



**Master of Education in Education Leadership (MEd)
Seeking Principal Certification Program Handbook
and
Site Supervisor Handbook**

Fall 2025

Education Division
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
7101 University Ave
Texarkana, TX 75503
Phone: 903.223.3000

NOTE: This handbook is subject to change without prior notification, and updates will be available in the Education Leadership Department. This handbook does not constitute a catalog and does not carry catalog privileges.

Table of Contents

Master of Education in Education Leadership (MEd)	1
Department of Education Leadership Faculty	3
Faculty	3
Contact Information	3
Admission Process	4
Degree Courses and Standards.....	6
Program Courses and Pathway.....	6
Program Pillars and Standards	6
Principal Practicum	8
Practicum Requirements	8
Practicum Evaluation	8
Site Supervisor	8
University Field Supervisor	8
Practicum Course Requirements	9
Certification Test Approval Procedures.....	10
Principal as Instructional Leader (TExES 268).....	10
Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL 368).....	11
Program Policies	12
Retention and Exit Policy.....	12
Complaint Policy	12
Site Supervisor Handbook	14
The Site Supervisor	14
Site Supervisor Training: Paying it Forward.....	15
Program Resources	17
Code Related to Principal Certification and Standards	17
Assessment Manuals	17

Department of Education Leadership Faculty

The faculty of the Education Leadership Department are professional educators who bring their Texas public school leadership experience to the program. Our faculty has served as assistant principals, principals, coordinators, directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents in various school districts. Their field-based understandings, combined with active research agendas, make for the best possible learning opportunities as students seek to become educational leaders who will make a difference in schools, school districts, and local communities.

Faculty

Faculty	Title	Email
Trisha Gerrish Ray, EdD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Associate Professor of Education LeadershipPrincipal Certification Program Coordinator	TRay@tamut.edu 903-334-6680
Michael Blalock, EdD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assistant Professor of Education Leadership	MBlalock@tamut.edu
Tabitha Dudley, EdD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adjunct InstructorPrincipal, Westlawn Elementary School	TDudley@tamut.edu
Coggin, Kasey, EdD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Adjunct InstructorPrincipal, Waggoner Creek Elementary School	KCoggin@tamut.edu

Contact Information

Questions beyond the scope of this handbook should be directed to the following departments.

Office	Email	Assistance
Registrar	registrar@tamut.edu	Course enrollment issues
Financial Aid	finaid@tamut.edu	Finance issues
Certification Coordinator	AMiller@tamut.edu	Certificate issues
Graduate Admissions Coordinator	SGleason@tamut.edu	Degree issues
Program Coordinator	Tray@tamut.edu	Program issues

Admission Process

The Department of Education Leadership offers a 30-hour Master of Education in Education Leadership (MEd) degree. This degree provides the foundation for the skills and knowledge required to prepare for the *Principal as Instructional Leader* (TExES 268) certification examination and the *Performance Assessment for School Leaders* (PASL 368). For students already holding a master's degree in education (or a related field), Texas A&M University-Texarkana offers a principal certification program consisting of 24 hours of coursework. The programs are offered online, supported with synchronous virtual learning classes for the convenience of our students.

Student admission to the master's degree with principal certification and/or certification-only program is a multi-part process.

1. Graduate Studies Admission

Students must apply to the Texas A&M University-Texarkana Graduate Studies for admission to the master's degree or non-degree-seeking principal certification-only program. To apply for graduate studies, go to the [Graduate Studies Application](#). Complete the appropriate application and submit the processing fee.

The following items are also required for the graduate studies application.

- **Official Transcripts:** University policy forbids anyone from being fully accepted into a graduate degree program without first supplying the University with an official transcript from every regionally accredited college/university the applicant attended. It is important to note that ALL transcripts come directly from the institution of record (mailed, hand-delivered in an unopened envelope sealed by the issuing institution or emailed to admissions@tamut.edu) and must be official.
- **Master's Degree:** A master's degree from a regionally accredited institution is required for the certification-only program.
- **GPA:** To be accepted into the principal certification program, applicants must have a minimum **overall undergraduate GPA of 3.00** or an overall 3.00 on a completed master's degree from a regionally accredited institution.

More information regarding this program can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

2. Educator Preparation Program Application

Students must submit a separate application through the [Educator Portal](#).

