit’s observation instruments, discuss program requirements, and provide feedback on the field and clinical experiences. Clinical teachers and university supervisors use training videos for scoring the Field Experience/Student Teaching Summative Evaluation for the purpose of reliability and fairness. After independent scoring, participants discuss their results, then watch the training video and score the teacher’s performance a second time to assure validity and reliability.

The unit provides a copy of the Field Experience Handbook or the Student Teaching Handbook detailing specific policies and requirements of the program to provide mentor teachers and teacher candidates at all levels with the appropriate guidance, directions, forms, and instruments that are needed during classroom experiences. These handbooks are provided for mentor teachers, principals, and district administrators so that all persons involved in the field and clinical experiences are aware of the unit’s policies, expectations, and the responsibilities of each party involved.

The mentor teacher provides guidance and the opportunity for the teacher candidate to put into practice with PK-12 students the theory, methods, and strategies they have acquired in education courses. The mentor teacher models effective classroom, instructional, and management strategies and assistance is given in the implementation of these strategies. The mentor teacher provides constructive criticism for the teacher candidate and helps them reflect on their performance in the classroom. The university supervisor and mentor teacher confer regarding observations, performance, and dispositions of the teacher candidate.

The mentor teacher completes informal, formative evaluations based on classroom observations of the teacher candidate. Summative evaluations are completed at mid-term and at the end of the experience. All evaluation instruments provide qualitative rubrics to assist the evaluators in completing fair, consistent, and unbiased evaluations. The university supervisor confers with the mentor teacher to complete the summative evaluation and submits it to Live Text to be analyzed for trends and ongoing program improvements as indicated by the data.
3 b.1 Describe the proposed entry and exit requirements for clinical practice.

**Entrance Requirements for clinical practice:**
The unit requires that the teacher candidate complete the Application for Student Teaching by the second week of the semester prior to their student teaching semester, and submit it to the Field Experiences Coordinator. The teacher candidate must receive acceptable ratings on all key assessments administered prior to the clinical practice experience. The following criteria must be met to student teach:

- All university coursework must be completed
- 2.5 GPA
- C or above in all education courses
- Acceptable evaluation from previous field experiences on the Field Experience/Student Teaching Mid-term/Final Summative Assessments
- Acceptable evaluation on the Lesson Planning Assessment in Professional Core I and Professional Core III.
- Acceptable evaluation on the Professional Dispositions Assessment
- Clear Criminal background check
- Liability insurance secured and documented

**Exit Requirements for clinical practice:**

- Complete 75 days (15 weeks x 5 days per week x 8 hours per day) or 600 hours of clinical practice.
- Passing score on GACE Content Exam
- Grade of B or higher in clinical practice
- Acceptable evaluation on Field Experience/Student Teaching Mid-term/Final Summative Assessment
- Acceptable evaluation on Electronic Portfolio entries (pedagogy example provided).
- Acceptable evaluation on the Dispositions Assessment
- Acceptable evaluation on the Student Teacher Work Sample

3b.2 Describe the proposed field experiences for each program or categories of programs in initial preparation programs. Describe the proposed required clinical practice for each program or categories of programs in initial preparation programs.

The unit’s field experiences are developmental and sequential in nature for all programs (Early Childhood; Middle Grades; Middle Grades Post Baccalaureate, Secondary English and Mathematics; and Secondary English and Mathematics Post Baccalaureate Programs). Details are outlined in the Early Childhood Education Program Field Experience and Clinical Experience Progression and the Middle Grades/Middle Grade Post Baccalaureate and Secondary/Secondary Post Baccalaureate Program Field Experience and Clinical Experience tables. The education courses taken early in the progression provide the teacher candidate the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge that will be necessary to be successful in field and clinical experiences. The teacher candidate gains knowledge and skills in content
and early methods courses, and has ample opportunity to practice through peer teaching, video-taping the lessons delivered, reflecting on one’s presentations, and receiving feedback from peers. The teacher candidate progresses through the program to practice in the PK-12 partner schools the theory, methods, and strategies learned in unit education courses. Throughout the structured sequence of courses, the teacher candidate is provided support from university faculty and the mentor teacher to become proficient in the art and science of teaching.

The teacher candidate works with a diverse population of peers in age, background, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity in the university setting that helps to prepare the teacher candidate for planning and teaching in the diverse PK-12 classrooms of the unit’s partner schools. The partner schools provide a wide diversity of student populations in ethnicity, race, socioeconomic levels, family structure, and ability levels; 80% of the unit’s partner schools qualify for Title I status. The diverse nature of the partner school settings provide for extensive and rich opportunities for the teacher candidate to develop the dispositions, the knowledge, and the skills necessary to help all PK-12 students learn.

3b.3 Describe how the unit plans to systematically ensure that candidates develop proficiencies outlined in the unit’s conceptual framework, state standards, and professional standards through field and clinical experiences in initial preparation programs.

A developmental sequence of field and clinical experiences for Early Childhood Education and Middle Grades/Middle Grade Post Baccalaureate and Secondary/Secondary Post Baccalaureate is focused on the development of the teacher candidate’s target behaviors for pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions. The key assessments table details how the seven assessment instruments are used to demonstrate the proficiencies outlined in the unit’s conceptual framework, state standards, and professional standards.

3b.4 Describe how the unit plans to systematically ensure that the teacher candidate uses technology as an instructional tool during field experiences and clinical practice.

The unit systematically ensures that candidates use technology as an instructional tool during field experiences and clinical practice as evidenced through multiple assessments and can be found in the chart entitled Key Assessments for Technology Knowledge and Application.

3b.5 Describe the criteria that the unit will use in the selection of school-based clinical faculty. Describe how the unit will ensure implementation of the criteria. Describe the evidence that the unit plans to ensure that school-based clinical faculty members are accomplished school professionals.

In collaboration with partner school districts in Southwest Georgia, the unit uses the following criteria in the selection of school-based clinical faculty:
- 3 years teaching experience.
- Certification in the grade level/subject placement.
- Recommendation by school principal.

The district personal responsible for the placement of teacher candidates in field experience and clinical teaching will certify that the school-based clinical faculty selected by the school principal meets each of these criteria.

The Division of Education’s clinical teacher program is a planned, concentrated, ongoing process to identify and train its school based PK-12 faculty within the structure of a collegial partnership. University faculty, school based faculty, and district administrators participate to share in the design, training, and evaluation of the clinical teacher program. The clinical teacher program provides the structure and opportunity for the unit to work closely with PK-12 partners to discuss, design, advise, and train on the key assessments used in field and clinical experiences. The unit will ensure school based clinical faculty are familiar with clinical teacher program policies and instruments through ongoing training provided by the unit twice a year and by orientations at district locations twice a year.

**3b.6 Describe how the unit will prepare, or train, school-based faculty members for their roles as clinical supervisors.**

The unit prepares or trains its school based faculty members for their roles as clinical supervisors through participation in its clinical teacher program. The clinical teacher program is a planned, structured, on-going program to identify and train its school based faculty to be partners with the university supervisors and unit faculty in the supervision of its student teachers. The unit provides two meetings annually during which time participants use training videos to practice scoring evaluation instruments to ensure reliability and lack of bias. The twice yearly meetings provide an opportunity for district administrators and school based faculty to provide feedback on new initiatives, share district and partner school needs, resolve programmatic issues and concerns in a collegial manner; and to discuss, design, revise, and provide on-going evaluation for the clinical teacher program. The clinical teaching training is provided twice a year in order to continually bring new school based faculty into the program.

In addition to the twice yearly clinical teacher program meetings, the unit provides after school orientation sessions each semester as needed for partner schools at multiple sites in the 11 school districts across the large geographic region served by the unit’s programs. The orientation sessions are directed by the unit’s field coordinator. University supervisors and trained school-based faculty participate in the orientation: updating information; explaining the roles and responsibilities of mentors, candidates, and university supervisors; and training new clinical teacher program participants in the use of the unit’s key assessments.

The unit provides the clinical supervisor with a copy of the Field Experience Handbook or the Student Teaching Handbook at the clinical teacher training meetings and at the partner school orientation meetings after school. Digital copies of the handbooks are available online so that all participants in the clinical teacher program have access to the roles and
responsibilities of each party, and to all forms needed during the field and/or student teaching experience.

3b.7 Describe the proposed evidence that the unit will use to demonstrate that clinical faculty members provide regular and continuous support for student teachers.

The unit ensures that clinical faculty members provide regular and continuous support for field experience students and student teachers by providing training, orientation, and copies of the Field Experience Handbook or the Student Teaching Handbook that clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of each party.

The unit requires mentor teachers to observe and document teacher candidate performance and proficiencies regularly throughout the clinical experience using the Field/Clinical Experiences Formative Evaluation and the Field/Clinical Mid-term/Final Summative Evaluation.

The mentor teacher provides ongoing feedback by conferencing with teacher candidate throughout the student teaching experience. The university supervisor maintains close contact with the mentor teacher through frequent conferencing when visiting partner schools to observe the teacher candidate. Opportunities for additional conferencing are readily available upon mentor teacher request as needed to share concerns, monitor progress, and provide support for the teacher candidate.

Each member of the triad completes an evaluation of the other members of the partnership at the end of the semester. The following chart shows the partners and surveys completed by each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Teacher Candidate</th>
<th>Mentor Teacher</th>
<th>University Supervisor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Candidate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor Teacher</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Supervisor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Survey information is used by the unit to determine the quality of support provided for the student teacher and the mentor teacher, as well as the quality of the working relationship among all partners. Survey results are entered in Live Text and analyzed for trends and improvements needed as indicated by the data.

3c.1 Describe the proposed roles for candidates, university/agency supervisors, and school-based faculty in assessing candidate performance and reviewing the results during clinical practice.

The university supervisor, partner school-based faculty, and teacher candidate each has a role in assessing the teacher candidate’s performance and reviewing the results during clinical practice. The Student Teaching Handbook clearly delineates each party’s role and responsibility. Roles for teacher candidates, university supervisors, and school-based faculty in assessing candidate performance and reviewing the results during clinical practice are
detailed in The Roles for the Teacher Candidate, University Supervisor, and School-based Faculty table.

3c.2 Describe how time for reflection and feedback from peers and clinical faculty will be incorporated into field experiences and clinical practice.

The teacher candidate is provided extensive opportunities to engage in a reflective cycle of ‘plan, teach, reflect, and receive feedback’ during field experiences and clinical practice. The teacher candidate observes the mentor teacher and other teacher candidates throughout the field and clinical experiences using systematic observation instruments, reflects in journals, and discusses observations with those observed. The teacher candidate uses video in order to view, critique, and reflect on specific aspects of their teaching and interaction with students. Teacher candidates work with a partner to assist each other with the videotape assignments, providing feedback and critiques to encourage growth and confidence. By analyzing videos of one’s teaching and that of peers and mentors, the teacher candidate identifies appropriate strategies, behaviors, and interactions with students. Teacher candidate uses this reflective cycle throughout the field and clinical experiences to gain valuable insight into his/her teaching and to take advantage of the opportunities for continued growth that occur in the classroom. The mentor teacher conferences with the teacher candidate on a daily basis, using Systematic Observation Instruments, the Lesson Plan Format and Rubric, the Field Experience/Student Teaching Formative Assessment, the Field Experience/Student Teaching Mid-term/Final Summative Assessment and reflective questioning to guide the teacher candidate in analysis of lessons taught.

During the clinical experience, the mentor teacher provides guidance to the teacher candidate through the Student Teacher Work Sample, assisting with contextual information and interpreting student performance data. Daily and weekly journal reflections about classroom experiences, observations of peers and mentors, and interactions with students, encourage growth and understanding of the art and science of teaching.

The university supervisor confers with the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate, and provides guidance for the teacher candidate through observations, feedback, and reflective questioning techniques. Support for both the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher is offered by the university supervisor throughout the experience, providing encouragement and necessary critical feedback to help the teacher candidate grow and develop. The seminar portion of the student teaching course allows for the sharing of experiences that promotes self-improvement and growth as a professional. The seminar also provides the opportunity for teacher candidates to participate with colleagues in discussions of issues in education.

3c.3 Describe how data from multiple assessments will provide evidence that candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping all students learn in field experiences and clinical practice.

The knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions of the teacher candidate are continually
assessed at **transition points** throughout the program. The fields are sequential with increased expectations and level of mastery expected with each successive field experience. The field courses offer the teacher candidate the opportunity to put into practice the academic knowledge they are acquiring in methods courses. It is in fields and clinical practice that the teacher candidate connects what they learn in academic courses with teaching PK-12 learners. Student teaching provides a comprehensive and culminating clinical practice experience while continuing to focus on teacher candidate learning. Mentor teachers and university supervisors use the key assessments with their respective qualitative analytic rubrics at each transition point to evaluate teacher candidate performance and progress. Key assessments are aligned with the unit’s conceptual framework and with GA Professional and Program Standards; each individual instrument specifically assesses the teacher candidate’s proficiency in content knowledge, professional and pedagogical skills, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, and dispositions. The teacher candidate is assessed on the elements that require attention to differentiation and diversity in order to help all PK-12 students learn. **The Target Behaviors for Diversity Key Assessments Table** indicates target behaviors on key assessments that provide evidence that candidates demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions for helping all students learn. Data is aggregated and disaggregated to allow the unit to analyze the data for individual candidate performance, and to look across the program for trends and areas that need improvement as indicated by the data. Professional Development Plans are designed collaboratively by the teacher candidate’s advisor and the university supervisor, with input from the mentor teacher, to address areas that need improvement.

