



**Louisiana Early Leaders Academy
Application Guide
Year 5: 2023 - 2024**

Join the 5th Cohort of the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy!

The past several years have challenged leaders in new ways, requiring adaptability and creativity, with many challenging conversations along the way. Now more than ever, early learning leaders need new skills and thought partners to solve complex problems. If you run a Type III center, this nine-month executive-level academy is for you.

The Louisiana Early Leaders Academy (LELA) is geared toward enhancing your leadership and management skills to improve quality in your center(s). The Academy offers a community of peer leaders, focused on building instructional leadership to best support young learners to achieve their full potential in school and in life. LELA does this through online and in-person learning sessions with peers, and individual and group coaching.

For cohort 5, directors from all parishes are eligible to apply for and participate in the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy.



The Louisiana Early Leaders Academy Guide is designed to help you answer these questions & more. Read on to learn more about:

- The schedule for online and in-person LELA meetings
- Frequently asked questions and answers
- The selection timeline
- Application questions
- The scoring process for the application and interview

WHAT IS THE LOUISIANA EARLY LEADERS ACADEMY?

The Louisiana Early Leaders Academy is a competitive Fellowship program designed to build the instructional leadership skills of directors of Type III centers. Fellows collaborate and learn from and with their peers through online and in-person learning sessions, coaching, and meetings with their peers in small group coaching sessions that we call Home Team meetings. By completing the fellowship, leaders will develop new skills, networks, and motivation for the important work ahead. Additionally, they will implement new practices in their centers that will transform adult relationships and the quality of instruction that children experience every day.

WHAT IS A FELLOWSHIP?

A fellowship is designed for leaders who are ready to join a community of colleagues that will challenge and support them to grow in new ways. A “fellow,” as the Louisiana Early Leadership Academy participant is called, has a growth mindset, views themselves as a lifelong learner, and recognizes that every person has something to learn and something to teach. The fellowship provides opportunities for a group of lifelong learners to engage in new approaches to learning and sharpen their skills.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS?

Early learning center directors pursue an ambitious vision for the children in their programs. However, the everyday tasks of a center can sometimes distract leaders from their bold vision. Time management, teacher retention, and budgeting are necessary and sometimes overwhelming tasks. These tasks can overshadow parts of your leadership that have the potential to make a huge difference in the lives of children. LELA helps leaders refocus on their vision, while providing them with the knowledge and tools to guide quality instruction in their centers. This means building skills to guide teachers’ growth and improvement through interactions with children in their classrooms.

HOW DO I BENEFIT FROM LELA?

As an early learning leader, you will receive leadership training that is essential for driving positive change in your center, community, the state and nation. Content is designed to support directors to improve teacher job satisfaction, program operations, and the quality of teacher-child interactions. Individualized coaching will be provided to directors on related leadership and management goals.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

LDOE will select thirty directors of Type III centers who are ready to improve instructional leadership in their centers, and increase their influence in the early childhood field across the state and country. Participants will come from a wide variety of life experiences, backgrounds, and experience levels in early childhood education. They will share a sense of purpose, vision of excellence for children, and a commitment to their own professional and personal growth.



HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ACADEMY?

- Attend the virtual webinar to learn about LELA and receive application tips
 - + Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 3:30 pm, [Meeting Link](#)
 - + Meeting Link:
<https://anlar.zoom.us/j/89904397909?pwd=SnVUOUl3UTNaNkRUY1hOU TBHSWxrZz09>
- Read the Early Childhood Connections newsletter. [Subscribe here](#).
- Please contact Bridget.Rey@la.gov with any questions about LELA.

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS?

The LELA program is designed to meet early learning leaders where they are. LELA is a hybrid academy with eight virtual sessions and two in-person meetings. One in-person meeting is planned for Wednesday, August 9, 2023 - Friday, August 11, 2023 and the other is planned for Tuesday, April 25, 2024 - Wednesday, April 26, 2024. Both in-person meetings will be in Baton Rouge, LA. All other LELA activities including live learning sessions, coaching, and home team meetings will be virtual. Fellows are expected to:

- Engage in all 8 live virtual learning sessions—one in each of the following months: August 2023, September 2023, October 2023, November 2023, December 2023, January 2024, February 2024, and March 2024
- Attend and engage in both in-person sessions.
- Participate in all Home Team calls.
- Participate in monthly 1:1 coaching.
- Complete module pre-work and post-work.
- Proactively reschedule one-on-one coaching visits if necessary.
- Complete all required monthly assignments.

To receive the full benefits of the program, we strongly suggest that participants evaluate their ability to engage in roughly 4.5 hours of Academy work per month (excluding the months with in-person sessions).

LELA COHORT FIVE: SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Application and Selection Schedule

- May 30, 2023: Applications open.
- June 6, 2023: Informational Webinar at 3:30 pm
- June 23, 2023: Application period closes at 11:59 pm
- July 21, 2023: Year 5 Cohort Announced

Academy Schedule

July 24 - August 4, 2023: Coaches will conduct “Get to Know You” Interviews with Year 5 Cohort members. We use information from these interviews to create Home Teams and make adjustments to our curriculum and coaching support.