- The Educator Portal application requires the following:
 - **Valid Teacher Certificate:** The candidate must hold a valid teacher certificate.
 - **Teaching Service Record**

Additional program admission requirements include:

- **Principal Program Interview:** All candidates will complete an interview with Education Leadership faculty to assess leadership potential, oral communication skills, and managerial skills.
- **Writing Sample:** A link to the writing sample is available in the Educators Portal.
- **English Language Proficiency Requirements for Admission to EPP:** [Texas Education Agency English Language Proficiency Website](#)

3. **Admission**

Once the screening process is complete and you have met the admission requirements for the Principal Certification Program, you will be emailed an ***Offer of Admission to the Principal Certification Program***. Admission is not complete until you respond.

If you have program questions, please contact [Amy Miller, Certification Coordinator](#), at 903-223-3044 or [Dr. Trisha Gerrish Ray, PCP Coordinator](#), at 903-334-6680.

Degree Courses and Standards

Official degree plans are available in Degree Works. The Education Leadership courses and pathways are shown in the following table.

Program Courses and Pathway

Principal Certification Program Pathways		
Students do not hold a master's degree.	Students hold a master's degree in education or a related field and wish to earn a second master's degree.	Students hold a master's degree in education or a related field and wish to seek principal certification only.
30 hours, 10 courses	30 hours, 10 courses	24 hours, 8 courses
Education Leadership Courses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ED 520 Research Design OR EDLD 581 Improvement Science (3-SCH) EDLD 561 Coaching Strategies for Instructional Leadership (3-SCH) 		
Principal Certification Courses EDLD 580 Data Analysis for Instructional Leadership (3-SCH) EDLD 570 Texas School Law (3-SCH) EDLD 525 Executive Leadership (3-SCH) EDLD 540 Campus Strategic Operations (3-SCH) EDLD 531 Instructional Leadership (3-SCH) EDLD 587 Campus Leadership Experience Part 1 (Includes Practicum Part 1; 3-SCH) EDLD 567 Supervision of Instruction (3-SCH) EDLD 588 Campus Leadership Experience Part 2 (Includes Practicum Part 2; 3-SCH)		
Students may submit their PASL assessment to the state during the spring or fall of the final semester of the program. The test is currently unavailable during the summer.		

Applicants seeking a master's degree occasionally request consideration of prior graduate coursework for the requirements of their master's degree. A maximum of 6 SCH of coursework outside of the University will be considered for the degree.

Courses are valid for up to five (5) years before graduation and program completion. Students will be required to retake courses older than five years before completing the program.

Students may begin the program in any semester.

Program Pillars and Standards

Throughout the program, students will complete authentic campus leadership activities and will document the activities through assignments. Students will demonstrate competencies aligned with the Texas standards for the *Principal as Instructional Leader* Certificate through

engagement with administrative activities and responsibilities that are aligned with the Texas Education Agency Pillars:

1. Communication with Stakeholders
2. Curriculum Alignment
3. Diversity and Equity
4. Data-Driven Instruction
5. Hiring, Selection and Retention
6. Observation and Feedback
7. Professional Development
8. School Vision and Culture
9. Strategic Problem Solving

Instruction throughout the program will integrate theory and practice in preparation for the TExES 268 *Principal as Instructional Leader* assessment and the PASL by providing experience in developing and applying competencies associated with the domains of the test:

1. School Culture
2. Leading Learning
3. Human Capital
4. Executive Leadership
5. Strategic Operations
6. Ethics, Equity, and Diversity

The cumulative assignments will result in a *Principal Leadership Portfolio* (PLP). The PLP will be subject to review at various points in the program, upon the course instructor's request, or request by the Principal Certification Program Coordinator. Some campus-based activities within the PLP may be appropriate for students to document as part of the PASL tasks. Students may choose to select from the assignments when considering their PASL submission to the state.

A completed and approved PLP must be submitted to the Principal Certification Program Coordinator to receive authorization to register for the PASL. The PLP will serve as documentation of the student's authentic campus leadership activities.

Principal Practicum

The principal practicum, required by state law, is an integral part of the educational experience of the Principal Certification Program. Students must complete requirements for the Principal Practicum, incurring a minimum of **160 clock hours** of authentic practicum experience. The design of the practicum is to bridge the gap between theory and practice by building upon the candidates' academic foundation with in-school experiential learning. The alignment of the practicum is congruent with state standards, domains, and competencies.

Practicum Requirements

The Principal Practicum is embedded in EDLD 587 Campus Leadership Experience Part 1 and EDLD 588 Campus Leadership Experience Part 2.

Students in the practicum must be employed in an approved Texas educational setting during the two practicum courses.

The practicum experiences are designed to be accrued throughout the two designated courses. The Site Supervisor (mentor principal or designee) will guide the campus activities and interact meaningfully with the candidate concerning field experiences.