**3c.4 Describe the proposed processes that will be used to ensure that candidates collect and analyze data on student learning, reflect on those data, and improve student learning during clinical practice.**

The teacher candidate must be aware of their students’ progress in order to effectively move them forward in their learning. To this end, the unit provides frequent opportunities for the teacher candidate to analyze student learning, use assessment data to guide planning, and to provide remediation to increase student learning. The clinical practice experience offers a comprehensive, documented opportunity for the teacher candidate to analyze and plan for improvement of student learning, the **Student Teaching Work Sample**.

The teacher candidate completes the Student Teaching Work Sample during clinical practice, and it is assessed using the **Student Teaching Work Sample Assessment** (STWS). The STWS is a comprehensive, structured action research project aligned with the unit’s conceptual framework and GA Professional and Program Standards. The STWS focuses the teacher candidate’s attention on student learning, requiring teacher candidates to align their goals and objectives with what they are teaching and with how they assess the learning. To familiarize themselves with their students’ educational needs, the teacher candidate gathers contextual information on relevant characteristics of the students in their classroom. The teacher candidate creates an assessment plan including pre-assessments, plans for instruction, instruction and formative assessments, re-teaching as needed, post-assessments, analysis of student data, and reflections suggesting further changes to increase their students’ learning. The **Student Work Sample** offers an opportunity for teacher candidates to apply what they
have learned in their coursework to their classroom, connecting academics with practice while under the supervision of their mentor teacher.

In addition to the Student Teaching Work Sample, the mentor teacher and university supervisor use the Field/Clinical Experiences Formative Evaluation and the Field Experiences/Clinical Experiences Midterm/Final Summative Assessment instruments to evaluate how well the teacher candidate uses assessment to guide their planning in their clinical experience.

3c.5 Describe how the unit will ensure that all candidates have field experiences or clinical practice that includes students with exceptionalities and students from diverse ethnic/racial, Linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

The unit partners with 41 schools from 12 school districts in Southwest Georgia to place teacher candidates in field and clinical experiences. The Partner School Demographics table provides details regarding the wide diversity of student populations among the unit’s partner schools that ensure that the teacher candidate has broad and diverse field and clinical experiences. Of the 41 partner schools, 80% are identified as Title I schools. The schools serve an average of 65% economically disadvantaged students, with 5 schools having an economically disadvantaged population of over 90%. The African American population averages 42%, white 49%, Hispanic 7%, and Asian 1%. The population of students with disabilities ranges from 6% - 37%. In addition, the schools provide services for students through the Early Intervention Program, ESOL program, Migrant Student Program, and gifted programs. These diverse populations make for rich field and clinical placement opportunities for the unit’s teacher candidates. The unit works with its partner school districts to determine the placement settings that are most appropriate for teacher candidate development.

Along with the field experience classes, other selected courses have field components to ensure that the teacher candidate has the required placement experiences. These include EDU316 Methods & Strategies, EDU 320 Exploring Diversity, EDU468 Exceptional Learners, and EDU 340 Assessment Strategies to Improve PK-12 Learning. The unit and partners have determined the sequence of field course outcomes and specified schools deemed appropriate for field experiences as a result of student populations being sought. The unit’s planned sequential progression of field and clinical experiences, described in detail on the Early Childhood Education Program Field/Clinical Progression and the Middle Grades/ Middle Grades Education/ Post Baccalaureate and Secondary/Secondary Post Baccalaureate Program Field/Clinical Progression tables, is designed to provide the teacher candidate experiences with students with exceptionalities and students from diverse ethnic/racial, Linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

Standard 4. Diversity

4a.1. Describe the proficiencies related to diversity that candidates are expected to develop and demonstrate.
Diversity is one of the nine components of the Conceptual Framework. Our vision, our mission and other key elements of our conceptual framework reflect our commitment to support the learning of all students. The diversity curriculum and experiences are guided by the beliefs described in our Conceptual Framework.

The teacher candidate will develop and demonstrate the following proficiencies:
- Demonstrate the ability to listen and be respectful of divergent viewpoints.
- Demonstrate behaviors that are consistent with the belief that all students can learn.
- Create lesson plans which indicate a respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Create lesson plans for individual needs, abilities, and interests.
- Modify instruction to create student-centered classroom environments that respects, values, and meets the needs of all students.
- Develop habits of reflection that will lead to a deeper understanding of diversity in the classroom in order to improve learning for all students.

The unit uses multiple key assessments to evaluate the teacher candidate on proficiencies relating to diversity during Core I, II, and III courses and in field and clinical experiences. The teacher candidate builds their knowledge base about diversities in the following classes: EDU200 Introduction to Education, EDU468 Exceptional Learners, EDU320 Exploring Diversity: Influences and Issues in Educational Settings, and EDU316 Methods & Strategies. Each course offers opportunities for reading, discussions, presentations; and research about relevant laws, requirements and teaching strategies. As a result of this knowledge base, the teacher candidate progresses from awareness and valuing diversity to developing the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to adapt instruction and/or services for diverse populations, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities. The teacher candidate is provided many opportunities to develop and present lessons that include all learners. Differentiated instruction is a requirement in all lesson plan development. Modifications, enrichment opportunities, assessments of student learning, and strategies for remediation are developed and reflected in future lessons.

4a.2. Describe the required coursework and experiences that will enable teacher candidates and candidates for other school professional roles to develop:

- Awareness of the importance of diversity in teaching and learning.
- Knowledge, skills and professional dispositions to adapt instruction and/or services for diverse populations, including linguistically and culturally diverse students and students with exceptionalities.

The unit has a planned sequence of coursework and field experiences in ECE and MGE/SEC that provide the teacher candidate with the content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and opportunities to develop appropriate professional dispositions to appreciate, be sensitive to, and adapt instruction for diverse learners. All unit courses encourage respect for all learners and strategies for including all students. The Diversity Outcomes X Course X Key Assessment Table indicates how the outcomes, which are the focus of this question, are aligned with unit courses and key assessments.
4b.1 Describe the proposed opportunities for candidates (including candidates at off campus sites and or in distant learning preparation programs) to interact with higher education and /or school based faculty from diverse groups.

Although Thomas University faculty are a somewhat homogeneous group, our candidates are presented with the opportunity to interact with individuals from diverse ethnic, racial, and gender groups through various activities that occur in classrooms and university programs. Thomas University is located in Thomasville, Georgia; a small city in Southwest Georgia, located just 35 miles north of Tallahassee, 45 miles west of Valdosta, GA, and 65 miles south of Albany, GA. Being somewhat isolated from large metropolitan areas, Thomas University provides numerous opportunities for the teacher candidate to interact with professionals from diverse groups. T.U. partners with the Thomasville Center for the Arts to provide dramatic presentations, art exhibits, and music programs to local school groups; in addition to bringing a plethora of diverse cultural experiences to the community. T.U. candidates are encouraged to attend the Fridays at Noon and the Sundays at 4:00 music programs offered by the T.U. Arts Division in collaboration with the Thomasville Center for the Arts. T.U. teacher candidates attend programs at the Thomasville Center for the Arts with their assigned classrooms. Each presentation offers its own unique approach, including diverse performers and artists from around the region. All Thomas University students are encouraged to take advantage of the Center’s programs.

Division classes invite men and women of all ages from various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and experiences to speak with teacher candidates. Distinguished professors, authors, and illustrators, Creek and Cherokee tribal officials, a young autistic woman, and T.U. program completers in their first year of teaching have been among those providing enrichment to the teacher candidate’s experience with diverse peoples. The guest speakers provide insight into a myriad of issues in education today, and help them to understand the value of culturally-responsive teaching.

Classroom field placements are carefully made to offer the teacher candidate an opportunity to be mentored by highly qualified teachers from diverse backgrounds and varied ages and, when possible, from a minority group. The classroom placements reflect the composition of our schools and region. Classroom placements provide experience for teaching in inclusion classrooms, helping the teacher candidate respect and value all students, and develop the disposition that all PK-12 students can learn. The unit works with our partner schools and district administrators to provide placements and opportunities for the teacher candidate to interact with faculty from diverse groups.

While in the program, the teacher candidate is required to attend at least one local, district, state or national level conference, such as GAE or NAE, or a district level workshop in order to interact as a professional and to learn about education issues, laws, and initiatives from state and national educational leaders of diverse backgrounds. Students who are unable to attend a conference for extenuating personal reasons are provided a series of recordings from various educational conferences to watch and reflect on to meet this requirement.

4b.2. Describe the knowledge and experiences expected of faculty related to preparing
Faculty in the Division of Education and Division of Arts & Sciences bring their knowledge and experiences of diverse school settings and students to each course they teach. Faculty members are eager to share their knowledge and background experience to enrich and prepare the teacher candidate to work with students from diverse groups. Faculty member in both units have either a Masters or Doctorate degree in their area of specialization.

Faculty who teach the teacher candidate are provided workshop opportunities to become knowledgeable about the GA Professional and Program Standards that must be addressed by every course offered to the teacher candidate. Faculty in the Division of Arts & Sciences and Education work together to align all required and specialization course syllabi with the GA Professional and Program Standards.

Division faculty have diverse experiences with the educational system, from the classroom to school administration and district administration level. Division faculty have earned certificates and endorsements in exceptional learners, gifted education, reading, and administration; each having recent experiences, or currently working, with the appropriate grade levels or specializations.

Thomas University requires Division of Education faculty to be experienced educators with documented years of excellence in their teaching career and to hold a Masters or Doctorate degree. Division faculty are held to the same professional dispositions as the teacher candidate. Respect for fairness and belief that all students can learn is modeled by faculty. Division faculty are expected to exhibit energy and enthusiasm for their particular field and education in general. Life-long learning and use of technology, including assistive technology, are encouraged for instructors as well as skills to be taught to the teacher candidate. Division faculty provide the teacher candidate a variety of strategies for teaching diverse learners and all PK-12 students. Unit faculty are expected to share their knowledge and diverse experiences to enable the teacher candidate to grow in understanding and appreciation of diversity.

4b.3 Describe the demographics of faculty who will work with education candidates.

The Faculty Demographics table provides details regarding the diversity composition of the faculty who work with education candidates.

4b.4 Describe efforts the institution/agency will make to recruit and retain diverse faculty.

Thomas University (T.U.) seeks out faculty members who demonstrate the diverse representation of the most highly qualified educators in their field of expertise. Advertisements for positions are posted as a matter of practice in the Chronicle of Higher Education, HigherEdJobs.com, on the T.U. website, and in regional newspapers. To enhance recruitment of diverse faculty, we pay an additional cost with all position listings in HigherEdJobs.com to be included in their Affirmative Action listing as well, which is sent weekly to 171,004 job seekers and features job postings from colleges and universities that
are actively recruiting candidates in accordance with affirmative action or diversity plans. Retention of faculty is encouraged by the supportive atmosphere of the administration, collegial peer relationships across disciplines and with staff, an expectation of participation in the shared governance model, conscious fostering of a community of caring for all members of the campus community, and openness and encouragement of new ideas and diverse approaches to the work of the institution. All full-time faculty participate in a New Faculty Orientation and receive mentoring support specific to the assignments they are given in their first year at T.U. The administration encourages and financially supports professional development opportunities and the faculty’s diverse professional interests.

Campus events and student activities are respectful and/or celebrate the diversity of students, faculty, and staff in terms of ethnicity, heritage, religion, and sexual orientation. The university’s Diversity Statement (approved by the Board of Trustees and printed in the Catalog) extends our expression of our non-discrimination policy to specifically value diversity in our campus community.

The President and Provost make an increase in the salary pool an annual priority for approval by the Board of Trustees as the next year’s budget is considered. The University offers generous health benefits, including major medical, dental, and vision insurance, life insurance, long term disability, and retirement plans. Initial salaries are competitive within the region and show consideration for attracting diverse candidates in particular as budgets allow.

4c.1. Describe proposed opportunities candidates (including candidates at off-campus sites and/or in distance learning preparation programs) will have to interact with candidates from diverse groups.

The teacher candidate interacts and works with candidates from diverse ethnic, racial, and gender groups in professional education courses on campus and in PK-12 schools. Thomas University’s (T.U.) student demographics reflect the ethnic diversity of the elementary and secondary students of the surrounding region. Approximately 35% of education majors are African-American and 1% Hispanic, mirroring the percentage of the university’s student body as a whole. T.U. also has a large population of nontraditional age students, as well as students who represent the first members of their families to attend college. These teacher candidates provide a dimension to class interactions and discussions that enriches both the traditional student and the nontraditional student.

