



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
College of Education™

Educational Leadership

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program

Application Guidelines – (Last updated 12.15.2020)

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Program Overview

IMPORTANT NOTE: The TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program is an online cohort program serving the advanced leadership learning and development needs of PreK-12 school district educators in Texas and across the nation. The TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program utilizes online instruction that includes multiple cohort collaborative experiences (i.e., virtual online course delivery with cohort online collaboration and Summer Institutes). As such, the TTU Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program is an online delivery program. Students admitted to the TTU EDLD Ed.D. Cohort Program participate in three immersive group-learning experiences throughout the three-year program, including an initial cohort orientation at the TTU- Lubbock main campus and three-day “summer institutes” held in June during the first and second years of the 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 on the Education Doctorate (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-and-a-half-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 First Semester of Year One of the program to a closed cohort group (expected to consist of approximately 15-20 highly qualified school leaders) and progress through a three-and-a-half-year sequence of distance-delivered courses. As an integral feature of course instruction, cohort students and faculty participate in three face-to-face meetings (i.e., on campus orientation during the first semester and two 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 program’s 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 online collaborative learning experiences.

The program centers on a research inquiry-based curriculum that includes 66 hours of required coursework culminating in a dissertation-in-practice. A maximum of 30 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 in each of the first two years of the program is uniquely designed around two integrated courses in the fall and spring semesters, and two courses over an eight-week summer term. The first two summers of the program include a required three-day, 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 education 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, including:

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

Program 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. Detailed directions can be found on the Graduate Application process page:

<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/education/apply-now/graduate.php>

Below is a list of materials all applicants are required to submit.

Materials to be submitted to the TTU Graduate School:

- **ApplyTexas Application:** This application can be found at www.applytexas.org. To apply to the Educational Leadership Ed.D program, you will need to select “Education – Edu. Leadership (Ed.D.) (Online inside Texas)”
- **Application Fee:** The initial application fee is \$60. Any changes to a submitted application (e.g., entry date, desired program) will require a \$50 fee per change. The fee can either be paid with the initial submission of the ApplyTexas application or later through the Graduate School website.
- **Transcripts:** Send unofficial copies of all transcripts to the Texas Tech Graduate School at graduate.admissions@ttu.edu. The transcripts must be in PDF format and no larger than 2 MB. Multiple attachments per email will be accepted. Grade reports or unofficial transcripts from university web portals will not be accepted. Please redact the Social Security Number anywhere it appears on your transcript. If documents are written in a language other than English, a copy of a complete and official English translation must be provided with the original language records. Official, mailed transcripts will only be accepted during your first semester if you are admitted to your desired program.
- **GRE (Texas Tech University code 6827):** The Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D) in EC-12 Educational Leadership 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.

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 Academic Learning" for a district of 15,000 students in Texas. The district was not part of the pilot program for Texas's new teacher and principal evaluation system (T-TESS and T-PESS). As such, both systems will be implemented in all Texas school districts beginning in the 2017-18 school year. The Superintendent has asked you to implement both systems with fidelity and as a long-term initiative that will drive the district's student learning agenda for the next three years. Research indicates that collaboration on leadership and teaching practices may be highly effective in improving instructional practices that ultimately improve student achievement. In your new role as Assistant Superintendent for Academic Learning, what **specific, detailed ACTION PLAN (i.e., "short- and long-term action steps")** would you recommend to the superintendent that district administration implement in order to ensure that T-TESS and T-PESS are genuine improvement initiatives, rather than simply compliance mandates from the Texas Education Agency?

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 and to begin courses in the program, **all required application materials must be received at least two months prior to the first semester of Year One of the Program.** Individual cohort groups will be admitted annually in late fall and late spring of each year to begin courses in the following semester. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Applicants will be notified of cohort admission decisions on an ongoing basis.

Course Requirements and Program of Study

The Educational Leadership Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Program consists of 66 hours of coursework beyond a master's degree from an accredited university program (this is inclusive of the dissertation research hours). A maximum of 30 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 either the spring or summer semester and being continually enrolled for the three-and-a-half-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 three-and-a-half-year program sequence of courses is as follows:

TTU EDLD EdD Cohort Program semester-by-semester course sequence [Note: The 96-hour program consists of 18 courses (i.e., all EDLD EdD core doctoral courses, the EDCI 6381 course, and the two EDLD 7000 research courses, but not including the superintendent internship) plus 12 hours of EDLD 8000 which equals “66 semester credit hours” of doctoral study (beyond the “30 semester credit hours” allowed by the TTU Graduate School as transfer hours toward a doctoral degree program at TTU).]

EdD Core Doctoral Courses

YEAR ONE

First Semester

EDLD 6301 – EC-12 Learning and Performance in District Organizations (doubles as SUP CERT course)

EDLD 6385 – Research in Educational Administration: Leadership Theory and Behaviors (doubles as SUP CERT course)

Second Semester

EDLD 5381 – School District Resource Management: District Resource Allocation and Deployment (doubles as SUP CERT course)

EDLD 6300 – Organizational Behavior and Change in Education

Third Semester

EDLD 6381 – Development of Human Capital and Resources (doubles as SUP CERT course)

EDLD 6307 – Inquiry I: Designing Problem Based Research in Educational Leadership

****P1 End of Phase Assessment: Knowledge and skills associated with educational leadership; framing and defining problems of practice**

YEAR TWO

First Semester

EDLD 6314 – Issues in Educational Leadership: Curriculum, Assessment & Interventions

EDLD 6308 – Inquiry II: Designing Problem Based Research in Educational Leadership

EDLD 5394 – Superintendent Internship (this is an additional “internship course” taken by cohort students pursuing superintendent certification preparation at TTU that is listed on students’ superintendent certification plans only)

Second Semester

EDLD 6312 – Issues in Educational Leadership: Educational Accountability

EDCI 6381 – Constructivist Inquiry Methods

Third Semester

EDLD 6316 – Leadership for School Reform

EDLD 6340 – Educational Policy and the Law

****P2 End of Phase Assessment: Design action research intervention to address problem of practice identified.**

YEAR THREE

First Semester

EDLD 6001 (EDLD 6318) – Special Topics Seminar: ELL (Advanced Study of Special Topics in Educational Administration)

EDLD 6305 – Social Justice Leadership

Second Semester

Research Blocks

EDLD 6361 – Doctoral Seminar

EDLD 6392 – Doctoral Internship

EDLD 7000 (3 hrs) – Research

Third Semester / plus Dissertation Final Defense Semester

(Note: The twelve semester credit hours of EDLD 8000 are to be organized in consecutive semesters by the student’s dissertation chairperson based on the student’s progress in conducting and completing her/his dissertation research.)

Research Blocks

Third Semester: EDLD 7000 (research) – 3 hrs / EDLD 8000 (doctor’s dissertation) – 5 hrs

Dissertation Final Defense Semester: EDLD 8000 – 7 hrs

****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.**

Total: 96 hours (66 hours plus 30 hours transfer from masters or post graduate program)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Courses denoted in yellow are required for superintendent certification.

Important Curriculum Sequence Dates to Remember:

Cohort Orientation for Year One Participants (held in the month prior to the first semester of coursework).

Summer School begins in June each summer. The **Summer Institute of Professional Learning** is a mandatory, on-campus three-day residency experience for cohort participants scheduled during the first summer term in the first two years of the program.

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 problems 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-and-a-half-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-in-practice 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 throughout the three-and-a-half-year program. 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.

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 30 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 orientation before beginning the program, participate in two 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-and-a-half-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 six 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. What if a student is already a superintendent or certified in Texas to serve as a superintendent?

This program includes the coursework to be certified in the state of Texas to be a superintendent. Yet, the courses denoted as superintendent certification prerequisites are required of all students selected to the cohort even if already certified. Superintendents and interested students with superintendent certification are encouraged to apply because all coursework is deemed important for senior executive leadership in education.

9. When are admission decisions made?

Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis for future cohorts. Selected cohort participants will be informed in the semester prior to their cohort program's semester start date. Potential participants applying to the program should make certain that they are available to start courses in the first semester of Year One of the program and can make a solid commitment to full involvement in the cohort program for three-and-a-half years.