While most practicums are completed in public school settings, accredited private schools or charter school settings may be considered for approval. The Texas Education Agency maintains a [list of approved schools](#).

Practicum Evaluation

Candidates will meet with their field supervisor during virtual classes and will be evaluated during their practicum experience. Practicum minimum requirements include:

- 160 hours of authentic leadership activity documenting the six standards for principal certification.
- Three observations of leadership activity totaling 135 minutes.
- Three informal 15-minute “walkthrough” observations per semester in the practicum (may be synchronous or asynchronous).
- TEA-required training documentation.
- Site supervisor documentation.
 - Letter of Attestation of the site supervisor’s qualifications
 - Site Supervisor Training
 - Recommendation Form

Site Supervisor

The site supervisor must hold a current Texas Principal Certificate and must be working in a Texas school district. The site supervisor will receive training per [TAC228.35\(f\)](#). The site supervisor will facilitate the campus activities and will interact meaningfully with the student concerning field experiences.

University Field Supervisor

The university field supervisor must hold a current Principal Certificate and must have experience as a school principal. The field supervisor will receive training per [TAC228.35\(h\)](#).

The field supervisor will complete formal and walkthrough observations of the student per TEA guidelines. The observations will be conducted by video submission.

Practicum Course Requirements

Throughout the practicum, students will complete at minimum the following activities:

- Submit completed *Principal Leadership Portfolio* for approval
- Complete, document, and submit for approval 160 hours of authentic campus leadership activities under the guidance of the campus site supervisor.
- Observations:
 - **Formal Observations.** Participate in three (3) observations evenly spaced across each third of the practicum. The observations may not be fewer than 30 minutes or more than 75 minutes. The total of the three observations must not be fewer than 135 minutes. Students must document the principal standards through authentic campus activities. Observation of campus leadership activities may be synchronous or asynchronous via video recording. Students will participate in a pre-conference and a post-conference.
 - **Walkthrough Observations.** Complete three walkthrough observations of at least 15 minutes in length, three times per semester, while in the practicum. Walkthrough observation activities may be synchronous or asynchronous via video recording.
- Provide evidence of instruction in:
 - Mental Health,
 - Substance Abuse
 - Youth Suicide
 - Dyslexia
 - Code Of Ethics
 - Digital Literacy
 - Texas-Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS)
 - Texas-Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS)
 - Additional or revised training as required by TEA

Certification Test Approval Procedures

Information regarding the two state assessments required for principal certification in Texas may be found below.

Principal as Instructional Leader (TExES 268)

Candidates are limited to a total of five (5) attempts to take the TExES 268 *Principal as Instructional Leader* certification test. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the examination and four retakes as stated in the [Texas Education Code §21.048 \(a-1\)](#).

Students seeking approval to register for the TExES 268 *Principal as Instructional Leader* exam must meet eligibility requirements specified in the TExES 268 registration bulletin. In addition, principal certification students (whether earning certification with a master's degree or principal certification-only) seeking to be eligible to take the certification exam must:

- Be admitted to the principal certification program and demonstrate successful completion of coursework.
- Be currently enrolled in the final semester of the program or have completed the program.
- Must score as follows on **all** qualifying exams in the following order:
 - 240 Tutoring Practice Exams
 - Practice Test 1 – benchmark score
 - Practice Test 2 – minimum of 75%
 - Practice Test 3 – minimum of 80%
 - [Pearson Online Practice Exam](#)
 - Selected Response Test – minimum of 80%
 - Constructed Response Test – minimum of 11 of 16
 - TExES 268 Release exam.
 - Selected Response Test – minimum of 80%
 - Constructed Response Test – minimum of 12 of 16
 - Alternate exam as approved by the Principal Certification Program Coordinator
- Principal Leadership Project submission that:
 - Is at least 90% complete.
 - Meets the approval of the Principal Certification Program Coordinator in terms of quality.
- Demonstrate successful completion of program coursework.

Students seeking approval to register for the TExES 268 *Principal as Instructional Leader* must submit a *Request to Test Application* to [Dr. Trisha Gerrish Ray](#), Principal Certification Program Coordinator, via a Google Form located in the practicum course.

Clearance will only be provided for one testing attempt per request. No early clearances will be considered. Students seeking clearance for retakes must engage in remediation before receiving approval. Students who do not successfully pass the TExES 268 exam will be required to complete remediation as assigned by the Department of Education Leadership. Additional clearances will not be provided until remediation has been completed. Costs of assigned remediation materials, resources, programs, websites, etc. will be incurred by the student.

Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL 368)

Candidates are limited to a total of five (5) attempts to take the Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL). The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the examination and four retakes as stated in the [Texas Education Code §21.048 \(a-1\)](#).

Students seeking approval to register for PASL 368 must submit a *Request to Register for State Assessment Application* to Dr. Trisha Gerrish Ray, Principal Certification Program Coordinator, via a Google Form located in the practicum course. To receive authorization to register, students must provide:

- Evidence of completion, submission, and approval by the Program Coordinator of the *Principal Leadership Portfolio*.
- A signed statement that the tasks are complete and are ready to submit, or a signed completion plan timeline that is approved by the Program Coordinator.

Program Policies

Program policies related to retention, program exit, and the complaint process are available in this section.

Retention and Exit Policy

Retention: Educators and education leaders must show academic, dispositional, and professional characteristics worthy of the students served. Texas A&M University-Texarkana Educator Preparation Programs require the following to maintain program admission:

- 3.0 Graduate GPA
- No grades below “C” in major/professional development areas or Unsatisfactory in Practicum/Internship courses
- No violation of the university Student Code of Conduct
- No violation of the [Texas Education Agency Teacher Code of Ethics](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=19&pt=7&ch=247&rl=Y)
[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=19&pt=7&ch=247&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=19&pt=7&ch=247&rl=Y)

Exit: Candidates will be dismissed from the Educator Preparation Program after a period of inactivity of two years. An inactive candidate is one who is no longer completing coursework, training, and testing requirements with an EPP and is not a completer of the EPP.

Complaint Policy

As defined by TAC 228.70: a candidate or former candidate in an Educator Preparation Program (EPP), an applicant for candidacy in an EPP, an employee or former employee of an EPP, a cooperating teacher, a mentor, a Director of Educator Preparation Services in a school district, charter school, or private school may submit, in accordance with subsection (c)(1) of this section, a complaint about an EPP for investigation and resolution. Any of the persons previously mentioned may seek resolution without fear of retribution. Any current student at Texas A&M University-Texarkana must follow the current university policy listed in the student section of the University Rules and Procedures.

Formal Process for complaints against the EPP at Texas A&M-Texarkana must be submitted in accordance with the following procedures.

1. An individual “files” a complaint by submitting a written letter regarding the complaint to the Education Preparation Program in writing. The College Dean or designee will be available to answer questions regarding the submission of the complaint and provide assistance, as needed.
2. The College Dean or designee will coordinate the investigation of the complaint. The investigating officer will retain the original complaint submission.
3. The designated administrator will review the complaint and provide a written decision to the complainant and the Executive Officer overseeing the office or department named in the complaint within fifteen (15) business days of the administrator’s receipt of the complaint. If additional time is needed for investigation and consideration of the complaint, the administrator will notify the complainant and their Executive Officer of the need for an extension and the date by which a decision

will be made. Absent unusual circumstances, the extension should not be for more than fifteen (15) additional business days. The designated administrator will provide a written decision to the complainant and the Executive Officer overseeing the office or department named in the complaint within five (5) business days of receiving the decision.

Appeals Process

An individual may appeal the decision of the designated administrator within five (5) business days after receipt of the written decision. Appeals must be in writing and submitted to the office of the Executive Officer who oversees the department, office or College named in the complaint. The Executive Officer will review the original complaint and the written appeal and may conduct an additional investigation.

Site Supervisor Handbook

This part of the handbook is for the campus site supervisors.

The Site Supervisor

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a site supervisor for the principal practicum at Texas A&M University-Texarkana. This correspondence extends a welcome along with our sincere appreciation for your willingness to contribute your time, energy, and expertise to develop a future school district principal. As site supervisor for the practicum, you become a regular connection with the student in the learning environment. We greatly appreciate your efforts and your investment in the leadership growth of a fellow professional.

The information in this handbook describes and summarizes the central objectives and procedures of this important program in the professional preparation of future principals. Much of the information is included to inform you of the expectations that are being made of the candidate. There are also expectations of you as a site supervisor. These expectations include the following:

1. Serving as a role model for the administrative candidate. You will exert powerful and positive influences to shape the candidate's career.
2. Providing opportunities for the candidate to lead authentic campus activities. You will be the person who "opens doors" and introduces the candidate to the people and experiences that will facilitate those learning opportunities.
3. Sharing your experiences as a campus leader. You will facilitate the candidate's growth in understanding the role and responsibilities of an effective administrator who knows how to support teaching and learning for all.

At our initial conference with the candidate, we will review the program requirements and the expectations for the candidate. In addition, we will discuss leadership project ideas, observation requirements, and our communication plan. This meeting will occur at our mutually agreed-upon time. It is the candidate's responsibility to coordinate times for meetings.

