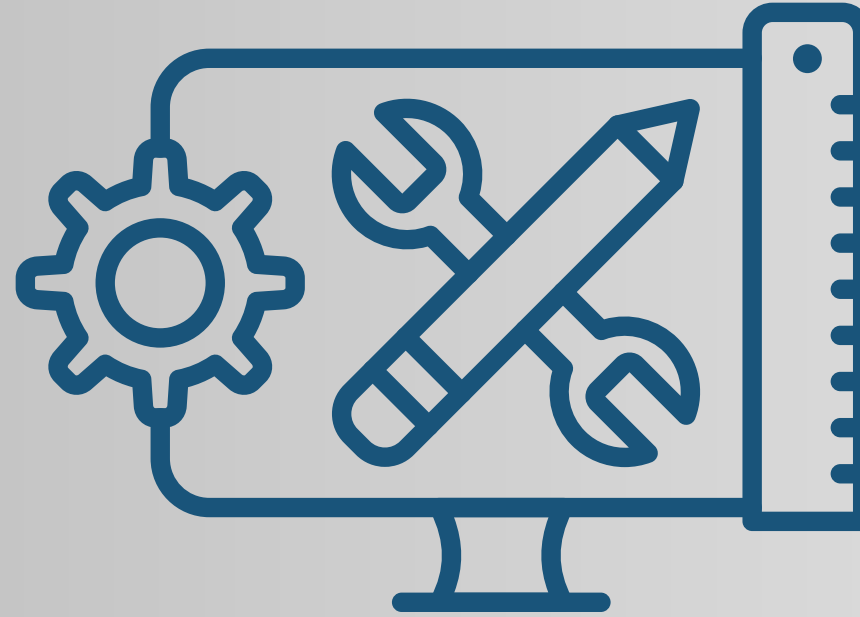




Teacher Candidate Development Toolkit: Strategies for Differentiation, Classroom Environment, and Assessment



April 2026



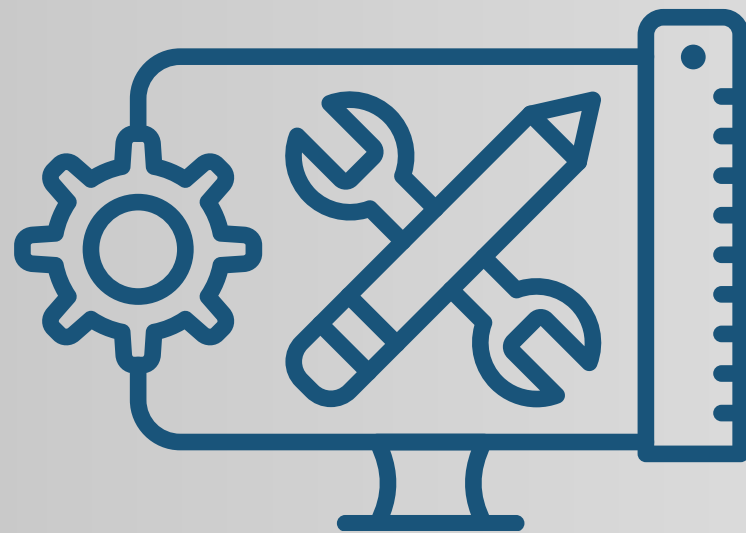
EPPIC Group 5: Teacher Preparation Program's curriculum is not aligned and/or relevant to the current K-12 teacher needs.



Research Question: How do stakeholders perceive teacher candidate preparedness in the core methods: Planning, Instructional Practices, Classroom Environment, and Differentiation.



Sam Houston State University, Our Lady of the Lake University, and UTEACH collaboratively designed and administered surveys to teacher candidates and cooperating teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their educator preparation programs. These surveys, aligned with key dimensions of instructional practice and classroom management, were used to gather valuable insights into planning, assessment, differentiation, and classroom environment. Based on the collected data, the partner institutions identified shared areas for improvement and developed a practical toolkit aimed at strengthening teacher preparation across their programs. This collaborative effort reflects a data-informed commitment to continuous improvement and enhanced teacher candidate support.

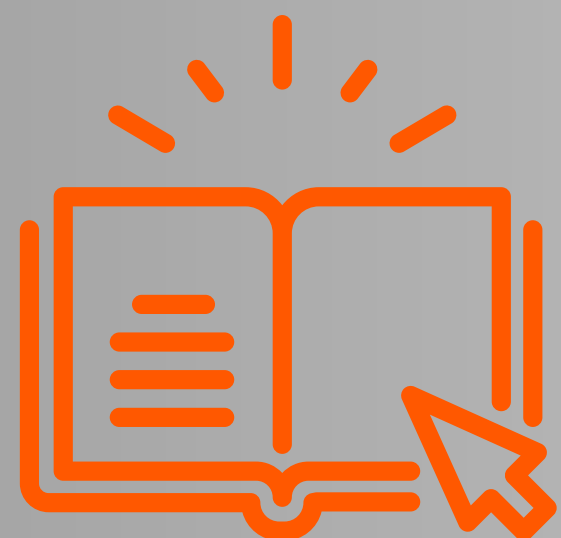


This toolkit is designed to support teacher candidates in strengthening three critical areas of instructional practice: fostering a positive classroom environment, supporting differentiated instruction for diverse learners, and the effective use of assessment and feedback. Drawing from stakeholder feedback, it provides targeted strategies, tools, and reflection prompts to help candidates translate theory into confident, classroom-ready practice.