Teacher candidates from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups work together on committees and education projects related to education and content areas. Professional preparation classes are interactive, utilizing a variety of small peer group activities, many of which include assignments related to field experiences. The nature of these experiences facilitates the interaction of candidates from diverse groups. Thomas University has small classes that frequently provide for cooperative learning opportunities and open classroom discussions. These small group open discussions provide meaningful opportunities for rich, philosophical discussions that lead to increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the way in which diverse groups live and learn.
The university recruits students from around the world. These international students are frequently invited to speak in classes to encourage the teacher candidate to compare and contrast beliefs, customs, and governmental policies as they relate to education. Many of the schools used by Thomas University for teacher candidate placement are also used by Valdosta State University and South West Georgia Technical College. Efforts are under way to provide for interaction among teacher candidates from these institutions to enable them to collaborate and provide support for one another.

4c.2. Describe institution/agency and unit efforts to recruit and retain diverse candidates.

The Division of Education is committed to the recruitment and retention of a diverse student population as is called for in our Thomas University Diversity Statement. Recruitment efforts at the university level further the goal of recruiting and retaining diverse candidates. Frequent visits are made to area schools to offer information about Thomas University (T.U.) and the programs available. Students from area schools are invited to “Campus Day” to tour our campus, and meet with student leaders and faculty. Many of these students represent minority populations. The Office of Financial Aid helps students apply for a variety of scholarships and financial aid options. Our athletic teams offer opportunities to recruit culturally diverse students from around the world.

In recent years, T.U. has made significant strides in addressing diversity. Attention is being directed to the climate of the campus, the composition of the constituency, and the nature of the global society in which graduates will live.

One of the unique characteristics of T.U. is the nontraditional student population. In addition to nontraditional aged students (we have teacher candidates between the ages of 20-55 years) many of our teacher candidates represent the first member in their family to attend college. Many of our nontraditional students are employed full time and must balance work, family, and school. In order to recruit and retain these nontraditional students, we offer both day and evening classes.

Academic support is available through the following student services: Academic Resource Center (ARC) which provides group and individual tutoring on-campus and online via email and web-conferencing; primarily for math, writing, and research support for all T.U. students; and Student Support Services (SSS) which provides academic tutoring services and mentoring through the federally-funded TRiO grant for first-generation, low-income, and/or disabled students. Accommodations for students with disabilities are provided by the Office of Disabilities Service and information about receiving disabilities services is included on all university syllabi; this includes accommodations for access as well as for learning support. Thomas University provides free counseling services for students by referral in coordination with the Archbold Medical Center Student Assistance Program. Thomas University has one of the highest retention rates in the country and has been nationally recognized as evidenced in this article http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/10/colleges-with-the-highest_2_n_820990.html#s236902&title=Thomas_University_100
4d.1. Describe how the unit will ensure that candidates develop and practice knowledge, skills and professional dispositions related to diversity during their field experiences and clinical practice.

The unit, in cooperation with its partner school districts ensures that the teacher candidate develops and practices the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions related to diversity. The teacher candidate participates in diverse partner school settings for their field experiences and clinical practice.

The teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate behaviors that are consistent with the belief that all PK-12 students of diverse backgrounds, cultures, ethnicity, race, ability, and socioeconomic levels can learn. During the Professional Core II and III, the teacher candidate takes EDU 320, Understanding Diversity, and EDU 468, Exceptional Learners. Both courses emphasize the diverse population of learners in Pk-12 schools, and prepare the teacher candidate to plan lessons and develop appropriate strategies to help all PK-12 students learn. This particular disposition is critical to the development of beginning teachers who are charged with helping all students learn.

The unit partners with 41 schools from 12 school districts in Southwest Georgia to place teacher candidates in field and clinical experiences. The schools provide a wide diversity of student populations to ensure that the teacher candidate has broad and diverse field and clinical experiences. The Thomas University Partner Schools spreadsheet provides demographic and diversity information regarding the unit’s partner schools. Of the 41 partner schools, 33 (80%) are identified as Title I schools. The schools serve an average of 65% economically disadvantaged students. The African American population averages 42%, white 49%, Hispanic 7%, and Asian 1%. In the partner schools, the population of students with disabilities ranges from 6% - 37%, with an overall average of 12%. Several of the unit’s partner schools serve migrant student populations and ESOL populations, as well as gifted learners. Partner schools provide services for students with disabilities and exceptional learners in inclusion settings. The Early Intervention Program provides needed services for qualifying students. These diverse populations make for rich field and clinical placement opportunities for the teacher candidate to develop and practice in the classroom setting the skills and knowledge studied in the unit’s methods and content courses.

Key Assessments are used throughout the program to ensure that the teacher candidate is developing the necessary dispositions, knowledge, and skills relating to diversity to effectively teach all PK-12 students. All assessment instruments use a qualitative analytic rubric so the data can be aggregated and disaggregated to identify individual teacher candidate performance or to look for trends across the program. Diversity assessment information can be found in the Key Assessments for Diversity table.

4.d.2. Describe the diversity of the P-12 students in the proposed settings in which candidates will participate in field experiences and clinical practice. Please complete Table 7 or insert a hyperlink to your own table at prompt 4d.4 (although GAPSC encourages institutions to report the data available by school. If the unit uses more than 20 schools for clinical practice, school district data may be substituted for school data in
The unit partners with 41 schools from 12 school districts in Southwest Georgia to place teacher candidates in field and clinical experiences. The schools provide a wide diversity of student populations that ensure the unit teacher candidates have broad and diverse field and clinical experiences. The partner schools represent urban and rural schools, both large and small in size. The Thomas University Partner Schools spreadsheet provides demographic and diversity information regarding the unit’s partner schools. Of the 41 partner schools, 33 (81%) are identified as Title I schools. Thirty four of the 41 (83%) of the unit’s partner schools met their AYP goals for the school year 2008-2009. The schools serve an average of 65% economically disadvantaged students, with 5 schools’ population over 90%. In 39% of the schools, over 50% of the population is minorities. The African American population averages 42%, white 49%, Hispanic 7%, and Asian 1%. The population of students with disabilities ranges from 6% - 37%, with an overall average of 12%. In addition, some of the unit’s partner schools serve migrant student populations, and ESOL populations, as well as gifted learners. Partner schools provide services for students with disabilities and exceptional learners in inclusion settings. The Early Intervention Program provides needed services for qualifying students. These diverse populations make for rich field and clinical placement opportunities for the teacher candidate to develop and practice in the classroom setting the skills and knowledge studied in the unit’s methods and content courses.

4d.3. Describe how the unit will ensure that candidates use feedback from peers and supervisors to reflect on their skills working with students from diverse groups.

The unit ensures the teacher candidate receives feedback from peers and supervisors in all fields, and requires the teacher candidate to use this feedback to reflect on their skills working with students from diverse groups. In Professional Core I courses, the teacher candidate participates in peer teaching and reviews using scenarios that replicate diversity placements and situations. Peers provide feedback that helps the teacher candidate to evaluate and improve these skills. In early field experiences, the teacher candidate works with other candidates to observe and critique each other using various Systematic Observation Instruments that target specific behaviors while working with diverse student populations. The teacher candidate uses video to record their interactions with groups of students, and works with a partner to critique the interactions. The teacher candidate receives ongoing feedback from the field supervisor and the mentor teacher in the form of written observations using the Field Experience/Clinical Experience Formative Assessment. Additionally, twice during each field experience and clinical practice the university supervisor collaborates with the mentor teacher to provide the teacher candidate feedback using the key assessment, Field Experience/Clinical Experience Mid-term/Final Summative Assessment.

The teacher candidate is expected to plan and implement lessons for all learners as they progress through the program using feedback from peers and supervisors. The Lesson Plan Assessment is used to evaluate how effectively the teacher candidate plans with diversity in mind. The teacher candidate conferences with the mentor teacher and university supervisor...
regarding lesson plans. Lesson plans are peer reviewed in class using the Lesson Plan Assessment.

The unit’s Professional Dispositions Assessment is presented and used as a self-assessment and as an opportunity for division faculty to assess the teacher candidate each semester in education classes. In addition, the teacher candidate keeps a journal to reflect upon their skills working with students from diverse groups, and sets goals for improvement as needed.

**Standard 5. Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development**

5a.1. Table 8 is linked at 5a.5.

5a.2. **Describe the expertise that qualifies professional education faculty members who do not hold terminal degrees for their assignments.**

Those without terminal degrees have rich experiential backgrounds and have demonstrated competency for their Thomas University assignments.

5a.3. **Describe how the unit will ensure that school-based faculty members are certified in the areas they teach or are supervising.**

The Division of Education collaborates with 12 school districts in selecting the PK-12 teachers who serve as mentors for teacher candidates. Requests for placements are made to the district-level administrator in charge of placement for field and clinical experiences, who verifies that selected teachers are certified in the content and grade level they teach and are supervising. All PK-12 mentor teachers have been certified/licensed by the state of Georgia in assigned teaching areas and are considered to be a highly qualified teacher as defined by the “No Child Left Behind” federal legislation.

5a.4. **Describe acceptable contemporary professional experiences in school settings expected of higher education clinical faculty members.**

All full-time faculty are required to maintain recent experience in PK-12 schools through annual participation as a member of a school advisory council, ongoing tutoring of a PK-12 student, or by teaching in the PK-12 setting at least once a year. Most full time faculty are involved in either a field-based methods experience or student teacher supervision, which provides them opportunities to keep up-to-date with current classroom practices. Several serve on school boards, on state assessment advisory committees, mentor/tutor PK-12 students, and otherwise continue to be involved with PK-12 students. All of the division’s part-time clinical faculty possess a wealth of recent PK-12 teaching and administrative experience.

5a.5. Table 8 linked
5b. Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching

5b.1. Describe how the unit will ensure that professional education faculty teaching reflects the conceptual framework as well as current research and developments in the field.

The unit will ensure that professional education faculty teaching reflects the conceptual framework as well as current research and developments in the field through the systematic assessment of course evaluations completed by teacher candidates each semester and through the use of peer evaluations annually. The Unit’s conceptual framework forms the foundation for teaching by professional education faculty members. All course syllabi have objectives linked to the conceptual framework and the PSC professional standards. All course syllabi are reviewed each semester by the Division Chair for current research and development in the field before being submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Operations. Additionally, the Education Division Curriculum Committee meets twice a semester to review existing course syllabi for alignment of course outcomes with course assignments and evaluation measures, alignment with the Division conceptual framework and PSC content standards, and incorporation of current research and developments in the field. The Curriculum Committee also reviews and approves all new course syllabi for these criteria prior to submitting them to the University Academic Council for approval. Methods of instruction identified on course syllabi reveal proven methods of instruction such as alternative assessment, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and other research-based strategies are a part of each course. Clinical and field based experiences are evaluated with forms built on the conceptual framework.

5b.2. Describe how the unit will ensure that professional education faculty teaching encourages the development of reflection, critical thinking, problem solving, and professional dispositions.

The unit will ensure that professional education faculty teaching encourages the development of reflection, critical thinking, problem solving, and professional dispositions through the systematic assessment of course evaluations completed by teacher candidates each semester and through the use of peer evaluations annually. The Unit’s conceptual framework forms the foundation for teaching by professional education faculty members and the professional practices of reflection, critical thinking and problem solving, and professional dispositions are each articulated components of the framework. The philosophy inherent to the conceptual framework of the teacher preparation unit at Thomas University is the principles of a constructivist paradigm. The adoption of a developmental approach to teacher preparation provides the rationale to personalize the education of both traditional and nontraditional age professionals, as well as supporting the constructivist paradigm for teaching and learning. Learning experiences are designed that are cumulative in nature and move the teacher candidate from “exploratory” performance towards “empowered” expertise. Professional education faculty use a wide variety of instructional strategies to promote candidate learning, reflection, critical thinking, problem solving, and professional dispositions. A review of course syllabi reveals examples of collaborative learning, field trips, simulations, microteaching, blogs, multimedia, reflection papers, portfolios, conference attendance and
participation, case studies of PK-12 students, case studies of schools, web quests, graphic organizers, research reviews, problem solving, games, learning centers, diagnosis and remediation of learner’s achievement, and many others.

5b.3. Describe how the unit will ensure that professional education faculty teaching models expected instructional strategies and use of assessments.

The unit will ensure that professional education faculty models expected instructional strategies and use of assessments through the systematic assessment of course evaluations completed by teacher candidates each semester and through the use of peer evaluations annually. As stated in the unit mission, unit faculty members are committed to excellence in teaching and learning as they continually engage in reflective practice and are committed to lifelong learning. Thomas University is essentially a teaching university and therefore the unit hires faculty who, first and foremost, are committed to modeling best professional practices in teaching. Faculty have an in depth understanding of their field and are teacher scholars who integrate what is known about their content fields, teaching, and learning into their own instructional practices. Faculty degrees and experiences, as indicated on vitae, validate that they have knowledge and experience in the content area they teach.