There will be in-person training sessions on August 9-11, 2023 in Baton Rouge and April 25-26, 2024 in Baton Rouge. All travel is the responsibility of the fellow.

Module	Live Session Date and Time & Time Commitment
Module 1: Preparing for Success in LELA and Beyond & Key Skills and Mindsets for Instructional Leaders	<p>Wednesday, August 9, 2023 - Friday, August 11, 2023 <u>In-person:</u> 12:30 pm - 4:00 pm CST on Wednesday, August 9, 2023, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm CST on Thursday, August 10 and Friday, August 11, 2023 (21.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, needs assessment interview, in-person sessions, online work, and home team meeting)</p>
Module 2: High Leverage Leadership and Instructional Leadership	<p>Wednesday, August 30, 2023 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)</p>
Module 3: Time Management and Communication for Continuous Improvement	<p>Wednesday, September 20, 2023 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)</p>
Module 4: Core Knowledge for Instructional Leaders - Instructional Frameworks, Curriculum Implementation, and High Quality Practices - Part 1	<p>Wednesday, October 25, 2023 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)</p>
Module 5: Core Knowledge for Instructional Leaders - Instructional Frameworks, Curriculum Implementation, and High Quality Practices - Part 2	<p>Wednesday, November 15, 2023 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)</p>
Module 6: Growing Leadership in Your Team with Delegation and Distributed Leadership	<p>Wednesday, December 13, 2023 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)</p>

Module 7: Designing, Facilitating or Finding High Quality Professional Development	Wednesday, January 17, 2024 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)
Module 8: Community Engagement and Partnerships	Wednesday, February 21, 2024 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)
Module 9: Building Effective Partnerships with Families	Wednesday, March 27, 2024 <u>Virtual:</u> 11:30 am - 1:00 pm CST (4.5 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, online work, live session, and home team meeting)
Module 10: Building Equity and Leadership in Your Center & Graduation	Tuesday, April 25 - Wednesday, April 26, 2024 <u>In-person:</u> 8:30 am - 3:30 pm CST (Tuesday and Wednesday) (16 hours including the 1:1 coaching session, in-person sessions, and home team meeting)

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

HOW DO I KNOW LELA WILL ADDRESS MY CHALLENGES?

The first two tasks that each fellow will complete with their coach will drive planning for the LELA experience. A leadership coach will work with each fellow to complete a *Get to Know You* interview and plan for and conduct a survey of each fellow's teaching staff. Information from each activity will be used to guide action planning for the fellowship program.

WHAT MAKES THE LOUISIANA EARLY LEADERS ACADEMY SPECIAL?

Directors are used to addressing complex challenges alone. LELA provides opportunities to work with peers who understand and who can provide new approaches.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I AM A STRONG CANDIDATE FOR LELA?

If you can answer "yes" to the questions below, you should consider applying for the LELA.

- Is the majority of your role administrative (director, assistant director, with no regular teaching responsibilities) in a Type III early learning center?
- Are you interested in expanding your leadership role in your center, community, state, and nation?

- Do you supervise teachers as part of your typical responsibilities?

I AM A CENTER OWNER, AND I HAVE A DIRECTOR WHO RUNS THE PROGRAM. WHICH ONE OF US SHOULD APPLY?

The person who is best-suited for the fellowship program is one who is in your center every day, and responsible for guiding teachers. Two individuals from a center can apply, but both must be available at the same time to attend virtual and in-person sessions.

HOW ARE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED FOR THE EARLY LEADERS ACADEMY?

Interested applicants will participate in a competitive selection process to gain a spot in the Academy. The online application is open now and due June 23, 2023.

Applications will only be accepted through the online Google Form. No paper applications will be accepted. This guide lists the questions you will answer on the online application.

We will ask community network leads for recommendations for each applicant. All applicants will be notified of the status of their application at this stage.

All finalists will be notified of the status of their application by July 21, 2023.

Applying is easy!

Complete the [online application](#)* to be considered for a place in the Year 5 cohort. The online application is a Google form and easy to access and use.

- PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE ONLY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS ONLINE*.
- Please do not email or submit hard copies of your application as they will not be considered.

* [Application Link](#):

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe0S7MJTHixNlja5mL1ZiSfrVs8kvfKl_JWEtIqKYNn6lu2_Q/viewform

CONSIDERING APPLYING TO LELA?

Check out this [short commercial](#) to hear from Year One fellows about the benefits of the program.

WHAT DO PAST FELLOWS SAY ABOUT LELA ?

