Educational Leadership

Doctor of Education Program Application Guidelines

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College of Education
Graduate Education and Research
Texas Tech University
Box 41071
Lubbock, TX 79409-1071
(806) 742-1997
Fax (806) 742-2197
www.educ.ttu.edu
Program Overview

IMPORTANT NOTE: The TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program is a “regional delivery” cohort program serving the advanced leadership learning and development needs of PreK-12 school district educators in the West Texas and Texas Hill Country regions. The TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program utilizes blended instruction that includes a combination of face-to-face and technology-integrated cohort learning experiences. As such, the TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program is NOT an exclusively online delivery program. Students admitted to the TTU EDLD Ed.D. Cohort Program participate in multiple required face-to-face, immersive group learning experiences throughout the three-year program, including: an initial full-weekend cohort orientation at the TTU-Lubbock main campus; one-week long “summer institutes” held in June during the first and second years of the program; and attend “EDLD Doctoral Colloquium” research application events in the Fall and Spring semesters in each year of the three-year program. In addition to these intensive, “face-to-face” group-learning experiences scheduled at regular intervals throughout the three-year program, cohort students and professors interact regularly online within program courses using Blackboard Collaborate. These multiple interactive learning experiences are designed to provide cohort students in the program with enhanced opportunities for collaborative sharing and focused inquiry centered on exploring creative, research-based methods for addressing current problems of school leadership and improvement practice in PreK-12 schools and school districts.

The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Educational Leadership Program at Texas Tech University is designed to enhance the learning of executive school leaders who can identify and implement research-based solutions to high-leverage problems of practice within a PreK-12 school district context. The program is aligned with the core principles of the Carnegie Project for Education Development (CPED) national initiative. The program is designed specifically for school leaders (i.e., accomplished instructional coaches, assistant principals, principals, central office professionals, superintendents, and comparable educational leaders) who are interested in implementing change in their local district practice. Through a three-year sequence of defined courses concluding with a problem of practice dissertation, program participants will deepen their abilities to lead instructional change, identify problems of practice, and implement focused interventions in their local educational organizations.

The Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program has been redesigned for educational practitioners who are full-time professionals. Cohort students are admitted during the Spring semester to a closed cohort group (expected to consist of 15-20 highly qualified school leaders) and progress through a three-year sequence of distance delivered courses. As an integral feature of course instruction, cohort students and faculty participate in multiple face-to-face meetings (i.e., Doctoral Colloquium events during the Fall and Spring semesters, summer institutes in June) and meet at least bi-monthly in a synchronous collaborative digital space, because executive leadership is seldom conducted alone. All courses are designed around the trademark outcome of developing school leaders who can skillfully evaluate and apply data to implement action plans to solve current problems of practice. Cohort students begin and complete the program of studies together, engaging in a common set of courses, summer institute activities, and other collaborative learning experiences.
The program centers on a research inquiry-based curriculum that includes 72 hours of required coursework culminating in a dissertation of practice. A maximum of 12 hours of previous graduate (masters-level) course credit hours earned from one or more accredited universities may be transferred to the program (based on program faculty review of student transcripts). The sequence of courses is uniquely designed around two integrated courses in the fall and spring semesters, and three courses over an eight week summer term. The first two summers of the program include a required one-week, on-campus summer residency designed to enhance students’ professional learning and skill development. With cohort participants representing different school districts across Texas, the power of learning from diverse professional contexts cannot be overstated. Compared to traditional, separate courses that a student takes whenever desired or available, the Texas Tech closed cohort program is designed to enhance professional, collaborative leadership development and generate participant persistence toward program completion.

While traditional programs have been deemed to be preparation for central office leadership and/or the superintendent’s role, the specific focus of this program is to enhance and add value to leadership in both campus and district organizations to positively impact student learning in PreK-12 classrooms.

The Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership at Texas Tech University will make a difference in the way cohort participants think and work as leaders in education. If schools are to improve for ALL students in the future, they must be carefully adapted for each community. Because everyone has a role to play in improving the academic performance of all students, leadership must be adaptable, distributed, innovative, and reflective. This program is designed to develop such leaders!

