



Program Handbook Equip Pathway

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Vision

In collaboration with the entire community, we will create an inclusive environment of academic excellence that supports the diverse needs of all learners.

Mission

We will inspire and prepare all students for lifelong success by providing an exemplary education in a safe learning environment.

Beliefs

1. **All children can and will learn.** The District will prioritize effective, engaging instruction aligned with a challenging curriculum for all students.
2. **We can achieve higher levels of performance within every facet of our organization.** The District will promote high expectations for all students and staff members, clearly defined District goals and strategically aligned resources.
3. **Every classroom will have an effective teacher and every school will have an effective principal.** The District will recruit, develop and retain highly effective teachers and administrators.
4. **All school and work environments will be safe, secure and supportive.** The District will ensure that learning and work environments are safe, secure and supportive in order for all students and staff to achieve high levels of performance.
5. **In order to prepare our next generation to become responsible citizens, we will work collaboratively with our families and community partners.** The District will actively collaborate with families and community partners to maximize opportunities for the success of our students.
6. **We should be fiscally responsible and accountable to the public.** The District will implement financial procedures and internal controls to ensure fiscal responsibility.

Beaumont ISD does not discriminate in employment opportunities or acceptance to our program on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

BRACE Staff & Contact Information

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BRACE, or Beaumont ISD's Grow Our Own Program, was established in 2023 in partnership with Beaumont ISD, Capturing Kids' Hearts /TeachWorthy, and Indiana Wesleyan University. The program serves current employees of Beaumont who are pursuing Bachelor's Degrees and teacher certification, as well as graduating Beaumont ISD High School seniors who have earned their Associate's Degrees while in high school and are working to become educators. The accelerated program has little or no cost for the participants as they work to become certified teachers. The program also supports those who have their Bachelor's Degrees who are seeking their teaching certification. Following the completion of the program and earning standard certification, graduates agree to complete two years of teaching for Beaumont ISD.



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Degrees Offered through Indiana Wesleyan University

Bachelor's of Science in Integrative Studies - Custom

Specializations Offered:

Early Childhood Teacher Training
Elementary Teacher Training
Secondary Teacher Training

****Note:** BISD will fund tuition for the Custom Program, which meets basic requirements for degree and certification.

****TeachWorthy Elevate** offers a variety of Texas alternative certification areas, and an individualized plan will be made in collaboration with IWU so that prerequisites are met for certification area exams.**

General Program Guidelines

Application to Program

Annually, BISD will release a new BRACE Application for the upcoming cohort of learners. BISD employees who have been employed full-time for at least one school year can apply by following the following steps:

- Complete the BRACE Application.
- Agree to terms and conditions within the BRACE handbook.
- Commit to work in BISD for the duration of the program and for 2 years following graduation/certification.

Application to the program and current employment in the district does not guarantee acceptance into the BRACE Program.

Application for Brace Teaching Position

Once admitted into the BRACE program, participants will have an opportunity to apply to become a BRACE teacher once the following criteria are met:

- Completion of all Teachworthy courses
- Completion of all BISD courses (as determined by degree plan)
- Acceptance into IWU:
 - Apply to IWU
 - Send transcripts to IWU of previous college credit.
 - Complete the FAFSA.

To apply for the BRACE teacher positions, the candidate will apply through the Beaumont ISD TalentEd website for specific postings. Candidates may be invited for interviews with campus principals. Once a recommendation is received for a specific posting, candidates will begin their IWU courses and begin teaching.

Attendance

Attending classes, both in person and virtually, is required for successful completion of the program. Candidates are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled. If a candidate is ill or cannot attend for any reason, he or she is responsible for emailing the instructor prior to the scheduled class time with the reason for absence. The candidate is also responsible for any and all makeup work regardless of absence. Participation points may be deducted for any absence.

MobileMind sign-in links are provided at each face-to-face and virtual meeting. Each candidate must sign-in for himself or herself before each session. Signing in for another candidate is considered academic dishonesty.

Candidates are expected to attend the entire class session, and it is expected that candidates conduct themselves in a professional manner, which includes being punctual for the beginning of each course. Late arrivals or early departures will be

documented, and points will be deducted accordingly. Multiple late arrivals, early departures, or excessive absences may result in dismissal from the program.

Academic Expectations

As this program is a benefit to the candidate and is paid for by the district, and in order to be good stewards of our resources, it is BISD's expectation that candidates will complete each course successfully, show adequate work effort for each class, and receive a passing grade. In the event that a course is not completed with a passing score, the candidate will be placed on academic probation, which may result in removal from the program or reimbursement costs for the student.