- In general, LELA fellows report learning a great deal from the Academy and from time with their peers to address challenges of their work.
- From an anonymous survey: “LELA is really helping me to identify all of the areas that I need to address or improve. So thanks for developing this it's really gotten me evaluating my leadership.”
- From an anonymous survey: “Every time the fellows meet whether in-person or for an online session, I enjoy hearing from people who are passionate about early childhood education. I also appreciate the opportunity to network with other leaders in my field and share useful tools for running our centers.”
- From an anonymous survey: “As a result of participating in LELA, I have developed a time management system for my center and myself. I am also transitioning into advocacy in early childcare within my community.”
- 100% of participating fellows rate the content and resources as helpful.
- 91% of participating fellows rate the LELA faculty as responsive and helpful.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please use this to prepare for the online application. The online application can be found at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe0S7MJTHixNlja5mLIZiSfrVs8kvfKI_JWEtIlgKYNN6lu2_Q/viewform

Please allow 45-60 minutes to complete a thoughtful and thorough application. This application is the first step in the competitive process of applying to be a Louisiana Early Leaders Academy fellow. We want to understand what fuels your leadership and drives your interest in this academy. Please be sure to take your time to answer the essay questions as incomplete applications will not be considered. Your responses will determine if you are invited to interview.

PART 1: TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Full Name:	Cell Phone Number:
Preferred email address for all communication:	
What is the best way to reach you during the day?	
Role (circle one): <input type="radio"/> Director and owner <input type="radio"/> Director, not owner <input type="radio"/> Assistant director <input type="radio"/> Other:	
How many years have you worked in early childhood education as a director or assistant director? As an early childhood teacher?	
Have you applied to LELA before? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Have you been accepted to LELA before but could not participate? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Have you been accepted and participated in LELA before? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
What gender do you identify as?	
Which category includes your age? <input type="radio"/> 17 or younger <input type="radio"/> 18-20 <input type="radio"/> 21-29 <input type="radio"/> 30-39 <input type="radio"/> 40-49 <input type="radio"/> 50-59 <input type="radio"/> 60 or older	
Please select your race from the list of options: <input type="radio"/> White <input type="radio"/> Black or African American <input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="radio"/> Chinese <input type="radio"/> Filipino <input type="radio"/> Asian Indian <input type="radio"/> Vietnamese <input type="radio"/> Korean <input type="radio"/> Japanese <input type="radio"/> Other Asian (for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, and Hmong) <input type="radio"/> Native Hawaiian <input type="radio"/> Samoan <input type="radio"/> Chamorro <input type="radio"/> Other Pacific Islander (for example, Tongan, Fijian, and Marshallese) <input type="radio"/> Other	

PART 2: TELL US ABOUT YOUR LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

1. What inspired you to lead an early learning center? What do you hope families say about your center?
2. What do you hope to learn from participating in LELA?
3. Why is now the right time in your life for you to participate in LELA?
4. What comments and questions do you have?

PART 3: TELL US ABOUT YOUR CENTER

How many centers do you direct? 1, 2, 3 or more				
Name of center (s):				
Address for your primary center:				
In what parish or parishes is your center or centers located?				
Is at least one of your centers a Type III center? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <i>(The Louisiana Early Leaders Academy is for directors or administrators of Type III centers only.)</i>				
How many employees do you have at your center?				
How many children are served in your center(s)?				
How many children would you like to serve in your center(s)?				
How many of those children receive public funding of any kind for their early care and education?				
# of CCAP:	# of LA 4:	# of EHS:	# of HS:	# of NSECD:
# receiving another type of public funding:		Please indicate the other type of public funding:		

PART 4: TELL US ABOUT TRAINING YOU'VE RECEIVED

Do you have your Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate? Yes No

Have you received any kind of Directors Credential (National Administrators Credential or similar)? Yes No
Which one?

Are you a CLASS® reliable observer? Click all that apply:

Infant: Current Expired **Toddler:** Current Expired **Pre-K:** Current Expired
 I am not currently a CLASS reliable observer. I have never received CLASS reliability training.

Are you a member of any early childhood organizations or councils? Which one(s)?

Please list the professional development and training that you have completed in the last 12 months.

What is your highest level of formal education?

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Some college credits
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Post-master's Certificate
- Doctorate (PhD, EdD, or equivalent)

Do you have any formal or informal training that you would like to describe? Please do so below:

EARLY LEADERS ACADEMY: SELECTION RUBRIC

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____ CENTER: _____

CRITERIA FOR APPLICANT	APPLICATION	INTERVIEW	NOTES
Vision. The applicant is committed to an ambitious vision for the children, families, and teachers from their center and community	___/20	___/20	
Readiness. The applicant is interested in implementing organizational change and clearly articulates areas of improvement.	___/5	___/5	
Effort. The application and interview reflect thoughtful, personal responses.	___/5	___/5	
TOTAL			

APPLICANT DASHBOARD:

ELIGIBILITY	SERVICE	RELIABILITY	CERTIFICATES
	___ # Children served ___ # Publicly funded ___ % Publicly served	Current CLASS reliability areas: ___ Infant ___ Toddler ___ Pre-K	___ ECAC ___ NAC ___ Other: _____
NOTES:			