**Typical Applicants**

Typical participants to the program include working PreK-12 educational professionals who want to transform and improve their leadership practice and create enhanced learning opportunities for all students. This program will be of interest to a variety of leaders working in PreK-12 educational settings:

- Administrators (central office and campus)
- Instructional coaches
- Curriculum, assessment, and professional development specialists
- Counselors
- Regional Service Center Professionals

Participants MUST hold an active professional position in a PreK-12 educational environment that allows them to implement small-scale change in the form of action research. This doctoral program is NOT designed for individuals seeking academic tenure-line faculty positions at universities. The program is designed for educational leaders who intend to improve their current place of practice or advance in their profession while remaining in a Pre-K-12 leadership capacity.

**Application Requirements**
To be considered for admission to the Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Cohort Program at Texas Tech University, applicants must apply to both the TTU Graduate School and the TTU College of Education. Directions are as follows:

Go to: [http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/admissions/how.php](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/admissions/how.php)

Follow the directions on the site and complete the two-step process:

1. Apply to the Graduate School through ApplyTexas (receive eRaider* ID and activation information from the TTU Graduate School).
2. Apply to the TTU College of Education

Materials to be submitted to the TTU Graduate School:

- Application Fee
- Official Transcripts (sent to TTU Graduate Admissions, not to the College of Education)
- GRE (Texas Tech University code 6827) The Educational Leadership Ed.D. Program does require GRE scores, and scores must not be more than 10 years old at the time of application. For more information or to register go to [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org).

Materials to be submitted directly to the TTU College of Education:

**Resume:** Applicants should provide the following information in a resume not to exceed three single-spaced pages (1" margins and 12 point font): educational background, work and other professional experiences (including the applicant’s current employer’s name, location, dates worked, the applicant’s job title, and job responsibilities), and other information that might be relevant (e.g. organizational affiliations, community service). Please note that this program is designed for working professionals, and the applicant must have a position—whether teacher leader/coach (not a classroom teacher with assigned students), administrator, or other—that will allow the applicant to implement change in his/her workplace. Successful applicants will be part-time doctoral students while maintaining full-time PreK-12 educational leadership roles.

**Applicant’s Personal Statement of Interest:** Applicants should write a personal statement of no more than two double spaced pages (1” margins and 12 point font). The statement should address the following: 1) what interest the applicant has about this particular doctoral program, given the applicant’s current or prior professional experiences; 2) a local school or district challenging problem of practice unique to the applicant’s practice that he/she might address as part of the applicant’s action research project(s) and/or dissertation; and 3) how the applicant envisions the program helping him/her address this challenging problem of practice and, through doing so, achieve his/her professional goals.

**Completed Recommendations** (3 in electronic form): The applicant will identify three recommenders who will each submit an online recommendation form providing their perspectives regarding the applicant’s suitability for the program. At least one recommendation must be from your current supervisor (i.e., the superintendent for a principal applicant, either Board of Trustees Chair or former superintendent for a sitting superintendent, etc.). It is strongly recommended that one recommendation be
completed by a former faculty member or academic professional, or from someone who can address the applicant’s academic ability to become a scholarly practitioner. Lastly, one recommendation should come from a person of the applicant’s choice who can speak to the applicant’s qualities that will contribute to his/her success in a practice-focused doctoral program.

Develop a Written Response to the following Problem of Practice Prompt:

You have just been hired as the “Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning” for a district of 10,000 students in Texas. The district has undergone a thorough needs assessment and has determined that the reading mastery levels in grades 3-11 have not evidenced any demonstrable improvement over the past two years since the inception of the new accountability system. The demographics of the school district community have changed significantly over the past five years (students identified as Limited English Proficient [LEP] have increased from 11% to 26% and students identified as poverty level have increased from 38% to 56%). Discuss the steps you would take in the new position. Construct your answer as if you were developing a written report that you would submit directly to the Superintendent of Schools.

The answer to the above prompt should be not more than 5 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, with one-inch margins.

Further Requirements and Timelines

To be considered for admission to the Texas Tech University Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program in the spring of each year, all required materials must be received by October 1. Only one cohort will be admitted annually each spring semester. Incomplete applications will be accepted on the website but will not be reviewed for admittance.

Applicants will be notified of cohort admission decisions on November 1st.