In addition, BISD retains the right to monitor student's progress and academic standing and will communicate directly with any student who is not progressing through the courses and meeting benchmarks and expectations. It is our goal that all students are successful in our program. To that end, please notify Professional Development Department and/or IWU / Teachworthy of any issues immediately so we can support progress in the courses.

Participants are provided four years from the date of entry into the program to earn their bachelor's degree, complete their certification program, and pass all Texas Educator Certification Examinations necessary to obtain teacher certification from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC).

Academic Partnerships

Beaumont ISD is currently partnered with Indiana Wesleyan University and Teachworthy in order to offer accelerated degrees and alternative certification opportunities. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed by these partner organizations and their employees belong solely to their organization and do not necessarily reflect the views, thoughts, or opinions of Beaumont ISD or staff.

Participants must agree to and follow the terms and conditions listed in the Indiana Wesleyan University and Teachworthy participant agreements to remain in the BRACE program.

Please note that the academic expectations, timelines, and processes within the BRACE Handbook are subject to change due to partner or district updates. If updates or changes occur, participants will be notified.

Teacher Candidate Disposition and Participation

Upon acceptance into the program, teacher candidates will complete a BRACE Candidate Agreement Form, which outlines district expectations. Further, as candidates are also employees of BISD, all employee policies and expectations still apply, including, but not limited to the following:

- At the time of acceptance to the program and for the duration of the time in the program, the BRACE candidate must remain an employee in good standing with Beaumont ISD. If an employee resigns, is terminated, and/or experiences any other concern that, at the discretion of the district, prohibits them from continuing in BRACE, they are no longer eligible for participation in BRACE.
- Demonstrate professionalism at all times. Dress for courses may be casual, but respectful.
- Follow *TAC Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*.
- Follow all legal and local policies as outlined in the Beaumont ISD Board Policy Manual (DH Legal/Local/Exhibit) and the BISD Employee Handbook.
- Complete all benchmarks/assignments by required dates.
- Attend all required classes, both in person and online, and be an active participant.
- Complete all online coursework by required dates. While BISD courses are flexibly paced, it is the expectation that work is completed in a timely manner.

- Stay abreast of all BRACE activities and deadlines. Several means of communication are available, including the schedule/syllabus, email, website, *MobileMind*, *Remind*, and *phone*. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance. We are here to support you.
- Notify BRACE staff of any issues, concerns, or conflicts immediately.
- Register for and take courses in a timely manner per degree plan.
- Several courses are self-paced. It is the responsibility of the candidate to complete the learning path and coursework completely and then for the candidate to notify the BRACE staff of completion so credit can be assigned and a certificate issued.
- *BRACE candidates must be clocked out for face-to-face courses that occur after school or in the afternoons, and any online coursework needs to be handled after work hours are complete. Any training that occurs on workdays or professional development days will not require the candidates to clock out. If you are unsure of whether to stay clocked in or to clock out, reach out to the BRACE team for clarification.*

Phase I - Foundational Coursework

Phase I of the program includes much of the training prior to entering a classroom as an intern. Phase I consists of BISD PLA courses, which offer up to 20 hours of college credit, and the Teachworthy training modules, which result in a minimum of 10 hours of college credit. The training is carefully planned and aligned with TEA's *Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and Standards for EC-Grade 12*. The complete list can be found [here](#). In addition, [SBEC's Technology Applications EC-12](#) were also used to inform course planning.

Phase I of the program is designed to be completed within a year, followed by Phase II, which includes the BRACE clinical teaching experience. Some courses may be taken the last semester with BRACE Seminar, but they may be taken earlier if desired. Teachworthy modules must be taken prior to Beaumont ISD and IWU coursework.

Phase I consists of blended learning courses and experiences, including:

- *Foundational Coursework - This phase includes multiple face-to-face and blended courses, 27 total credit hours, focused on scientifically-based instructional practices, curriculum, classroom management, social-emotional learning, and technology integration. Additionally, training will help prepare*

the candidate for TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility (PPR) exams.

- How to contact IWU for PLA Credit: [Emailing Certificates to IWU](#)
- Field-Based Experiences - Embedded into the courses are classroom observations and related activities focused on lesson cycle, classroom management, and effective teaching practices that the candidate will be able to implement in his/her own classroom.
- Foundational Coursework through IWU - In addition to the 27 hours completed through BISD's BRACE Program, students will complete any additionally necessary content coursework through IWU, including the minimum of 30 hours of IWU credit required for graduation.
- Teachworthy modules begin during Phase I - 8 modules that result in 10 college credit hours, as well as the Science of Teaching Reading module for those students whose degree plans require this training.

