

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
UNION CITY SCHOOLS**

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Union City High School construction and wellness teacher John Graham has been selected for the 2019-20 class of the Tennessee Educator Fellowship through a competitive process by the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE).

The TEF is a year-long program that equips teachers, school counselors, interventionists and librarians to learn about education policy and advocate for their students and their profession. The educators chosen this year work in a variety of settings, traditional public schools, public magnet schools and public charter schools.

Graham, a UCHS graduate, has been a teacher in the UC School System for seven years. He was one of 31 “fellows” chosen in this the sixth year for the TEF program.

“Even though I have only been through the selection process for the fellowship, I have been extremely impressed with the professionalism, preparedness and enthusiasm this program has for improving the education for Tennessee students,” Graham said.

“Their biggest concern is making education in Tennessee more effective for students in preparing them for post-secondary education as well as skilled labor positions. They want to advocate for better educational policies to help students become successful.”

Graham will gather in Nashville on four different weekends to collaborate with other SCORE fellows and members of the SCORE staff. He will also attend two regional meetings as well as four online convenings, and will be given assignments to complete before and after meetings.

“The Tennessee Educator Fellowship convenes talented and driven educators who are relentless advocates for improving student achievement through student-focused policies and practices,” SCORE President and CEO David Mansouri said. “The fellows bring unique and diverse perspectives and experiences that are invaluable as they participate in local and state-level conversations about preparing all students for success in college, career and life.”

Since 2014, the fellowship has supported more than 180 educators to engage in critical discussions about education policy by speaking at public events, inviting policymakers into their classrooms, writing about their experiences in state and national publications, creating regional professional networks and serving on state-level policy committees.

“The 31 fellows — from different backgrounds, grade levels, subjects, and regions of the state — bring diverse perspectives to policy and practice conversations with a clear focus on greater academic growth and opportunities for all Tennessee students,” SCORE Educator Engagement Associate Leigh Cooksey said.

The fellows chosen for the 2019-20 cohort have a combined teaching experience of 358 years and represent elementary, middle and high schools in 26 districts across East, Middle and West Tennessee.

The members of this cohort teach English language arts, math, science, social studies, STEM, construction trades, and special education in urban, suburban and rural schools. The cohort also includes educators who serve as school counselors, a librarian and an educator who teaches English language learners.

Throughout the upcoming year, the fellows will learn through in-person and online convenings and will serve as liaisons between their colleagues, their communities and policymakers as Tennessee continues the work of improving academic achievement for all students.