Course Requirements and Program of Study

The Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program consists of 72 hours of coursework beyond a master’s degree from an accredited university program (this is inclusive of the dissertation research hours). A maximum of 12 hours of previous graduate (masters-level) course credit hours earned from one or more accredited universities may be transferred to the program (based on program faculty review of student transcripts). **Texas Tech University no longer offers a separate set of courses to attain “stand alone” superintendent certification preparation.** The courses noted below in yellow WILL apply toward superintendent certification preparation because the program includes superintendent professional certification preparation as part of its integrated curriculum design.
The course sequence below is based on beginning the program during the spring semester and being continually enrolled for the three-year sequence of courses. NOTE: Failure to register for a semester or summer load of courses or participants who fail to complete courses on time will result in the student’s removal from the program and the closed cohort. This is a unique feature of this program and requires significant commitment on the part of each participant selected for the cohort. Many of the courses are designed to be integrated with the companion course in a given semester or summer term. Courses may not be taken out of order.

The program sequence of courses is as follows:

**Year 1**

Spring 2016

**EDLD 5380**: EC-12 Learning and Performance in District Organizations

**EDLD 6385**: Research in Educational Leadership (Leadership Theory and Behaviors)

Summer 2016

One-week Summer Institute of Professional Learning (collaborative experience on TTU campus – 2nd week in summer term)

**EDLD 5381**: District Resource Allocation and Deployment

EDLD 6310: Social Justice and Equity in Educational Leadership

EDLD 6300: Organizational Behavior and Change in Education

Fall 2016

EDLD 63XX: Inquiry I: Designing Problem Based Research in Educational Leadership

**EDLD 63XX**: Issues in Educational Leadership: Accountability

**EDLD 5394**: Superintendent Internship (optional but required for Texas superintendent certification; this course is not part of the course sequence for the Educational Leadership Ed.D.)

**P1 End of Phase Assessment**: Consists of each cohort student identifying one or more problems of practice through an action research project.

**Year 2**

Spring 2017

EDLD 63XX: Program Evaluation and Assessment in Educational Leadership (use course from Higher Education and assume it has been approved for research)

EDLD 6340: Educational Policy and the Law (in EC-12 Schools)

Summer 2017
One-week Summer Institute of Professional Learning (collaborative experience on TTU campus)

EDLD 5384:  Development of Human Capital and Resources
EDLD 63XX:  Instructional Leadership and School Reform
EDLD 63XX:  Leading Instruction for English Language Learners

Fall 2017

EDLD 63XX:  Inquiry II: Designing Problem Based Research in Educational Leadership
EDLD 63XX:  Issues in Educational Leadership: Curriculum, Assessment, and Interventions

**P2 End of Phase Assessment:** Engages each cohort student in designing a specific action research intervention to address an identified problem of practice.

Year 3

Spring 2018

EDLD 63XX:  Capstone – Conducting Problem Based Research in a District Context
EDLD 63XX Seminar:  Evidence Based Leadership in Education
(Qualifying Exams recommended during this semester)

Summer 2018

EDLD 8000:  Dissertation in Practice (6 hours)

Fall 2018

EDLD 8000:  Dissertation in Practice (6 hours)

**P3 End of Phase Assessment:** Culminates with each cohort participant fully implementing the identified action research intervention study, including engaging in progress monitoring and adjusting procedures during intervention implementation, and evaluating the intervention study’s overall impact.

Yellow highlighting denotes courses eligible for Superintendent Certification Preparation.

TTU Superintendent Eligible Courses are for Selected Cohort Participants ONLY!

Important Curriculum Sequence Dates to Remember:

Weekend Cohort Orientation for Year 1 Participants (held annually on a weekend after Thanksgiving but prior to December 18).

Summer School begins in June each summer. Summer Institute of Professional Learning will be a mandatory, week-long on-campus residency experience for cohort participants scheduled during the second week of the summer term.
The Educational leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program includes three summers of required coursework and two Summer Institutes of Professional Learning (during Year 1 and Year 2).

Notification of Cohort Selection
The Office of Graduate Admissions in the TTU Graduate School will send an official letter of acceptance/rejection to applicants. The EDLD Program Coordinator and the Associate Dean of the College of Education will also send acceptance/rejection notification letters.

Appeal process
The admissions process for the Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program is highly competitive and selective. The appeal process is to reapply to the program the following year because only a limited number of applicants may be accepted annually.

Additional Information and Suggestions
Other important issues such as registration, financial assistance, ethics, and appeals procedures are outlined in the Texas Tech University Graduate Catalog, College of Education Doctoral Student Handbook, and the Education Student Handbook. These can be accessed through the TTU College of Education website.