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW



Goal: To strengthen teacher candidates' readiness in fostering positive classroom environments, delivering differentiated instruction, and using assessment to inform learning.



Resources: This toolkit provides practical strategies, planning guides, reflection tools, and real-world scenarios aligned with high-impact teaching competencies.



Empowerment: By bridging preparation with practice, the toolkit empowers candidates to cultivate responsive and well-structured classroom environments with confidence and purpose.

RESOURCE 1:

Classroom Environment

Designing with Purpose – Creating Inclusive and Intentional Learning Spaces

Understanding Your Discipline Identity & Planning Interventions

Classroom Environment Tips

Communication in the Classroom – Listening,., and Empathy

Instructional Formats in Action: Observation & Reflection Activity

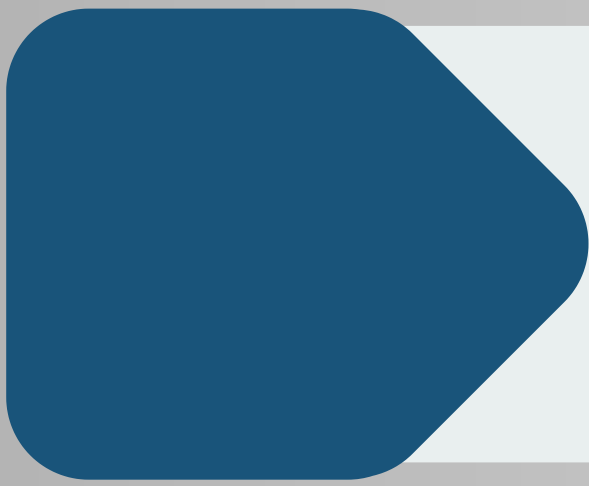
Teaching Students Who Challenge Us Most

Student Motivation & Management Portfolio: The Four Tendencies and Beyond

Motivation in Motion: Building Purposeful Praise and Reward Systems

Start Smart: Designing a Proactive Classroom Management Plan

Boundary Breakers and Builders: A Media-Based Teacher Analysis



RESOURCE #2: Differentiation

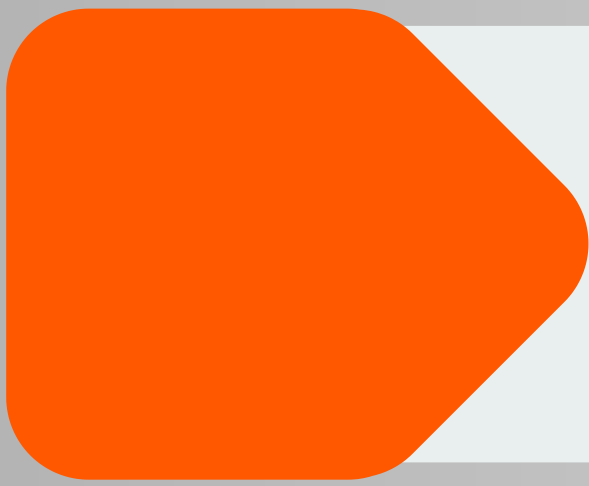
Integration
Matrix

Matrix
Plan

Menu
Choice
Sheet
Template

Mini Teach-
Differentiation

Differentiation
Discussion
Slides



RESOURCE #3:

Data Driven Instruction

Assessment
for Impact
on Student
Learning

Student
Achievement
Chart

Template for
Assessment
for Impact on
Student
Learning

Using AI for
Data Driven
Instruction

Assessment
Data Analysis
Project

Data
Analysis
Assignment

Data Driven
Instruction
Slides

BONUS CONTENT

Classroom
Management
Slides



Teacher Candidate Toolkit: Differentiation, Environment & Assessment Final Thoughts



The stakeholder survey feedback highlights key areas for growth that this toolkit directly addresses, ensuring alignment with stakeholder expectations.



Moving forward, ongoing feedback loops with educators and stakeholders will help adapt and improve the toolkit to meet evolving classroom needs.



Commitment to continuous improvement and responsive practice will support teacher candidates in becoming confident, effective educators over time.



Let us know what was helpful!

We would love to know what you found useful in the toolkit.

Submit your feedback here:

