
Course Description

This leadership course is designed to provide instructional leaders from group and school age programs with foundational knowledge about evidence- and research-based best practices for instructional leadership and program improvement. Rooted in an evidence-based framework, the course introduces leaders to a set of concrete strategies for leaders to apply in their programs. The course examines early childhood curriculum, job-embedded professional learning, and the role of instructional leaders in early education settings, including program directors, education coordinators, instructional coaches, and others. Participants will learn about organizational change, and new research on methods for accelerating improvement and creating a culture of collaborative learning. The course introduces strategies for continuous improvement coupled with opportunities to practice and reflect with peers. The culminating project for the course offers leaders an opportunity to identify a problem of practice related to instructional quality in their program, develop a plan to make change, and take steps with their staff to put the plan into action.

Intended Audience: Instructional leadership teams from group child care and out of school time programs (for example: Program Director and Lead Teacher)

Prerequisites: Participants should have a broad knowledge of child development and early childhood education and be working in an EEC licensed group or out of school time program.

Additional Requirements:

The course is delivered virtually; regular and reliable access to a computer/tablet and internet is required. A Google account/login will be required to access all course materials.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- evaluate and select appropriate early childhood curriculum based on a set of evidence-informed criteria and guidance, with a focus on all domains of development and content areas, with a special attention to the areas of language development and concept development
- develop skills for supporting educators' implementation of high quality, inclusive curriculum, with a focus on effective instructional practices, including the principles of universal designs for learning
- develop skills for supporting educators' continuous use of data to inform instruction using continuous quality improvement tools and methods
- describe strategies about how to increase educators' knowledge and skills for supporting multilingual children using high quality teacher-child interactions and differentiated instruction

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- identify “what it takes” to implement curriculum with fidelity and effectiveness including effective implementation methods and enabling contexts
 - increase knowledge of instructional leadership skills that are competency-based, culturally responsive, and aligned to the research-based essential organizational supports
 - reflect on current systems, structures, and practices of instructional leadership and job embedded professional learning and identify the challenges and opportunities to strengthen them, particularly in diverse workplace contexts
 - analyze how instructional leaders use collaborative learning protocols to shape ambitious teaching, learning, and family engagement
 - increase knowledge about engaging diverse families as an essential element of instructional quality

Program Structure and Delivery

This course will be delivered virtually in an integrated training and professional learning community format. The course content will be spread over ten sessions, for a total of 25 hours of instructional time. Course sessions will be held during the week or on weekends depending on demand.

Sample readings, self-study work, and activities

- Read: Reid, J., Scott-Little, C., & Kagan, S. L. (2019) Diverse children, uniform standards. *Young Children*, 74(5), 46-54
- Read: City, E. (2011). Learning from instructional rounds. *Educational Leadership*, 69(2), 36-41.
- Observe and reflect: Lesson Study in dual-language early childhood public school classroom. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hz0-8qFrbGY>
- Early Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP): Participants will use the Instructional Leadership tools, resources, and protocols introduced in the course, to create and begin to implement a quality improvement plan to address a problem of instructional practice at their program. Participants will present the results of their efforts, and the impact on instruction and program quality, at three main checkpoints during the course and participate in collaborative feedback with peers.