Syllabi for unit courses further document faculty emphasis on multiple approaches to teaching, and the use of assessment. All course syllabi of the unit reflect a direct link to the conceptual framework and the emphasis on reflective practice. Faculty incorporate a variety of sound pedagogical strategies including use of technology, microteaching, case studies, reflective discussions, simulations, research projects, and class presentations. Unit faculty members report using and modeling both formative and summative assessment strategies in their courses, as well as using traditional and authentic assessments. Faculty members use written essay and multiple tests (in-class and take home exams), skills assessment of selected performances such as demonstration of selected psychomotor skills, oral presentations, evaluation of lessons taught, authentic interviews, lesson and unit plans, and reflections on field experiences. Assessments also include the use of checklists, rubrics, reflective papers and journals, annotated bibliographies, lab reports, critique of research articles, completion of literature reviews, online and classroom discussions, re- and post-surveys, midterm and final written exams, research papers, projects, group projects, and e-portfolios.

5b.4. Describe how the unit will ensure that professional education faculty members incorporate technology into instruction.

The unit will ensure that professional education faculty members incorporate technology into instruction through the systematic assessment of course evaluations completed by teacher candidates each semester and through the use of peer evaluations annually. Faculty have multiple technology resources at their disposal for teaching and learning; many of these uses are mandated as part of the teaching and learning process for teacher candidates. Students and faculty are required to utilize their portal access to Hawklink (CAMS), T.U.’s fully-integrated internet-based student records system which enables online registration; student portal access to financial aid, billing, unofficial transcripts, and course Blackboard shells;
faculty portal access to advisees’ student records for advising and to automated grade reporting.

All students and faculty are assigned Thomas University email accounts. Every syllabus states that students are expected to use T.U. email as faculty, administrative and student services offices will communicate exclusively through this media for email. Faculty are required to check T.U. email daily and expected to be adept with the features of Outlook for communication and calendars.

All education faculty and teacher candidates must effectively utilize LiveText. Faculty are required to record student assessment in the system, to use the system to evaluate student progress, and to assist students in building components of the E-folio throughout their progress in the programs. In addition, all faculty members are required to use a Blackboard Learn course shell to provide course resources and communication for each course regardless of delivery mode. Hybrid or online classes must fully use the Blackboard course site to create meaningful instruction, interaction between instructor and classmates, provide feedback on assignments, and utilize gradebook functions. All faculty are expected to have competent skills using Microsoft Office suite programs. Use of Word, PowerPoint, and Publisher are required in Education course assignments as evidenced in course syllabi. In the same way, certain courses specify teaching and learning utilizing smartboard technology and pedagogy; this is evident in course syllabi. Other course assignments require demonstration of mastery of internet search skills and use of GALILEO and other scholarly databases; professors along with librarians provide instruction for these skills.

5b.5. Describe how the unit will ensure that faculty members systematically engage in self-assessment of their own teaching.

Thomas University and the education division are committed to quality teaching, and faculty are regularly assessed through an evaluation of their teaching performance which includes student course evaluations and chair and/or peer evaluations. Strong student evaluations; availability to students, professional rapport with students, appropriate and rigorous course content, scholarly and current command of subject matter are all aspects of teaching excellence at Thomas University. Additionally, reflection on and fulfillment of goals for the previous academic year are part of the self-assessment process. The formal evaluation process requires faculty to annually submit a Reflective Self Profile demonstrating teaching effectiveness, scholarship/professional development, and service activities. As part of the annual evaluation process, the faculty member identifies one to three goals in each area for the following academic year. The Division Chair and faculty member discuss the faculty member’s annual performance and ways in which ongoing reflection and growth of the faculty member’s teaching can be supported. Peer evaluation also provides a mechanism for stimulating self-reflection through conversations with a professional colleague during the pre-observation and post-observations exchanges.
5c. Modeling Best Professional Practices in Scholarship

5c.1. Describe the types of scholarly work that will be expected of faculty and how the unit will ensure that faculty are appropriately engaged in scholarship.

A faculty member must be a productive scholar, for scholarship is an intrinsic element of academic life. At Thomas University, four types of scholarship defined by Ernest L. Boyer in *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), provide a model for application in the faculty evaluation and promotion processes at Thomas University. *The Scholarship of Discovery* encompasses those scholarly activities that extend the stock of human knowledge through the discovery or collection of new information. *The Scholarship of Integration* encompasses scholarly activities that are primarily interdisciplinary or interpretive in nature. *The Scholarship of Application* encompasses scholarly activities that seek to relate the knowledge in one’s field to the affairs of society. *The Scholarship of Teaching* encompasses scholarly activities that are directly related to pedagogical practices.

Active involvement in intellectual, scholarly, and professional advancement in the field enhances effective teaching. Scholarly and professional activities should be judged for their relevance to the mission of the university, their improvement of teaching, and for their quality. They may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- a. Achievement of a relevant advanced degree or evidence of working towards the terminal degree in the field.
- b. Sustained inquiry into an area of one’s field.
- c. Scholarly productivity demonstrated as appropriate by publications, artistic work, performance, etc. (The quality of achievement should be assessed based on the level of recognition among peers and the significance in a particular field).
- d. Participation in and leadership of professional organizations.
- e. Appointment or election to a state or national post related to one’s field.
- f. Sharing of expertise with the university community.
- g. Relevant consulting work in one’s professional area.
- h. Reviewing or judging of materials to be published, displayed, or performed.
- i. Application for grants.
- j. Involvement in grants or other special projects.

All faculty members are expected to devote some portion of their time, on a regular basis, to at least one of the forms of scholarship. Thomas University systematically completes an annual comprehensive evaluation process of full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty with the goal of continuous improvement. The formal evaluation process requires faculty to annually submit a Self-Reflective Profile demonstrating, scholarship/professional development. Scholarly and Professional Involvement and Achievement must show evidence of the impact of professional development/involvement on teaching and/or the university as well as contributing generally to the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching.
5d. Modeling Best Professional Practices in Service

5d.1. Describe the types of service that will be expected of faculty and how the unit will ensure that faculty are appropriate engaged in service to the profession.

Faculty at Thomas University are expected to contribute towards the operation of the University by participating in Faculty Senate meetings, Division meetings, and other academic functions sponsored by the University. Faculty are required to be a member of two University Committees. Voluntary participation in other activities of the University, such as a) leadership in some area of university life such as governance, faculty development, etc, b) service in the community which is meaningfully related to the accomplishment of university goals c) service as advisor to a student organization, d) Planning and/or participation in extra-curricular activities, and e) planning and/or participation in curriculum-related enrichment activities outside normal course offerings, is encouraged. The University strongly encourages faculty members to become involved in service to the community outside the strictly academic field, and values the work of faculty members who are so involved. Such service may include, but are not restricted to, lectures to non-professional community groups, community leadership positions, or participation in non-profit organizations who serve the general public.

Faculty in the Division of Education are actively involved in service activities within the Division. They may serve in a leadership role as a program coordinator and therefore also on the Division of Education Executive Committee. All faculty are required to serve on Division committees, as needed. These committees include: Admissions/Advising Committee, Curriculum Committee, Assessment Committee, Advisory Committee and the Field and Clinical Experience Committee. Additionally, faculty are expected to serve the Division by assisting in the planning and implementation of all Division sponsored events, such as new student orientation, Kappa Delta Phi orientation, Clinical Teacher Training meetings, and events with PK-12 partner schools.

Annually the faculty member meets with the Division Chair for an annual evaluation. At the meeting, the faculty self-report their service involvement the chair and faculty member discuss goals in regards to service. Progress towards these goals is reported at the next annual interview.

5e. Unit Evaluation of Professional Education Faculty Performance

5e.1. Describe how the unit will ensure the regular, systematic, and comprehensive evaluations of full-time, adjunct/part-time, tenured, and non-tenured faculty, as well as graduate teaching assistants.

Thomas University systematically completes a comprehensive evaluation process of full-time and adjunct/part-time faculty with the goal of continuous improvement. While T.U. does not grant tenure, all full-time faculty hold continuing appointments (with an option to apply for a multi-year letter) subject to annual performance as reflected in formal evaluations. At each faculty rank, with expectations for responsibilities and skill incrementally increased, the
general evaluation criteria address teaching and advising, professional and scholarly activities, and service to the university and community.

Adjunct faculty are evaluated for teaching excellence on a semester-by-semester basis on student evaluations, and annually on Division Chair or peer observation of teaching. Additionally they are required to complete the Adjunct Faculty Development Profile.

The formal evaluation process requires faculty to annually submit a Reflective Self Profile demonstrating teaching effectiveness, scholarship/professional development, and service activities. University expectations are considered to be exceeded, met, or not met in each category. Teaching Excellence is evaluated in relation to evidence of strong student evaluations, advising, professional rapport with students, appropriate and rigorous course content, scholarly and current command of subject matter, and maximizing student learning. Scholarly and Professional Involvement and Achievement must show evidence of the impact of professional development/involvement on teaching and/or the university as well as contributing generally to the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Service to Student Body, University, and Wider Community is met through evidence of active engagement in division and university committee work and duties supporting student and community needs related to one’s field of expertise.

During fall and spring semesters and summer term, student evaluations of all full and part-time faculty members are administered by the university’s Office of Institutional Assessment. Results of student evaluations are analyzed and course summaries are distributed to the faculty and Division Chairs as aggregated and disaggregated data after each semester ends.

The performance of the faculty members is reviewed annually by the Division Chair (or in the case of the Division Chair by the Provost/VPAA) in relation to the submitted Profile, course evaluations, and the supervisor’s observation and review of evidence.

As part of the annual evaluation process, the faculty member identifies one to three goals in each area for the following academic year. The Division Chair discusses the faculty member’s annual performance and goals and the Division Chair completes the Thomas University Faculty Evaluation Summary. The faculty member is given the opportunity to review the Chair’s evaluation. If a corrective action plan is required (one or more areas not meeting expectations), it is developed with the faculty member. Both the faculty member and the Division Chair sign the evaluation and submit it to the Provost/VPAA.

Peer evaluation is the process that helps ensure the teaching effectiveness of all faculty with teaching assignments through regular evaluation by other faculty members. The complete peer review process includes four key components: the pre-observation exchange, the observation, the post-observation exchange, and the creation of a summative report. Additionally, faculty who supervise field and clinical experiences are evaluated by both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate.

5e.2. Describe how faculty evaluations will be used to improve teaching, scholarship, and service.
As indicated, annually the faculty evaluation process results in the faculty member setting measurable professional development goals in the areas of teaching excellence, scholarship, and service. The faculty identifies the type of support that will be required for achievement of the established goal(s) in each area. Following discussion and agreement with the Division Chair, a faculty member is expected to attain their professional development goals and the academic administration will provide the support the faculty member needs to do so.

If a faculty member is evaluated as not meeting expectations in one of the performance areas of Teaching Excellence, Scholarly and Professional Involvement and Achievement, or Service to Student Body, University, and Wider Community, the Division Chair develops a corrective action plan in discussion with the faculty member. Action plans typically align the faculty member with a university support person such as the Academic Technology Specialist, a senior academic advisor, or a peer mentor to meet regularly with the faculty member to address areas of improvement needed. Action plans require statement of measurable changes in behavior or productivity and these targets are addressed by the faculty member with the support person, and progress is closely supervised by the Division Chair over the following academic year. Progress is formally evaluated in the next year’s annual evaluation.

Throughout the year the academic administration identifies current needs for faculty development that enable all faculty – fulltime and adjunct – to better meet students’ learning needs and the university’s specific goals for rigorous, effective teaching and learning. Two Friday mornings per semester are reserved for mandatory Faculty Development Workshops; other voluntary workshops are offered during the 1 ½ hour meeting time throughout the semester. Recent workshops have addressed online teaching pedagogy and technological know-how, effective academic advising and understanding of FERPA requirements; developing appropriate course and program learning outcomes; engendering pervasive academic integrity; and working with a disruptive or potentially violent student.

5f. Unit Facilitation of Professional Development

5f.1. Describe how the unit will ensure that professional development will be related to needs identified in unit evaluations of faculty.

The Division Chair is responsible to oversee the implementation of professional goals determined jointly by the individual faculty and the Chair. A folder is kept by the Chair and referred to each consecutive year. After the annual evaluation process is complete the Division Chair submits a list of professional development session needs based on the performance of faculty in the Unit to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Each semester begins with a full-day Division of Education faculty retreat. The Chair works with the Administrative Council to determine topics seen as professional development needs for the majority of the faculty.