Teachworthy Modules

There are 8 modules for TeachWorthy with some additional modules required based on the desired certification area. There will be a required online orientation for these modules with TeachWorthy staff at the end of the semester prior to the student's planned graduation date. Certification exam and observation requirements must be completed during the final stages of the program per Teachworthy requirements. Once the modules are complete, the candidate must upload a copy of the certificate from Teachworthy into MobileMind for district documentation and email a copy of the Teachworthy module completion certificate to their IWU mentor in order to request their 10 hours of college credit.

Phase II - Clinical Teaching Experience & Final Coursework

Phase II of the BRACE Program is the final 3 hours of coursework, or *BRACE Seminar*, which is a required course. Other courses may also be taken during this last semester in the program, but the BRACE Seminar is required to be the last semester. The total contact hours for Phase II equal 60 hours. This portion of the training includes the semester-long seminar with clinical teaching opportunities under the supervision of a cooperating teacher and the BRACE staff. Topics are carefully selected and are aligned with the state certification standards and research-based practices.

The student is responsible for ensuring that all activities for the *BRACE Seminar Course* are completed on time and documented in MobileMind per the syllabus and rubric requirements. Failure to do so could result in course failure, not completing the program, and not being allowed to take certification exams.

Clinical Teaching Experience Roles and Responsibilities

Clinical Teaching Candidate:

- Complete all required activities and hours as listed on the course syllabus and rubric for BRACE Seminar.
- Make arrangements with the BRACE staff for observations and other appointments as outlined in the syllabus and rubric.
- Complete all online components of the course.
- Become a reflective practitioner and continuously strive to improve. Listen to and act on coaching sessions.
- Follow the professional behavior expectations outlined in district and state policy and in this document.
- *Arrange times and appointments with mentor teacher and campus principal, and/or supervisor. Candidates that can complete their desired area of clinical teaching within their current assigned role and as part of their current job responsibilities may stay clocked in during those sections. Candidates whose clinical teaching activities do not align with their current job role and responsibilities will need to clock out and arrange coverage with their principal or supervisor. If you are not sure about whether or not your activities and current role align, please reach out to your principal or the BRACE staff.*

Campus Principal

- Provide requested information to the BRACE staff in a timely manner.
- Assign the clinical teaching candidate an appropriate cooperating teacher based on pursued degree, and facilitate a positive working relationship between the mentor and clinical teaching student.
- Allow the candidate to observe various teachers on campus to fulfill their Teachworthy observation requirement of 30 hours.
- Communicate any concerns with the BRACE staff.
- Observe the clinical teacher in the classroom and provide feedback to the teacher as needed. This can be informal. However, it is important that the campus administrator is knowledgeable of the clinical teacher's abilities and areas of growth in order to inform the completion of the Principal Recommendation Form.
- Complete the Principal Recommendation Form near the end of the semester and send it to the BRACE staff.

Mentor Teacher

As a certified, accomplished educator in the same area, level, and/or instructional program that the intern is assigned, the mentor teacher plays an important role in the candidate's learning and growth.

- Attend the informational meeting for cooperating teachers prior to the beginning of the semester in which the candidate is assigned to his/her classroom.
- Provide assistance to the clinical teaching student during the semester.
- Complete an observation with feedback for one class period for the clinical teaching student.
- Communicate with the BRACE staff and Campus Principal regarding the progress of the clinical teacher.
- Guide, assist, and support the clinical teaching student in areas such as planning, classroom management, assessment, working with students and parents, obtaining materials, and campus/district policies and procedures.

BRACE Staff

- Observe the clinical teacher and provide feedback through coaching sessions.
- Monitor the clinical teacher's progress.
- Recommend instructional and behavioral management support and feedback as needed.
- Collaborate with and support the campus principal and supervising teacher.

Extension

A BRACE Seminar Course may be extended if a principal or the BRACE staff determines that the candidate needs more time to fully develop his or her potential. An experience will not be extended for incomplete assignments/benchmarks or failure to complete the BISD Course.

Grading Policies & Completion Expectations

Grading Policy

Beaumont ISD's goal is to help BRACE Candidates become effective teachers. The grading and feedback systems are designed with this growth in mind. Further, BISD believes that grading and feedback should be used as a positive tool to assess student achievement and development in each course in which a candidate is enrolled. A student's grade should reflect mastery of TEA's PPR Standards and their mastery of essential skills, which include critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, time management, and teamwork.