Cohort Program Design Components and Student Progression Through Doctoral Study

Educational Leadership (EDLD) Curriculum Design Threads
The Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program’s Trademark Outcome (Executive school leaders who can skillfully evaluate and apply data to implement action plans to solve problem of practice) is operationalized concretely through four curriculum design “threads” (Instructional Leadership; Data-driven Decision Making; Communication for Change; and Results for All Students) which are incorporated into the specific learning components and articulated Assessment and Evaluations for the sequence of courses in the Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Cohort Program. You will note in the above sequence of courses the End of Phase Assessments for Phase 1, 2 and 3 that correspond to Years 1, 2, and 3 of the program.

Across the nation, there are calls to reform educational leadership preparation in a drastic manner, and Texas Tech University is responding by transforming its programs to meet those demands. A basic part of this transformation is rethinking how educational leaders are prepared. Reforming executive leadership training means rethinking the entire educational process. Many aspects of these reforms are found throughout the courses—reforms designed to help you become an exceptional educational leader:
You will develop higher-level skills and products. Learning outcomes in all courses will still include knowledge and reasoning, but these will serve as prerequisites to higher-level skill and product competencies you will develop.

You will learn the attributes valued by employers and education professionals. (State and national standards, professional literature, a variety of focus groups, and potential employers were involved in determining the learning outcomes for these courses.)

Instruction will be connected to the achievement of school community stakeholders you will be leading.

Culminating Experience

Participants in the Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program complete action research that culminates in a Dissertation in Practice (DIP). The dissertation research is the second (or third or fourth) in a series of studies conducted over the course of the three-year program. In the above course sequence, you will note the P1 End of Phase Assessment, P2 End of Phase Assessment, and P3 End of Phase Assessment. In each phase, you will be assessed on your growth as a leader in education. Through successive action research projects, students will practice and refine research skills in an applied setting while making a difference in their local school/district. The dissertation represents a more sophisticated and complete iteration of a process that is a career-long quest to discover local knowledge, create local change, study the effects, and implement more informed change. You will be a better consumer of research after this course of study!

Dissertation in Practice (DIP)

The DIP is a scholarly endeavor that is also authentic to schools and districts. It will have lasting impact on a complex problem of practice. The specific features of the DIP are as follows:

1. The DIP identifies a researchable, complex problem of practice that has been vetted with the student’s school district leadership. Note: The problem of practice is a persistent, contextualized, and specific issue embedded in the work of a professional practitioner.
2. It demonstrates use of rigorous and appropriate methods of inquiry to address the identified problem of practice.
3. It shows the potential for positive impact, change or intervention on the stated problem of practice.
4. It demonstrates the practitioner’s ability to act ethically and with integrity (human subjects).
5. It proposes strategies for realizing a positive impact on individual and community professional practice, policy, and/or future research in the field.
6. It demonstrates the integration of theory and practice to advance professional knowledge and to impact the field.
7. It demonstrates the practitioner’s ability to communicate effectively to an appropriate audience in a way that addresses scholarly professional practice.
Program Cohort Acceptance

Once an applicant has been notified of acceptance to a cohort, the program coordinator will communicate cohort program activity dates for the coming years. The program coordinator will serve as the facilitator of the cohort for the first year. In the second year, the program will designate your chair for the dissertation in practice based on your ongoing action research. The superintendent of the cohort participant’s school district should, in most instances, approve and be a part of determining the ongoing problems of practice. In addition, one member of the committee for the dissertation in practice is recommended to be a practitioner from the PreK-12 environment.

Doctoral Program Progression Requirements

Qualifying examination. After completing all course work, each student must pass a doctoral qualifying examination. The qualifying examination requires synthesis and application of knowledge acquired during the course of study and action research for the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree in Educational Leadership. The participant may take this examination after receiving approval of the degree plan from the Dean of the Graduate School and completing most of the course work prescribed by the degree plan.

The dissertation committee judges the qualifying examination on a pass/fail basis. At the discretion of the dissertation committee, the committee may ask the student to complete an oral examination to provide additional evidence of his/her ability to synthesize and apply knowledge of Educational Leadership and/or the minor or related field. If the student fails the qualifying exam, the qualifying examination can only be repeated once after a lapse of at least four months. Once the applicant passes the qualifying examination, the TTU Graduate School admits you to candidacy, upon the recommendation of the dissertation committee. The chair of the committee submits this application for candidacy. The student has four years to complete the dissertation after admission to candidacy.