5f.2. Describe the proposed professional development activities that will be offered to faculty related to performance assessment, diversity, technology, emerging practices, and/or the unit’s conceptual framework.
A 1½ hour meeting time block is provided each week for campus meetings and professional development. Using this timeframe, the unit’s Administrative Council plans professional development activities related to performance assessment (development of quantitative and qualitative rubrics, training on teacher candidate performance assessments), diversity (culturally relevant pedagogy), technology (interactive SMART boards, web-supported teaching via Blackboard), and the unit's conceptual framework (evaluating and redesigning the CF as a useful tool to facilitate program improvement). Throughout the year the academic administration identifies current needs for faculty development that enable all faculty – fulltime and adjunct – to better meet students’ learning needs and the university’s specific goals for rigorous, effective teaching and learning. Two Friday mornings per semester are reserved for mandatory Faculty Development Workshops; other voluntary workshops are offered during the 1 ½ hour meeting time throughout the semester. Recent workshops have addressed online teaching pedagogy and technological know-how, effective academic advising and understanding of FERPA requirements; developing appropriate course and program learning outcomes; engendering pervasive academic integrity; and working with a disruptive or potentially violent student.

5f.3. Describe how often faculty will be expected to participate in professional development activities both on and off campus. [Include adjunct/part-time, tenured, and non-tenured faculty, as well as graduate teaching assistants.]

As mentioned above all faculty in the unit, including adjunct and part-time have multiple opportunities each month to participate in on-campus professional development activities offered by the unit’s Administrative Council and the Provost’s Office. Additionally, at the University level, the university’s full-time Academic Technology Specialist assists faculty and students in utilizing educational technologies, including LiveText, smartboard technology, ElluminateLive!, and Blackboard v 9.0. Each semester professional development sessions on how to use these technologies are provided both in a face-to-face format and online for the convenience of faculty. Faculty members are also expected to attend and/or make presentations at local, regional, and national conferences throughout the year that provide additional opportunities for professional development.

Standard 6. Unit Governance and Resources

6a. Unit Leadership and Authority

6a.1. Describe how the unit will manage or coordinate the planning, delivery, and operation of all programs for the preparation of educators.

The Division of Education is the unit responsible for all educator preparation programs at Thomas University. The Division of Education has the authority to oversee all teacher education licensure programs, with input and advice from its internal and external committees. The Unit provides leadership for all educator preparation programs, including coordination of accreditation and state program approval activities and oversight of curriculum and policies. The Division of Education chair reports directly to the Provost and
Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Education faculty members are under the leadership of the Division of Education Chairperson. The Chair of the Division of Education is the Unit head and is assisted by the full-time Field Experience and Assessment Coordinator and a full-time administrative assistant dedicated to the Division. The Chair oversees the development and direction of the University’s educator preparation programs.

The **Division’s Administrative Council** meets monthly and serves as the Division’s leadership team. The Division’s Administrative Council consists of the three program coordinators (ECE, MGE/SEC and Graduate). The duties and responsibilities of the Administrative Council involve establishing, reviewing, and implementing policies and procedures impacting the division. The Administrative Council addresses broad issues and problems impacting the entire division such as: faculty issues (assignment of responsibilities, annual evaluation, promotion, merit); curriculum and class scheduling; student recruitment, advisement, retention, and testing; adjunct faculty recruitment, training, supervision, and retention; instructional equipment and facilities; special projects; and alumni relations. Issues may be referred to the Administrative Council by the Division Chair, a Program Coordinator, or a student, faculty, staff member, or alumni of the division.

Specifically, the Administrative Council has responsibility for reviewing and giving final approval for policy recommendations (curriculum proposals, budget) made by individual programs. The purpose of this procedure is to allow the Administrative Council to determine if a policy recommendation negatively affects the division and/or the other two programs, either financially or programmatically. If an action item only involves one program, approval rests with the Administrative Council. If the item affects more than one program, the Administrative Council then refers it to the Faculty Council with a recommendation. If the Administrative Council or Faculty Council generates a proposal or action item that impacts one or more programs, it is referred to the programs for review and approval. A single member of the Administrative Council can request to refer a policy recommendation to the Faculty Council.

The Faculty Council meets monthly and is comprised of all faculty members with a 100% assignment in the Division. The Faculty Council is responsible for policy decisions that impact faculty (assignment of responsibilities, faculty development) and other policies that affect the entire Division. An additional priority of Faculty Council is to discuss candidate progress and to analyze data and make decisions regarding program improvement. Data-driven decisions and research-based practices are the foundation for our program enhancements and improvements. Additionally, Faculty Council hears and makes decisions regarding all teacher candidate petitions and appeals. The Division Chair is responsible for scheduling faculty meetings, establishing the agenda, conducting the meetings, making the arrangements for meeting minutes, and distributing the minutes of the meetings.

6a.2. Describe the unit's proposed recruiting and admissions policies. Describe how the unit will ensure that they are clearly and consistently described in publications and catalogues.
The Unit’s recruiting efforts are led by the Admissions Office and include visits to high schools and to two-year colleges with AA degree programs in Education, giving program information to paraprofessional staff within PK-12 systems, and individual meetings with prospective candidates. Program descriptions, admissions and program requirements are available on the T.U. webpage and in printed brochures sent to prospective students.

Admittance to the certification programs in Early Childhood, Middle Grades, Secondary English, and Secondary Math requires completion of the lower division Core Curriculum or an AA degree. A transfer candidate without an AA must meet the lower division requirements by completing any missing Core Curriculum courses or by meeting course requirements with equivalent transfer credits. Admissions standards for transfer students and for the acceptance of transfer credit are described in the T.U. Catalog. Post-baccalaureate programs for Middle Grades, Secondary English, and Secondary Math require the candidate to have a Bachelor’s degree.

Requirements for admissions are outlined in the Admissions Requirements Checklist for Thomas University Division of Education. One of the final steps in the admissions process, the interview, is evaluated by the Faculty Council using the Interview Assessment Form. The teacher candidate progression sheets (ECE, MGE, SEC English, SEC Math, MGE Post Baccalaureate, SEC English Post Baccalaureate, SEC Math Post Baccalaureate) guide consistent academic advising each semester.

The Education admissions requirements are delineated and kept updated in the T.U. Catalog, on the Division’s webpage and in its Handbook, also located on the webpage. Admission requirements are covered in EDU 200 Introduction to the Teaching Profession. Interview dates are set in advance and announced on the Division’s webpage.

The Division Chair keeps the Admissions staff apprised of updated policy and program information. The Admissions Office accepts students to the university based on general admission criteria and informs students of the need to be specifically admitted to the Education programs based on its published criteria and process administered by the Division. Candidates are notified of acceptance into the program by a letter of Admission from the Division.

6a.3. Describe how the unit will ensure that its academic calendars, catalogues, publications, grading policies, and advertising remain accurate and current.

The university’s Academic Council made up of the Academic Administration, all Division Chairs and program representatives, the Registrar, and Director of the Library establishes the academic calendar at least six months in advance of the next academic year. All divisions within the university use this calendar to inform their divisional calendars, strategic and operational planning, and course scheduling.

Any admissions policies or program requirements approved by the Unit’s Administrative Council and Faculty Council are taken to the university’s Academic Council. This body is responsible for final approval of any policy or program recommendation, including grading
policies, to maintain consistency and rigor across the institution. Once approved, policy and program requirement changes are published in the T.U. Catalog (posted in a web version on the T.U. website) and on the Division’s webpage on the website.

All undergraduate and graduate courses must adhere to the university’s approved grading scale. Teacher candidates’ progress is governed by university-wide academic progress policies as well as by Division policies. The grading scale and academic progress policies are published in the Catalog and Division policies in the sources noted in the paragraph above.

The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for maintaining an accurate and up-to-date university Catalog, incorporating all items approved by Academic Council. Each academic division through its respective Division Chair is required on an annual basis to review and revise their particular section of the academic Catalog as well as the same information on the university website.

In consultation with and approved by the Division Chair, Division publications for recruiting and advertising are updated annually, or sooner if changes mandate it, by the Admissions office.

6a.4. Describe how the unit will ensure that candidates have access to student services such as advising and counseling.

All teacher candidates are assigned academic advisors who are full-time faculty members in the Education Division. The advisor’s primary role is to assist students in enrolling for courses that lead to the timely completion of the degree program; however, in many cases advisors also mentor candidates with academic or personal issues. Quality academic advising is a required aspect of performance for every faculty member and advisor training is regularly provided by the Office of Academic Affairs. Academic support is available through the following student services: Academic Resource Center (ARC) which provides group and individual tutoring on-campus and online via email and web-conferencing, primarily for math, writing, and research support, for all T.U. students; Student Support Services (SSS) which provides academic tutoring services and mentoring through the federally-funded TRiO grant for first-generation, low-income, and/or disabled students; the Thomas University Library provides individual assistance for reference, research, and information projects, as well as assisting classes in person or via a course Blackboard shell. Accommodations for students with disabilities are provided by the Office of Disabilities Service and information about receiving disabilities services is included on all university syllabi; this included accommodations for access as well as for learning support. Thomas University provides free counseling services for students by referral in coordination with the Archbold Medical Center Student Assistance Program.

6a.5. Describe how members of the professional community will participate in program design, implementation, and evaluation. In what ways have members of the professional community participated in program design?
The unit’s Administrative Council has worked with its Faculty Council, Program Coordinators, Advisory Committee, Field Experience Committee, Admissions/Advising Committee, and Education Curriculum Committee to design the Early Childhood, Middle Grades, Middle Grades Post Baccalaureate, Secondary Education and Secondary Post Baccalaureate programs. These committees participate in continuous review of the program design, implementation and evaluation of the program. Unit faculty serve on committees in the division, as well as on the advisory committee with administrators and faculty members from the unit’s partner schools. These committees are charged with the responsibility of making policy decisions or programmatic decisions that impact the design, delivery, and evaluation of the program.

Program Design
The unit’s Administrative Council, Faculty Council, and Program Coordinators have recently worked collaboratively with the Advisory Committee to design the clinical teacher program. Partner school faculty and administrators are members of the Advisory Committee and participants in the clinical teacher program. The unit incorporates the feedback from the advisory committee and the clinical teacher program, as well as data from teachers and principals on the Division’s key assessments to design the field experiences and to determine the methods and content courses the teacher candidate is required to take. The Advisory Committee reviews data from the key assessments and makes recommendations to the Administrative Council.

Program Implementation
The mentor teacher observes and evaluates the teacher candidate during the field and clinical experiences using the Field Experience/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment and the Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate to document teacher candidate performance. Principals complete the New Teacher Hire Survey to inform the unit of the recent graduate’s proficiency in the classroom during the first year of employment. The data from key assessments are entered into LiveText to be analyzed for the purpose of determining program needs. The Advisory Committee reviews data reports from LiveText on key assessments, as provided by the Assessment Review Committee, and makes recommendations indicated by the data.

Unit Evaluation
The Advisory Committee reviews the data from the LiveText reports on teacher candidate performance, as provided by the Assessment Review Committee, and makes recommendations to the Administrative Council for program improvements.

6a.6. Describe how the unit will facilitate collaboration with other academic units involved in the preparation of professional educators.

The unit collaborates with the Division of Arts & Sciences to provide the content knowledge required for the teacher candidate to be successful in the classroom. Members of the Division of Arts & Sciences sit on the Advisory Committee with unit faculty and partner school faculty and administrators. The Advisory Committee reviews the data reports from: a) LiveText for the key assessments, b) GACE score reports, d) grades, and e) GPA data, as
provided by the Assessment Review Committee, and makes recommendations about program improvements.

The Education Curriculum Committee considers programmatic changes based on student performance data and legislative changes. In addition, they review new course proposals and annually review course syllabi. They discuss trends from the GACE score reports each semester to identify program needs. The Education Curriculum Committee reviews course syllabi annually to identify areas of need regarding the teacher candidate’s content knowledge. By analyzing GACE score reports and course syllabi, the unit faculty determines that changes to current content courses and new content courses will provide more content knowledge for the teacher candidate. The Arts & Science faculty have worked with the unit faculty to align the courses taken by the teacher candidate with the GA Professional and Program Standards.

6b.1. Describe the proposed budget available to support educator preparation programs. Describe how the proposed unit budget will compare to the budgets of other units with clinical components on campus or similar units at other institutions or agencies

The university provides unit funding through an annual budget process. Each fall, Division Chairs prepare budget requests with justification for capital, new personnel, and operating budgets. These requests are forwarded to the Provost/VPAA who reviews them with the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the President, and a complete budget is formulated and presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.

The total operating budget allocation for FY11 for the Division is approximately $25,000. These resources are delineated by budget line items that are used to fund faculty professional development, attendance at conferences, and professional memberships. Additional line items fund costs associated with delivering instruction, travel associated with supervising field experiences and student teaching, recruiting, accreditation, purchasing noncapital equipment, and maintaining the division office. The FY11 Division budget is comparable to Thomas University operating budgets for other Divisions with degree programs that require clinical observation, such as Social Work and the Thomasville-based RN-BSN program. Other line items reflect student course fee revenue to subsidize software costs for preparation for GACE testing and to subsidize student field trips.