If you have questions pertaining to any aspect of the practicum, please feel free to contact me. We appreciate your commitment to growing new education leaders.

Dr. Trisha Gerrish Ray, EdD
Associate Professor of Education Leadership
Principal Certification Program Coordinator
Tray@tamut.edu
903-334-6680

Site Supervisor Training: Paying it Forward

Site supervisor training is required by [Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 7, §228.35](#).

The Next Generation!

- In our profession, we have all stood on the shoulders of an educator who came before us. Now it is our turn to support the learning and training of a new administrator.
- We're glad you are joining us on the journey. We could not do this work without you and your willingness to share your knowledge and experience.
- Your willingness to shepherd a principal candidate through this stage in the learning process speaks volumes about you as a professional and your willingness to "pay it forward" with your experience and hard-learned lessons.

Principal Practicum Site Supervisor

- A site supervisor is the current term used for a mentor principal.
- A site supervisor is an experienced role model who guides the professional development of a less experienced individual through intentional coaching.
- A dedicated principal site supervisor is vital to the successful completion of the Principal Certification Program.
- Both the site supervisor and the candidate learn more about themselves, improve their skills, and gain professional recognition.
- It is an opportunity for the site supervisor to give back to the profession through sharing leadership knowledge and skills.
- As a result of their work with you, the principal candidate will be better prepared for the role of campus leader.

Purpose of Mentoring Experience

- Improve the quality of leadership
- Develop a pool of effective administrators
- Provide on-the-job development (apprentice model)
- Create a linkage between theory and practice
- Recognize the expertise of experienced administrators

Benefits for the Site Supervisor

Some of the advantages of serving as a site supervisor may include an opportunity to:

- Reflect on personal skills and practices, explore fresh ideas and new research, and share cutting-edge initiatives.
- Consider data and evidence-based recommendations that may be used for campus improvement strategies.
- Receive assistance with developing and implementing projects vital to campus improvement in areas such as communication, teaching and learning, and campus management; and
- Influence the next generation of district leaders.

Expectations of the Site Supervisor

As a site supervisor, there are expectations for you in the fulfillment of your role:

- Assist with planning and scheduling practicum activities
- Be available for meetings and discussions, clarifications, questions, and problem-solving with the candidate by providing constructive feedback
- Provide regular debriefing sessions, reflecting with the candidate on projects and experiences
- Share past experiences and expertise related to the roles and responsibilities of the principal
- Model effective practices, procedures, and strategies
- Allow the candidate to be meaningfully involved in and to contribute to chosen aspects of the work of the campus. Examples may include:
 - Leading or forming campus committees
 - Leading team/PLC meetings
 - Leading a part of the campus improvement plan process
 - Leading a part of the budget process
 - Completing new or existing projects
 - Completing classroom observations / calibrating findings with you or other administrators
 - Planning and providing relevant professional development
- Offer opportunities for the candidate to attend principal meetings and professional development related to leadership skills

Coaching and Feedback

In addition to providing access to leadership activities, your most important role as the site supervisor is the development of the candidate through intentional coaching and specific, targeted feedback. Some suggestions include:

- As is practical, develop a comprehensive plan for activities.
- Provide frequent and specific feedback and coaching on projects and activities.
- Provide coaching for specific areas of leadership improvement and development.
- Allow the opportunity for practice – or rehearsal.
- Require accountability and set report dates.

Communication

While this portion of the Site Supervisor Handbook serves as official documentation of training, please know that we are available to you and will discuss or clarify any issues that may arise. This effort to train a future principal is a joint venture between the university, the school district, and the student. We value this partnership.

Our Commitment

The Principal Certification Program of Texas A&M University-Texarkana makes the following commitments to you as a site supervisor:

- We will be available when you need us to consult with you and/or your candidate.
- We will schedule conferences to support the work of you and your candidate.
- We will continue to provide the highest quality instruction and guidance for your candidate.

Program Resources

Code Related to Principal Certification and Standards

- [Texas Administrative Code 241.15, Principal as Instructional Leaders Standards](#)
- [Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 2](#)
- [State Board of Educator Certification](#)
- [Texas Principal Certificate Renewal Information](#)
- [Texas Educator Code of Ethics](#)
- [International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\)](#)

Assessment Manuals

- [TExES 268 Principal as Instructional Leader Website](#)
- [Performance Assessment for School Leaders \(PASL\) Candidate and Educator Handbook](#)
- [Task Requirements for the ETS® Performance Assessment for School Leaders \(PASL\)](#)