The program makes any required accommodations for participants with disabilities to take the qualifying examination. The student must provide official documentation from TTU Student Disability Services. The student should discuss individual needs with his/her dissertation committee chair to arrange needed accommodations.

Dissertation Proposal, IRB, the Dissertation, and Oral Defense. After successfully passing the doctoral qualifying examination, the participant is eligible to present a formal proposal for dissertation research to his/her dissertation committee and other interested faculty and students. Once approved by the dissertation chair and committee, the candidate submits a research study proposal to the Texas Tech University Institutional Review Board (IRB) that reviews and approves all research conducted with human subjects at Texas Tech University. The participant must have IRB approval before beginning research. The final product, the dissertation in practice—a work of action research in a school district setting—must be defended in an oral defense administered and evaluated by the chair and members of the dissertation committee.

Statement of Intent to Graduate. The participant’s last step before the defense is to file a Statement of Intention to Graduate and pay graduation fees. Since specific
deadlines exist for filing forms and paying fees, please contact the Texas Tech Graduate School for additional information including dates for graduation.

Financial Aid. Information about financial aid is available from the university’s website at http://www.ttu.edu. The participant should contact the TTU Financial Aid Office and information is also available on the College of Education website at http://cms.educ.ttu.edu/.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Do applicants need a master’s degree before applying for the TTU Educational Leadership Ed.D. Cohort Program?**

   Applicants are required to have a master’s degree before applying to the TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program. A maximum of 12 hours of previous graduate (masters-level) course credit hours earned from one or more accredited universities may be transferred to the program (based on program faculty review of student transcripts).

2. **May applicants take courses before being selected to the TTU Educational Leadership Ed.D. Cohort program?**

   No courses will transfer into the program other than those noted in #1. The TTU Educational Leadership Ed.D. Program is a selection-based, closed cohort program.

3. **May participants take classes outside the TTU College of Education for this program?**

   Educational Leadership program faculty have designed the coursework denoted in this handbook so that all of the courses are required. There is no space for electives other than the courses noted in the designated “scope and sequence.”

4. **Does the program accommodate distance-learning participants?**

   The program includes distance-delivered courses. Students will be required to participate in synchronous class meetings within these courses using Blackboard Collaborate. You will need a microphone (webcam is optional), and reliable Internet access on a regular basis. Attendance for synchronous online class meetings is mandatory as designated by the faculty member instructing the course. The evening of the week (Mon-Thurs) will be determined in advance of each course. In addition, students must attend a face-to-face weekend orientation before beginning the program, participate in two week-long, face-to-face Summer Institutes of Professional Learning in Years 1 and 2, and participate in Doctoral Colloquium events scheduled during the Fall and Spring semesters in each year of the three-year program. The Program Orientation and two Summer Institute face-to-face meetings will be held at the Texas Tech University Lubbock Campus with housing paid for by the cohort participant.

5. **How much does the TTU Educational Leadership Ed.D. Program cost?**
Tuition and fees (resident and non-resident) depend on the University costs at the time of the cohort admission. Cohort participants may expect modest increases in tuition and fees imposed by the TTU Board of Regents concurrent with the start of each new university year. You may access the rates at:

https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/funding/tuition.php

This doctoral program requires enrollment in six credit hours per semester in the fall and spring and enrollment in nine credit hours each summer for three years. The remaining hours are denoted for dissertation credit hours and enrollment is continuous until program completion.

6. **May participants work full time while enrolled?**

YES! The program is designed for working professionals, and participants must have a position—whether instructional coach, counselor, administrator or other position—that allows students to implement action research and affect change. The Educational Leadership Ed.D. Program is not designed for those interested in full time doctoral study.

7. **How many students are admitted?**

A typical cohort is expected to consist of 15-20 highly qualified school leaders. Cohort numbers may vary from year to year.

8. **When are admission decisions made?**

Applications will be reviewed from mid-summer to September. Selected cohort participants will be informed by October 1st each fall semester. Potential participants applying to the program should make certain that they are available to start courses in the spring semester and can make a solid commitment to full involvement in the cohort program for three years.