The personnel budget for the Division of Education is the second largest supporting an academic Division in the university. This includes a year-round faculty appointment for the Division Chair of Education contracted for primarily administrative duties, teaching only one course per semester with three-quarters load for administration of the Division and supervision of the Division’s assessment system; six faculty lines devoted to teaching (one currently vacant); a year-round full-time Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment for the Division of Education; a year-round full-time Administrative Assistant to the Division of Education, who supports the work of the Division Chair and Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment; approximately $55,000 spent annually for adjunct personnel in the Division of Education. The university has assigned at least one Graduate Assistant to the
Division of Education for up to fifteen hours per week each semester to assist with implementation of the assessment system and other Division projects that support teacher candidates’ preparation. In addition, Student Workers are assigned to the Division of Education for fifteen hours per week per person to assist in data entry, filing, and support of faculty. Salaries and wages are competitive with those of other IIB private colleges and universities in Georgia. Clinical compensation for adjunct instructors is higher than regional public or private schools.

Approximately $100,000 is allotted annually to online and print journals, scholarly databases, and current books for the Library’s collection.

6b.2. Describe the adequacy of the proposed budget to support all programs for the preparation of educators and plans for increasing the budget as program offerings expand.

The Education Division is allocated adequate resources to support the Division’s mission. Administrative needs are met through the assigned time of the Division Chair and Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment for the Division of Education. As programs expand, the Division Chair can negotiate additional teaching release with the Provost/VPAA. The Coordinator implements the Division’s tracking system for placing teacher candidates in Field Experiences as defined in the Georgia Educator Preparation Rules and ensures the regular and systematic dissemination and collection of data collection instruments/data, while also facilitating the systematic process of data compilation, aggregation, and summarization of those data collected to enable the unit faculty and administration to analyze candidate and completer performance in regards to the outlined outcomes, along with preparation program and unit performance. The Coordinator is assisted by the university’s Director of Institutional Assessment in the production of meaningful reports from the LiveText system and statistical analysis of candidate performance data. This position was recently expanded to a 12-month position specifically to provide time to serve as LiveText Administrator.

The number and expertise of faculty is adequate to effectively address the teacher preparation programs and content specialization areas, along with faculty in the Arts and Sciences as well who provide content courses. The university’s full-time Academic Technology Specialist assists faculty and students in utilizing educational technologies, including LiveText, smartboard technology, ElluminateLive!, and Blackboard v 9.0.

Support staff needs are met by one full-time Administrative Assistant, at least one Graduate Assistant, and Student Assistants.

The university is committed to providing budget support for personnel, capital, and operating costs associated with growth. The FY12 budget proposes a renovation project for adding office space to the Education Building and capital investment in new Education classroom smartboards. The strategic model at Thomas University reinvests dollars generated by enrollment growth directly into program support for those students, in the form of faculty and resources.
6c.1. Describe the workload policies for the institution/agency and the professional education unit, including the proposed number of professional education faculty and their projected workloads (e.g., hours of teaching, advising of candidates, supervising student teachers).

The full-time teaching load across the university is normally defined as twelve credit hours per semester for two semesters per regular academic year. Faculty members who do not meet the minimum load may be assigned other duties, to include Directed Independent Study students, Division or institutional projects, or other responsibilities as their expertise and the university’s needs may dictate. Full-time faculty members are afforded optional teaching opportunities during the summer semester, including work with summer camps, seminars, etc. These duties are not considered part of a faculty member’s regular load, and are compensated at the highest level of adjunct rates.

In addition to instruction, academic advising is a major responsibility of faculty. Care is taken to distribute numbers of advisees as equitably as possible. As individual overloads become apparent, additional faculty members will be trained and assigned advisees. The teaching load is assigned by the Division Chair and approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs and will usually include both day classes and evening classes. Overload courses (normally limited to one per semester), are compensated at the highest level of adjunct rates, providing the faculty member has met all other load requirements for the semester.

Additionally, it is the duty of each member to take an active part in the life of the University. Faculty are to participate in Faculty Senate, serve on Division and university committees, and post a minimum of 10 campus hours over four days of the week, time available on campus for students and colleagues but not necessarily spent in the faculty member’s office, to include at least 2 hours identified as office hours during which the faculty member is in the office for appointments.

The Division of Education has a year-round faculty appointment for the Division Chair of Education contracted for primarily administrative duties, teaching only one course per semester with three-quarters load for administration of the Division and supervision of the Division’s assessment system; six faculty lines with a full teaching load (one currently vacant) and one ¾-time faculty member assigned to teach three courses per semester; and a year-round full-time Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment for the Division of Education who may teach one course per semester. Adjunct faculty are contracted on a per-course basis and on a per student basis for clinical supervision of Student Teachers.

6c.2. Describe the extent to which the proposed workloads and class sizes will allow faculty to effectively engage in teaching, scholarship, and service (including time for such responsibilities as candidate advisement, developing assessments, preparing for online courses, work in P-12 schools, independent study, research, administrative duties, and dissertation advisement).
Faculty workloads enable faculty to effectively be involved in teaching, advising, scholarship, and service. Teaching twelve credits per semester is considered a typical load at teaching-centered universities. The Division Chair takes care to create teaching schedules that enable faculty to set office/campus hours convenient to students, advisees, and for meetings with colleagues.

Scholarship and professional development are required activities at Thomas University but the focus in on the Scholarship of Teaching, as defined by Ernest Boyer, encouraging faculty to integrate scholarly practice with teaching, to be current in their discipline and in pedagogy. Creation of new teaching materials for the physical or online classroom, of Division assessment instruments, and accreditation documentation are part of the work of improving teaching and learning. If a faculty member is asked to assume a particularly large assignment or new initiative, they are given assigned time within their load or an overload stipend.

Class sizes are limited to enable attention to individual students’ learning and development as teacher candidates. Field Experience courses and Student Teaching are limited to 10 students per section. Other courses are capped at 30, but most average 10-15. The university is committed to running even smaller sections if they are necessary for students’ timely progression through the program.

The university keeps two periods free of scheduled classes on Mondays and Wednesdays as the reserved time for Division and university committees. The committee schedule is posted at the beginning of the academic year to enable planning and time management. Further, the university has structured the class schedule predominantly on Mondays through Thursdays so that Fridays can be reserved for scholarship, special meetings, and other forms of service.

**6c.3. Describe how the unit will ensure that the use of part-time faculty will contribute to the integrity, coherence, and quality of the unit and its programs.**

Adjunct faculty are carefully screened by the Chair of the Division of Education and the Associate Dean of Academic Operations for appropriate credentials, teaching experience, and understanding of Thomas University’s learner-centered ethos. All adjunct faculty receive orientation to their role, the curriculum, and logistical expectations for instructors at T.U. Additionally, all clinical adjunct faculty are required to attend a four-hour retreat at the beginning of each semester to focus on the use of the unit’s key assessments used in field and clinical experiences. This training ensures that all faculty who supervise and instruct teacher candidates have a thorough knowledge of assessing candidate performance and provides an avenue for gaining and maintaining interrater reliability in the evaluation of candidates during their field experiences and clinical experience.

Adjunct faculty are evaluated for teaching excellence on a semester-by-semester basis on student evaluations, and annually on Division Chair or peer observation of teaching and Self-Reflective feedback from the instructors.
6c.4. Describe the support personnel positions that will provide administrative and clerical support to the unit. How will the unit ensure that it has an adequate number of support personnel?

The Chair of the Education Division has a full-time (40 hours per week) administrative assistant who is located in the Education building next to the Chair’s office. The administrative assistant’s primary duties are supporting the work of the Division Chair and Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment in all matters associated with unit accreditation. She is the contact person for the licensure application process for teacher candidates. In this role, she verifies with candidate advisors and the Registrar that the candidate has indeed completed all requirements of certification and completes all paperwork required of the Division to process the teacher candidate’s certification with the Georgia certification office. In addition, she maintains close contact with the Georgia PSC and serves as the Title II data coordinator for the unit.

As a year-round full-time appointment, the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment facilitates the implementation of all aspects of placing teacher candidates in field experiences and student teaching, including securing candidate field/clinical placements and cultivating and maintaining effective relationships with area school personnel and revising field experience and student teaching manuals. The Coordinator ensures the regular and systematic dissemination and collection of data collection instruments, while also facilitating the systematic process of data compilation, aggregation, and summarization of those data collected in order to allow the unit faculty and administration to analyze candidate and completer performance in regards to the outlined outcomes, along with preparation program and unit performance.

The Coordinator is assisted by the university’s Director of Institutional Assessment (a 12-month staff contract) in the production of meaningful reports from the LiveText system and statistical analysis of candidate performance data. The Director maintains the teacher education electronic databases with information on teacher candidate demographics, field-based placements, and assessments at each decision point of the program. This position is the LiveText Administrator for the Division, and thus serves as the primary contact person for faculty and administrators for this system.

The university has assigned at least one Graduate Assistant to the Division of Education for up to fifteen hours per week each semester to assist with implementation of the assessment system and other Division projects. Student workers are assigned to the Division of Education for fifteen hours per week per person to assist in data entry, filing, and support of faculty.

6c.5. Describe the financial support that will be available for professional development activities for faculty and how faculty will request and receive such funds.

All University faculty are provided financial support up to $1,200 per year per faculty member for professional development. Faculty submit a request for professional development funding to the Division Chairperson. Funds are available through the Provost’s
office to assist with professional activities of faculty that specifically support teaching and learning excellence and scholarship in service to the university’s programs and mission. Additionally, throughout the year, there are multiple professional development opportunities for training in educational technology, effective teaching strategies, and advising practices. The Provost also provides funds to support faculty development of online courses.

6d.1. Describe the adequacy of the facilities that will be used to support teaching and learning. (How adequate are unit--classrooms, faculty offices, library/media center, the technology infrastructure, and school facilities--to support teaching and learning?) Describe facilities on the main campus as well as the facilities at off-campus sites if they exist.

The Division of Education full-time and adjunct faculty offices and many of its classes are housed in the Education Building. Each full-time faculty member has a private office with a desk, chairs, file cabinets, shelving, phone, and computer. An office is also provided for use by adjunct faculty. The Administrative Assistant to the Division of Education has an office adjacent to the Chair’s. This office as well as a locked storage closet, provides for security of student files. The Building also provides a materials preparation/mail room space.

Most education courses meet in the two education building classrooms; others are assigned depending on the nature of the course to another primary classroom, science laboratory or computer classroom, which are located in the campus’ primary academic building and the Library, respectively, which are nearby. All classrooms have full technology capabilities with a teaching computer with internet and LCD projector. The two classrooms in the Education Building are equipped with smartboard technology and computer stations. A bank of laptops is also available for extending computer access. All classrooms provide conference-table style or adult desks and are of adequate size for program enrollment numbers. All facilities are ADA-compliant.

The university has invested substantially in recent years to upgrade its technology infrastructure. T.U. uses Three Rivers/CAMS, a fully-integrated internet-based software system for its student records system which enables online registration; student portal access to financial aid, billing, unofficial transcripts, and course Blackboard shells; faculty portal access to advisees’ student records and to automated grade reporting. CAMS also enables up-to-date institutional reporting. In addition, T.U. contracts for managed hosting for Blackboard Learn v 9.0, which is integrated with CAMS. An upgrade to v 9.1 is scheduled this spring. We license ElluminateLive! for web-conferencing for instructional use, academic support services, and to facilitate meetings. Division Chairs, faculty, and students have access to computers and essential software through the Microsoft Office suite, Adobe Pro, and other licenses. T.U. also has a Mac Lab housed in the Library for faculty and student use, especially for creating podcasts and film production. Wireless internet is available in primary buildings across campus.

The T.U. Library houses over 34,000 holdings (print and media) in approximately 13,000 square feet of space. The library is open 60 hours a week and has reference, children’s literature, career, media, and general research collections available to patrons. There is
online access to over 150 databases and nearly 300 journals from anywhere with computer access. Two computer labs with 24 computers are available for student use.

T.U. will begin building a new 16,000 square foot Academic Building by January 2012 with the completion of a 5 million dollar capital campaign. The new building will include a 100-seat lecture hall, two larger classrooms, faculty offices and meeting spaces, all with state-of-the-art technology.

T.U. has also recently purchased a 34-acre property one mile from our current land-locked campus. This former school site contains an existing 32,000 square foot multipurpose building and gymnasium. Renovations on both facilities have begun so that they can be used by Fall semester 2011. The multipurpose building will include space for Math, Science, and Arts Innovation for enabling hands-on interdisciplinary learning for teacher candidates, teachers in the region, and PK-12 students.

6e.1. Describe how the unit proposes to allocate resources across programs to ensure candidates meet standards in their field of study.

