



Five Michigan Universities Selected to Launch 2026 Education Preparation Providers (EPP) Collaborative

New Statewide Initiative Aims to Strengthen How Future Educators Are Prepared

Michigan, January 22, 2026 – The Michigan Educator Workforce Initiative (MEWI), in partnership with edPrep Partners and 2Revolutions, today launched the 2026 Education Preparation Provider Collaborative, a two-year statewide initiative designed to improve teacher preparation recruitment, retention and quality, and to form a strong foundation to help teacher preparation programs be responsive to the evolving needs of today’s students. After an extensive application process, Central Michigan University, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan State University, Northern Michigan University and Western Michigan University were selected as the five participating Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) for this new initiative.

By launching with five state EPPs, the collaborative will introduce scalable, high-quality models for educator preparation by establishing stronger, data-informed partnerships between educator preparation programs and P-12 districts to strengthen the state’s talent pipeline. The two-year process among EPPs, P-12 districts and national partners will emphasize access and affordability, candidate retention and high-quality clinical pre-service experiences. “The data over the last decade on teacher preparation and retention tells us we must evolve. This Collaborative is an important opportunity to carefully examine and significantly improve how we prepare educators,” stated Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Detroit Public Schools Community District superintendent. “This statewide effort means our universities are committed to leading the change and evolution of teacher preparation in Michigan.”

Through evidence-based practices, structured support and stronger preparation program and district alignment, the EPP Collaborative aims to revitalize educator preparation. Together, all parties will share data to identify precise gaps in candidate readiness that emphasize the implementation of developmental, practice-based models across coursework and classroom experience, strengthening mentor teacher experiences and directly aligning university instruction with district instructional frameworks.

Leading this initiative, MEWI will bring together leaders and organizations to invest resources and expand this platform to ensure EPPs can share professional practices through positive results and ongoing successes. Participating EPPs are fully supported through project funding and partner contributions, receiving \$100,000 per institution to underwrite improvement efforts.

“Transforming education requires innovation from the very first moment a teacher begins training,” stated Becca Tisdale, Partner and Vice President of Programs for the Michigan Educator Workforce Initiative. “This Collaborative was designed to drive partnerships that convene universities, districts and national experts to implement systemic improvements. We are confident this model will not only

elevate the five participating institutions but provide an example for high-quality educator preparation nationwide.”

The five participating EPPs will receive numerous benefits through the collaborative. Access to high-touch technical assistance through individualized coaching, project management support and on-site or virtual guidance will assist these universities in being recognized as leaders in shaping the future of teacher preparation in Michigan while building strong district partnerships that align pathways with workforce needs.

“We are committed to continuously improving our teacher preparation approach,” said Dr. Kevin Guskiewicz, President of Michigan State University. “With MEWI’s support, we’re confident Michigan State will remain a nationally leading education program.”

Ultimately, with proven tools and frameworks, participating EPPs will establish lasting systems and practices that will endure beyond the Collaborative, supporting sustainable, long-term change.

“Our participation in the EPP Collaborative reflects our strategic commitment to educational innovation,” stated Dr. Ryan Gildersleeve, Dean of the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University. “This initiative will create a data-informed system for teacher preparation that serves the complex needs of Michigan districts. We are eager to begin this work in collaboration with our fellow higher-ed institutions, K-12 districts and MEWI.”

Success for the two-year collaborative will be measured according to the edPrep Partners Performance Framework, a structured approach to assessing quality across four critical performance areas: program leadership and continuous improvement, candidate preparation and development, teacher educator practices and district and program partnerships. This framework ensures that efforts and improvements made throughout the process are not temporary, but embedded into the EPP systems for sustainable, long-term results that benefit future educators and their students.

“This framework gives universities and districts a clear, shared roadmap for strengthening how we prepare new teachers,” said Calvin J. Stocker, CEO at EdPrep Partners. “We’re not interested in short-term fixes. We’re working alongside programs to build the systems, habits, and partnerships that make high-quality preparation the norm—not the exception. When programs consistently produce well-prepared educators, P-12 students and communities feel the impact for years to come.”

The launch of the 2026 EPP Collaborative marks the start of a multi-year journey to fundamentally transform how Michigan prepares its teachers. “Collectively, these five universities provide Michigan public schools with nearly 40% - over 1,000 - new teachers each year,” said Jack Elsey, founding partner and CEO of MEWI. “We’re excited to work with each of them to improve the state’s educator workforce for years to come.”

This statewide commitment is designed to drive systemic excellence and accelerate progress in educator preparation, making Michigan a national model for educator workforce development.

For more information, visit www.miedworkforce.org.