Beaumont ISD believes that grades in the BRACE Program serve as a valuable instructional tool by helping students, teachers, and supervisors monitor candidates' progress within the program and identify areas that need improvement. Grading shall be based on requirements, categories, and assignments as listed in each course syllabus.

Because Beaumont ISD believes that teachers should effectively manage time and materials, BRACE students must meet the deadlines outlined in the syllabus and/or course schedule, as also listed in MobileMind, to receive credit. Reflections, artifacts, exams, and participation points will result in zero points awarded if they are not completed on time. Students who are late to class or leave early will have points deducted from their participation grade for in-person and online classes. *If there are extenuating circumstances, please reach out to the BRACE staff for assistance.*

Credit/Feedback will be entered into MobileMind, and feedback on assignments will be given throughout the program. The BRACE Candidates are responsible for monitoring and tracking their progress within a course based on points and feedback within MobileMind. Also, once credit has been assigned for a course completed in MobileMind, the candidate must send the final certificate for the course to IWU personnel for college credit assignment.

If a candidate does not agree with a credit assigned, they are encouraged to reach out to the BRACE staff for clarification or to provide more information regarding their concern. However, the BRACE staff is the final authority on credit assigned.

Grading is mastery-based, and the courses are self-paced. However, it is the expectation that deadlines and benchmarks are met. BISD PLA assignments that are not mastered will be sent back for review and correction. If assignments are not

completed to mastery throughout a course, the student may not receive credit for that BISD PLA Course. Once an assignment is submitted, it will be scored according to the assignment/syllabus rubric and grading policy.

It is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all makeup work due to an absence. The student is responsible for reaching out to the BRACE staff to see what was missed during the class session and to receive a due date for work missed. All work is due by the final date for the course/Learning Path. For extenuating circumstances, please reach out to the BRACE staff.

Academic Dishonesty

As employees of BISD, you are expected to behave professionally and ethically, including academic honesty regarding your assignments. In the event that a student engages in academic dishonesty, the student shall be subject to grade penalties on assignments or tests and disciplinary penalties and/or counseling in accordance with the *TAC Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, Board Policy DH (local, legal), and EIA (local). Academic dishonesty includes cheating or copying another student's work, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination. The determination that a student has engaged in academic dishonesty shall be based on the judgment of the BRACE staff or another supervising district employee, taking into consideration written materials, observation, or information from students.

Dismissal

The BRACE Program Staff maintains the right to dismiss a candidate from the program if he/she cannot meet the expectations of the program, or the candidate will meet with the program staff to determine an appropriate course of action. Every effort will be made to resolve the problem, but the district, being the employing agency, has the final decision.

In the event that a principal or district administrator recommends a candidate discontinue the program during the school year, a meeting with BRACE Staff, district personnel, and the candidate will be held to discuss the situation.

Participation in the program is contingent upon employment. If at any time a candidate is released from his/her position for any reason, he/she will no longer be able to participate in the BRACE Program. The BRACE Staff may dismiss a candidate

from the program if he or she creates an unsafe environment for other students or if the candidate's behavior does not adhere to the Code of Ethics for Texas Educators and/or state and district policies.

Should dismissal occur, the participant will make arrangements for repayment as outlined in the participant agreement.

Resignation

If a candidate resigns from BISD, they are also resigning from the BRACE Program and may not be readmitted. It is imperative that the BRACE staff be contacted prior to resigning from the district or at the time of resignation.

Should resignation occur, the participant will make arrangements for repayment as outlined in the participant agreement.

Due Process

An Intervention Plan will be developed for any intern who is in need of additional assistance that may include the following:

- Classroom incompetence based on appraisal forms by the school or program staff.
- Failure of program course or courses.
- Failure to maintain an appropriate GPA or academic standing with our learning partners, IWU and/or Teachworthy.
- Insubordination or unprofessional behavior.
- Failure to comply with school or district rules and policies.
- Not meeting program timelines and benchmarks.

A candidate has the right to appeal the decision of the BRACE staff within 10 working days from the day of the dismissal notice. Upon receipt of a written request for further appeal, the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction has 10 working days to address the appeal in accordance with district policies regarding appeals. In the event that the candidate disagrees with the decision of the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, he/she has 10 working days to appeal the decision in writing to the Associate Superintendent of Schools. The Associate Superintendent of Schools is the final authority on program acceptance and continuation and has 10 working days to address the appeal.

Continuing Candidate Status

A candidate must be employed by the beginning of the school year to continue in the BRACE Program, and employment status must be maintained for the duration of the program. Once a candidate is no longer employed in BISD, they are no longer eligible for participation in the BRACE Program.