It is the responsibility of the Division Chair to ensure that all programs are equally funded. Early Childhood, Middle Grades, and Secondary preparation courses are scheduled to enable utilization for all programs of the Education Building classrooms which are equipped with teaching technology, smartboards, and student computer stations, or classrooms with computer or science lab resources as needed. All other primary classrooms to which program courses are assigned are also equipped with current teaching technology. Library resources supporting Education candidates’ preparation are also prioritized to provide current, relevant resources for every program area. All students have equal access to student computer labs on campus for individual study.

6e.2. Describe the information technology resources that will be available to support faculty and candidates. Describe evidence that will be used to demonstrate that candidates and faculty use these resources toward improving teaching and learning.

Faculty and students have multiple technology resources at their disposal for teaching and learning; many of these uses are mandated as part of the teaching and learning process for teacher candidates. Students and faculty are required to utilize their portal access to Hawklink (CAMS), T.U.’s fully-integrated internet-based student records system which enables online registration; student portal access to financial aid, billing, unofficial transcripts, and course Blackboard shells; faculty portal access to advisees’ student records for advising and to automated grade reporting.

All students and faculty are assigned Thomas University email accounts. Every syllabus states that students are expected to use T.U. email as faculty, administrative and student services offices will communicate exclusively through this media for email. Students are expected to know how to send attachments. Faculty are required to check T.U. email daily and expected to be adept with the features of Outlook for communication and calendars.
All Education faculty and teacher candidates must effectively utilize LiveText. Faculty are required to record student assessment in the system, to use the system to evaluate student progress, and to assist students in building components of the E-folio throughout their progress in the programs. Students learn to use LiveText in EDU400 E-folio Workshop and are accountable to building their portfolios systematically while they progress through the program. They are also expected to know how to utilize the learning resources provided by LiveText.

In addition, all faculty members are required to use a Blackboard Learn course shell to provide course resources and communication for each course regardless of delivery mode. Hybrid or online classes must fully use the Blackboard course site to create meaningful instruction, interaction between instructor and classmates, provide feedback on assignments, and utilize gradebook functions. Students are expected to use the tools within Blackboard with facility.

All faculty and students are expected to have competent skills using Microsoft Office suite programs. Use of Word, PowerPoint, and Publisher are required in education course assignments as evidenced in course syllabi. In the same way, certain courses specify teaching and learning utilizing smartboard technology and pedagogy; this is evident in course syllabi. Other course assignments require demonstration of mastery of internet search skills and use of GALILEO and other scholarly databases; professors along with librarians provide instruction for these skills.

6e.3. Describe the resources that will be available for the development and implementation of the unit's assessment system.

Though a faculty appointment, the Division Chair of Education is contracted for primarily administrative duties, teaching only one course per semester with three-quarters load for administration of the Division and supervision of the Division’s assessment system. Summer work is fully administrative. Release from teaching may be negotiated on a semester-to-semester basis with the Provost in respect to administrative demands.

The Division of Education also has a full-time Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment. This is a year-round full-time appointment. The Coordinator implements the Division’s tracking system for placing teacher candidates in Field Experiences as defined in the Georgia Educator Preparation Rules and ensures the regular and systematic dissemination and collection of data collection instruments. The Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment also facilitates the systematic process of data compilation, aggregation, and summarization of those data collected in order to allow the unit faculty, all associated partners, and the administration to analyze candidate and completer performance in regards to the outlined outcomes, along with preparation program and unit performance.

The Coordinator is assisted by the university’s Director of Institutional Assessment (a 12-month staff contract) in the production of meaningful reports from the LiveText system and from CAMS (the university’s integrated student records system) and with statistical analysis of candidate performance data.
Additionally, a full-time (40-hour per week) Administrative Assistant to the Division of Education is assigned to supporting the work of the Division Chair and Coordinator of Field Experiences and Assessment as her primary duties.

The university has assigned at least one Graduate Assistant to the Division of Education for up to fifteen hours per week each semester to assist with implementation of the assessment system and related Division projects.

6e.4. Describe the library and curricular resources that exist at the institution or agency. Describe how the unit will ensure that they are sufficient and that they remain current.

Resources
The T.U. Library houses over 34,000 holdings (print and media) in approximately 13,000 square feet of space. The library is open 60 hours a week and has reference, children’s literature, career, media, and general research collections available to patrons. As a member of GPALS, students and faculty utilize GALILEO and additional databases with online access to over 150 databases and nearly 300 journals from anywhere with computer access. The library subscribes to forty-four journals, and provides eleven databases/search engines fifteen reference resources that are education-specific.

Inter-library loan
The library has a reciprocal inter-library loan program. Patrons can make a request using an online form. Requested materials can be obtained in the library or shipped to a patron. Articles are delivered electronically.

Faculty Support
Faculty can access library resources and professional librarian services. They can meet with librarians to find materials or to discuss specific course needs. Faculty can receive database instruction and learn about new resources. Computers, copiers, and scanners are available in the library. Laptops, Kindles, iPods, video cameras, and digital recorders can be checked out.

Student Support
Students have access to library resources and to librarians for reference services. Appointments can be done face-to-face, in online chat, by phone or email, or through Elluminate. There are two computer labs for student use to encourage individual and collaborative research. A library commons area is available for studying.

Acquisitions
The acquisitions program operates via an online request form and through meetings between librarians, division s, and faculty members. Materials requested by faculty are given priority. Weeding policies are developed with faculty guidance.

Support for off-campus students and programs
Faculty members can ask that a librarian be “embedded” in a course to assist with specific
research assignments. The “embedded librarian” can join in discussion boards, post materials/tutorials, and meet with students via Elluminate. Online/hybrid students also have access to librarians via the Virtual Reference Desk in Elluminate. For quick questions, students can chat with a staff member via Meebo, on the front page of the library website. Materials delivery service is also available for students.

A complete list of Education-specific journals, databases, and reference materials is linked.

6e.5. Describe how the unit will ensure the accessibility of resources to candidates, including candidates in off-campus, and distance learning preparation programs, through electronic means.

Many resources are available through the internet and accessed via password through the T.U. webpage and library webpage, specifically. Access to GALILEO and additional databases, the library’s online catalog, Inter-library Loan assistance, and Live Chat with librarians for reference assistance are available through the webpage. The Technical Help Desk for student portal and Blackboard access questions as well as general technical support is available by phone, email, or in person at the Help Desk in the Library. Appointments can be made by phone or the webpage to schedule sessions in the Academic Resource Center and Student Support Services for tutoring; tutoring can be arranged in person, by phone, by Elluminate, or through email. Accommodations are provided for students with disabilities through the Office of Disabilities Services. Contact with this office can be done by phone, email, Elluminate, or in person. Accommodations include adaptations of the physical learning environment, acquiring or converting learning resources to an alternate format, and providing special assistance.

The Thomas University Division of Education has no off-campus or distance learning programs.

Georgia Specific Requirements 
for Professional Education Units and Preparation Programs

Standard 7: Requirements and Standards Specified in Rule 505-3-.01

7a. Admission Requirements
Admittance to the Early Childhood, Middle Grades, Secondary English, and Secondary Math programs leading to teacher certification requires the teacher candidate to have completed the required lower division core curriculum or have an AA degree. A transfer candidate without an AA must also meet the lower division requirements by completing any missing lower division curriculum requirements or by meeting course requirements with equivalent transfer credits. Middle Grades, Secondary English, and Secondary Math Post Baccalaureate Programs require the candidate to have a bachelor’s degree.

Requirements for admissions are outlined in the link entitled Admissions Requirements Checklist for Thomas University Division of Education. Admission requirements are covered in EDU 200 - Introduction to the Teaching Profession to help streamline admissions into the Division of Education’s upper division. Interview dates are set in advance and
announced on the division website. One of the final steps in the admissions process, the interview, is evaluated using the Interview Assessment Form. The teacher candidate progression sheets (ECE, MGE, SEC English, SEC Math, MGE Post Baccalaureate, SEC English Post Baccalaureate, SEC Math Post Baccalaureate) are used with the candidate during advising each semester.

7b. Reading Methods
The following literacy courses are required as indicated for the teacher candidate in Early Childhood Education (ECE), Middle Grades Education (MGE), Secondary Education (SEC), and Post Baccalaureate Middle Grades, Secondary English, or Secondary Math:

- RDE452 Teaching Reading (ECE)
- RDE450 Reading in the Content Areas (MGE, SEC, Post Baccalaureate MGE, and Post Baccalaureate SEC)
- RDE455 Diagnosis and Remediation of Reading Difficulties (ECE, MGE, SEC English, Post Baccalaureate MGE, and Post Baccalaureate SEC English)
- RDE454 Children’s Literature (ECE)

Course descriptions for the reading education courses listed above are described in the document entitled Reading Education Course Descriptions. The reading education courses provide a foundation including the history of reading instruction; the knowledge of reading theories and research-based reading strategies; the adaptation of instruction for emergent, struggling, and accelerated readers, as well as consideration of students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds; methods of reading and writing assessment and correction; knowledge of children’s literature; and the importance of successful literacy instruction which develops students who have a love for reading and writing. The teacher candidate participates in field experiences which allow application of knowledge learned in reading methods courses.

Key assessments of the teacher candidate’s content knowledge and application of skills in the teaching of reading are outlined in the document entitled Key Assessments for the Teaching of Reading.

7c. Describe how the unit will ensure that candidates in all teaching fields will complete 3 or more semester hours or the equivalent in the identification and education of children who have special needs.

The unit ensures that the teacher candidate completes 3 semester hours in the identification and education of children who have special needs in EDU468, Exceptional Learners. EDU 468 is required for the teacher candidate majoring in Early Childhood Education, Middle Grades Education, and Secondary English or Secondary Mathematics Education Bachelor Degree Programs, and Post Baccalaureate Certification Middle Grades and Secondary English or Secondary Mathematics programs and is taken in Professional Core II. This required course is designed to build the knowledge base of the teacher candidate to enable them to teach students with exceptionalities. Principles, concepts, and practices for effective teachers working with students with exceptionalities are developed. This course requires that
teacher candidate:

- Become familiar with current laws concerning students with special needs including those with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, definitions and identification procedures, criteria for identification, issues with labeling learners and prevalence figures.
- Identify physical, cultural, cognitive, emotional and social needs of individuals without or with identified exceptionalities.
- Discuss the need and importance of safe, supportive positive learning environments in which all learners/exceptionalities, diversities are valued.
- Discuss and utilize instructional and remedial methods including technology to develop the skills of individuals with identified special needs as well as all learners.
- Discuss the curricula, materials and techniques for the positive development of exceptional learners.

7d. Use, Application, and Integration of Instructional Technology
The use and application of instructional technology is integrated throughout the education program of the teacher candidate. CSC120 Computer Applications, a survey of computer fundamentals, is required as part of lower division prerequisites before entering Professional Core I. A transfer candidate must also take this class or meet the course requirement through an equivalent transfer credit.

EDU400, a one-credit E-Folio workshop taken in Professional Core I, introduces the teacher candidate to the use of LiveText for the submission of Conceptual Framework reflections and artifacts, such as lesson plans and embedded digital resources (e.g., photographs, videos, media files, etc.). The E-Folio serves as a multimedia showcase where the teacher candidate submits their work associated with the components of the Division of Education’s Conceptual Framework. EDU400 also provides opportunities for refining fundamental technology application skills.

Technology assignments provided in the chart titled A Sampling of Division of Education Technology Assignments present a sampling of ways the teacher candidate uses, applies, and integrates instructional technology in fields, student teaching, and methods courses. The teacher candidate’s knowledge and application of skills regarding instructional technology is evidenced through multiple assessments and can be found in the chart titled Key Assessments for Technology Knowledge and Application.

7e. Georgia P-12 Curriculum
Content knowledge is the foundation for the implementation of the Georgia P-12 curriculum. Each program’s curricula provides the candidate with a strong foundation in the content knowledge of their respective program. The teacher candidate in Early Childhood, Middle Grades, Secondary, and Post Baccalaureate Middle Grades and Secondary Education has frequent opportunities that lead to their development of knowledge in the implementation of the mandated Georgia state curriculum standards for their content areas. During Professional Core I of the upper division coursework the teacher candidate takes EDU316 Methods and Strategies, where they learn about the Georgia Performance Standards or Quality Core
Curriculum Standards. In this course the teacher candidate is also introduced to the Division of Education’s lesson plan format which requires a listing, along with descriptions of all GPS or QCC Standards used in a lesson. Lesson plan examples are provided as models for teacher candidates to follow.

The knowledge and application of the mandated Georgia state curriculum standards is evidenced through the development of lesson plans by the teacher candidate and is regularly assessed, initially in EDU316, and then in field experiences, methods courses, and student teaching. Key assessment instruments which monitor the teacher candidate’s proficiency in application of the state’s mandated standards is evidenced through multiple assessments and can be found in the document entitled Key Assessments for GPS/QCC Standards Knowledge and Application.

