

Novice Principal Academy Overview

T&L/Educator Talent and Workforce Development

[Novice Principal Academy Application](#)

Overview

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) holds the fundamental belief that student achievement is directly related to the quality of instruction and instructional practices in schools and classrooms. Additionally, the quality of instruction and instructional practices is directly related to the quality of support and leadership classroom teachers receive when preparing their lessons for students. As such, the LDOE is invested in providing training and support for school and system leaders. Using existing school leadership programs (Aspiring Principal Fellowship and EDL Alternative Pathway 4 Boot Camp) as a template, the LDOE has created the Novice Principal Academy to continue supporting principals throughout their first year of school leadership.

Program Description

The Novice Principal Academy is an intensive, year-long cohort that focuses on leadership development through self-reflection, long-range planning, and analyzing school data. Ultimately, each component is studied, analyzed, and explicitly implemented to improve student achievement in Louisiana Schools.

Additionally, participants will be paired with mentors assigned by the LDOE. Every assigned mentor has extensive experience and a documented record of success in school leadership. Many have also been system principals of the year, state principals of the year, semifinalists/finalists, division winners,, or overall state principal of the year. These mentors serve as lighthouses, providing clear and consistent feedback on each participant's leadership behaviors and personal development throughout the year-long cohort.

The Novice Principal Academy has three components: in-person instruction, mentor support, and self-reflection through content review. For in-person instruction, participants will gather three times throughout the cohort: for two days in the summer before the school year begins, one day in January for check-in and re-orientation, and one day at the LDOE's Teacher Leader Summit to reflect upon previous learning and prepare for the continuation of their school leadership journey.

Regarding mentoring support, the Novice Principal Academy articulates that participants meet with their mentors monthly, either virtually or in person, throughout the cohort. Additionally, participants are expected to visit their mentor's school once in the fall and have their mentor visit their school once in the spring. Each site visit is to be explicitly oriented toward the participant's needs, with the content and focus of those visits mutually determined by the mentor and participant.

Finally, recognizing that school leadership can be an overwhelming experience that requires expertise across multiple fields, a core component of the Novice Principal Academy is ongoing exposure to best practices in school leadership. Monthly, participants and mentors will receive annotated research on various topics, including, but not limited to, interview practices, difficult conversations with staff and community members, and developing leadership skills in subordinates. Each of these topics will also include questions for self-reflection and guided discussion between mentors and mentees.

Program Mission/Vision

Vision

Every student, teacher, school, and community deserves an educational leader who is competent, capable, and determined to provide an education focused on high-quality instruction, safety, and strong, effective management.

Mission

The mission of the Novice Principal Academy is to provide extensive support and mentorship for novice principals to develop, with confidence, the educational leadership skills necessary to lead, direct, and support students and teachers in pursuit of personal excellence.

Overall Program Objectives

Objectives

1. Reflect on our abilities and determine areas of reinforcement/refinement.
2. Develop a positive working relationship between mentors and participants.
3. Define what a “successful” principal looks like and create personal goals aligned with that definition.
4. Define a long-range plan, understand its key components, and develop a living long-range plan to guide the principalship's work.
5. Identify key markers within the vastness of available school data, develop school goals aligned to that data, and personal goals aligned to those school goals.
6. Develop the “soft skills” necessary for success as a school principal.
7. Discuss challenges and work through solutions through regular meetings between mentors and participants.

For More Information

Anyone beginning their journey as a school principal in the 2025-2026 academic year who wants to participate in the Novice Principal Academy should [complete the application now](#). The Novice Principal Academy is scheduled to host the Kick-Off meetings on July 17-18, 2025. Due to the intense nature of this pathway, only a limited number of participants are accepted into each cohort. The cost to participate in this pathway is \$1,000. Accepted participants are responsible for any required travel expenses and time off. Please only register if you can guarantee your presence at the Claiborne Building (1201 N. 3rd St, Baton Rouge) for the in-person kick-off on July 16-17, 2026.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Novice Principal Academy should email LouisianaLeaders@la.gov.

To Apply:

[Novice Principal Academy Application](#)

QR Code