7f. Professional Ethical Standards and Requirements for Certification and Employment

Ethics
The Division of Education’s admission materials regarding admittance to the Division of Education programs states that prior to admission candidates must pass a criminal background check. A teacher candidate is not admitted if they are not cleared. The prospective candidate must take a prerequisite course, EDU200 Introduction to Education, in which they learn about the Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics and must sign a form indicating that they have read it and will adhere to it. Transfer candidates must also take this class or meet the course requirement through an equivalent transfer credit.

Throughout their education program, the teacher candidate reviews the Georgia PSC Code of Ethics in their field experience and clinical courses. During EDU300, the teacher candidate investigates dimensions of teacher professionalism, defines teacher professionalism, and considers artifacts that would be pertinent to include in the Professionalism section of their electronic portfolio (E-Folio). Teacher candidate professional dispositions are reviewed in every teacher education course and assessed with the Core Professional Dispositions Student Assessment at the end of each semester. Professional Development Plans are written for a teacher candidate when improvement is necessary.

Certification
Information regarding the requirements for recommendation of certification from the Division of Education is introduced in EDU200 Introduction to Education and in the new student orientation that is conducted at the beginning of each semester. The student teacher receives the application for Georgia teacher certification during their Student Teaching Seminar, as well as information regarding the certification process in Georgia, seeking certification in other states, and employment opportunities. The Student Teaching Handbook outlines requirements for recommendation of certification from the Division of Education. Requirements for certification recommendation are found in the chart titled Requirements for Recommendation for Certification.

The Program Completer Form - Information for Teacher Certification states that all requirements have been completed, and must be signed by the candidate’s advisor prior to
recommendation of certification. When this form is signed, the teacher candidate receives clearance for recommendation for certification by the teacher candidate’s advisor and an authorized recommendation for certification from the Chair of the Division of Education.

### Requirements For Recommendation For Certification

- Successful completion of all coursework in their program with at least a grade of “C” in each course
- A cumulative Grade Point Average of at least 2.5
- A rating at or above the acceptable level on the Core Professional Dispositions Student Assessment
- A passing score on the appropriate GACE Content Exams

**Standard 7g.** Describe how the unit will ensure that candidates complete field experiences in all grade levels in which they seek certification and provide evidence of appropriate placements.

The unit has a systematic process that ensures all candidates complete field experiences in all grade levels in which they seek certification. The Early Childhood Education Program Progression table and the Middle Grades/Middle Grade Post Baccalaureate Program Field Experience and Clinical Experience table provide details on the unit’s systematic plan that provides ample and appropriate field experiences in the required grade levels.

### Content Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs

**Standard 8: Alignment with PSC-Adopted Program Content Standards**

To ensure that teacher candidates in the Early Childhood, Middle Grades, Secondary, and MGE and SEC Post Baccalaureate Education programs demonstrate competence on the appropriate program specific content standards adopted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the following procedures are implemented:

- The “Outcomes” section of each course syllabi in the Division of Education, as well as in the syllabi of the Division of Arts & Sciences courses taken as part of the Middle Grades and Secondary Education requirements, is aligned with its PSC Adopted Program Content Standards.
- Teacher candidate progression sheets (Early Childhood Education, Middle Grades/Middle Grades Post Baccalaureate Education, Secondary English/Secondary English Post Baccalaureate Education, Secondary Math/ Secondary Math Post Baccalaureate Education) show the required courses needed to demonstrate competence on the appropriate program specific content standards.
- Assessment instruments are utilized which monitor Teacher Candidates’ competence in content knowledge and include the following:
  - Lesson Plan Assessment
  - Field Experience/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment
  - Student Teaching Work Sample
  - GACE Content Examinations
  - Electronic Portfolio
- Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
- New Teacher Hire Survey
- Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey
Index of Linked Exhibits and Tables

**Standard 1 Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions**

1a.1. Progression Sheets  
1a.1. ECE Progression Sheet  
1a.1. MGE Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. MGE PB Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. SEC English Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. SEC Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. SEC PB English Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. SEC PB Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet  
1a.1. Key Assessment Target Behaviors for Content Knowledge  
1a.2. Target Behaviors on Eight Key Assessments  
1a.2. Brief Description of Key Assessments  
1a.4. New Teacher Hire Survey  
1a.4. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey

**Standard 1b**

1b.1. Target Behaviors for Eight Key Assessments  
1b.1. Brief Description of Key Assessments

**Standard 1c**

1c.1. Target Behaviors for Ten Key Assessments  
1c.1. Brief Description of Key Assessments  
1c.2. Brief Description of Key Assessments  
1c.2. Target Behaviors for Ten Key Assessments  
1c.4. New Teacher Hire Survey  
1c.4. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey

**Standard 1d**

1d.1. Nine Key Assessments  
1d.1. Brief Description of Key Assessments

**Standard 1g**

1g.1. Core Professional Dispositions Key Assessment Chart  
1g.1. Teacher Candidate Core Professional Disposition Log  
1g.1. Professional Development Plan  
1g.2. Core Professional Dispositions Key Assessment Chart  
1g.2. Lesson Plan Assessment  
1g.2. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example
Provided)
1g.2. Electronic Portfolio (Professionalism Example Provided)
1g.3. Description of Key Assessments
1g.3. Seven Key Assessments
1g.4. New Teacher Hire Survey
1g.4. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey

**Standard 2 Assessment System and Unit Evaluation**

**Standard 2a**

2a.2. Table 4
2a.2. Admissions requirements checklist
2a.2. Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey
2a.2. Field Experience Midterm/Final Summative Assessment
2a.2. Lesson Planning Assessment
2a.2. Professional Core Disposition Assessment
2a.2. PK-12 Alternative Assessment
2a.2. Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
2a.2. Field Experience Midterm/Final Summative Assessment
2a.2. Student Teaching Work Sample
2a.2. Electronic Portfolio
2a.2. Professional Core Disposition Assessment
2a.2. Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
2a.2. Early Childhood Education
2a.2. Middle Grades,
2a.2. Middle Grades Post Baccalaureate
2a.2. Secondary English
2a.2. Secondary Mathematics
2a.2. Secondary English Post Baccalaureate
2a.2. Secondary Mathematics Post Baccalaureate
2a.2. Intent to Graduate
2a.2. Degree Audit Report
2a.2. New Teacher Hire Survey
2a.2. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey
2a.4. Field Experience/Student Teaching Midterm/Final Summative Assessment
2a.5. Standard 1 X Transition Point X key Assessment Matrix
2a.5. Reflective Self Profile
2a.5. Faculty Evaluation Summary
2a.5. Mentor Teacher
2a.5. Teacher Candidate

**Standard 2b**
2b.1. Table 5. Assessment System: Processes and Timelines

**Standard 2c**
2c.1. Multiple committees
2c.2. Division Governance Structures

**Standard 3a**
3a.1. Partner Schools’ Demographic Table (School Demographics (1))
3a.2. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3a.2. Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
3a.2. New Teacher Hire Survey
3a.2. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey
3a.2. Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey
3a.2. Systematic Observation Instruments
3a.3. Early Childhood Education Progression Sheet
3a.3. Middle Grades Education Progression Sheets
3a.3. Secondary English Education Progression Sheets
3a.3. Secondary Math Education Progression Sheets
3a.3. T.U. Field Experience Placement Form
3a.4. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3a.4. Field Experiences Handbook
3a.4. Student Teaching Handbook

**Standard 3 Field Experiences and Clinical Practice**

**Standard 3b**
3b.1. Application for Student Teaching
3b.1. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3b.1. Lesson Planning Assessment
3b.1. Professional Dispositions Assessment
3b.1. Electronic Portfolio (Pedagogy Example Provided)
3b.1. Student Teacher Work Sample Assessment
3b.2 Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3b.2. ECE Field Progression
3b.2. MGE-SEC Field Progression
3b.3. ECE Field Progression
3b.3. MGE-SEC Field Progression
3b.3. Teacher Candidate Core Professional Dispositions Assessment
3b.3. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3b.3. Lesson Plan Assessment
3b.3. Electronic Portfolio
3b.3. Student Teacher Work Sample Assessment
3b.3. Surveys
   Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey
   Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
3b.4. Key Assessments for Technology Knowledge and Application
3b.6. Field Experiences Handbook
3b.6. Student Teaching Handbook
3b.7. Field Experiences Handbook
3b.7. Student Teaching Handbook
3b.7. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)

**Standard 3c**
3c.1. Student Teaching Handbook
3c.1. Student Teacher Work Sample
3c.1. Teacher Candidate Self-Assessment Survey
3c.1. Electronic Portfolio
3c.1. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3c.1. Professional Dispositions Assessment
3c.1. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Formative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3c.1. Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
3c.2. Systematic Observation Instruments
3c.2. Lesson Plan Format
3c.2. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Formative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3c.2. Student Teacher Work Sample
3c.3. Transition Points
3c.3. Target Behaviors For Diversity Key Assessments Table
3c.4. Student Teacher Work Sample
3c.4. Student Teacher Work Sample Assessment
3c.4. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Formative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
3c.5. Partner School Demographics Table (School Demographics (1))
3c.5. ECE Field Progression
3c.5. MGE-SEC Field Progression

**Standard 4 Diversity**

**Standard 4a**
4a.1. Key Assessments for Diversity
4a.1. EDU 200
4a.1. EDU 468
4a.1. EDU 320
4a.1. EDU 316
4a.2. ECE
4a.2. MGE/SEC
4a.2. Diversity Outcomes X Course X Key Assessment Table

**Standard 4b**
4b.1. Highly Qualified Teachers From Diverse Backgrounds
4b.1. Composition of our schools and region
4b.3. Faculty Demographics
4b.4. Catalog

**Standard 4c**
4c.2. Thomas University Diversity Statement
4c.2. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/10/colleges-with-the-highest_2_n_820990.html#236902&title=Thomas_University_100](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/10/colleges-with-the-highest_2_n_820990.html#236902&title=Thomas_University_100)

4d.1. Thomas University Partner Schools
4d.1. Key Assessments for Diversity
4d.2. Thomas University Partner Schools
4d.3. Systematic Observation Instruments
4d.3. Field Experience/Clinical Experience Mid-term/final Summative Assessment
4d.3. Lesson Plan Assessment
4d.3. Professional Dispositions Assessment

**Standard 5 Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development**

**Standard 5a**
5d.1 See 5a.5.
5d.3. School Districts
5a.5. Table 8 Faculty Qualifications Summary

**Standard 5b**

5b.1. Peer Evaluation
5b.1. Course Syllabi
5b.1. Curriculum Committee
5b.2. Peer Evaluation
5b.3. Peer Evaluation
5b.3. Course Syllabi
5b.4. Peer Evaluation
5b.5. Self-Reflective Profile
5b.4. Peer Evaluation

**Standard 5d**

5d.1. University Committees
5d.1. Division Committees

**Standard 5e**

5e.1. Adjunct Faculty Development Profile
5e.1. Reflective Self-Profile
5e.1. Thomas University Faculty Evaluation Summary
5e.1. Peer review process

**Standard 6 Unit Governance and Resources**

**Standard 6a**

6a.1. Division of Education
6a.1. Division’s Administrative Council
6a.2. T.U. Catalog
6a.2. Admissions Requirements Checklist for Thomas University Division of Education
6a.2. Interview Assessment Form
6a.2. ECE Progression Sheet
6a.2. MGE Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.2. MGE PB Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.2. SEC English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.2. SEC Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.2. SEC PB English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.2. SEC PB Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet
6a.3. T.U. Catalog

**Standard 7 Requirements and Standard Specified in Rule 505-3-01**

**7a Admission Requirements**
7a. Admissions Requirements Checklist for Thomas University Division of Education
7a. Interview Assessment Form
7a. ECE Progression Sheet
7a. MGE Fall Cohort Progression sheet
7a. MGE PB Fall Cohort Progression sheet
7a. SEC English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
7a. SEC Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet
7a. SEC PB English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
7a. SEC PB Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet

**7b Reading Methods**
7b. Reading Education Course Descriptions
7b. Key Assessments for the Teaching of Reading

**7d Use, Application and Integration of Instructional Technology**
7d. A Sampling of Division of Education Technology Assignments
7d. Key Assessments for Technology Knowledge and Application

**7e Georgia P-12 Curriculum**
7e. Key Assessments for GPS/QCC Standards Knowledge and Application

**7f Professional Ethical Standards and Requirements for Certification and Employment**
7f. Core Professional Dispositions Assessment
7f. Requirements for Recommendation for Certification

**Standard 8 Alignment with PSC-Adopted Program Content Standards**
8. Course Syllabi
8. ECE Progression Sheet
8. MGE Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. MGE PB Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. SEC English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. SEC Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. SEC PB English Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. SEC PB Math Fall Cohort Progression sheet
8. Lesson Plan Assessment
8. Field Experience Student Teaching Midterm Final Summative Assessment (ECE Example Provided)
8. Student Teaching Work Sample
8. Electronic Portfolio
8. Mentor Teacher Survey of Teacher Candidate Performance
8. New Teacher Hire Survey
8. Recent Graduate Self-Assessment Survey