



Building Professional Capital to Lead State Early Childhood Policy Reform Overview of the 2025 NASLEE Leadership Academy

On behalf of the NASLEE Executive Committee, we are pleased to announce that we will begin recruitment for the second cohort (2025) of the NASLEE Leadership Academy in October 2024. The Leadership Academy addresses a critical goal of one of NASLEE's [strategic priorities](#) -- to build leadership capacity of state early education leaders through leadership development opportunities and supporting equitable pathways to leadership at the state and national levels.

What is the NASLEE Leadership Academy? It is a 9-month executive leadership program tailored to state early education administrators.

Who is eligible to apply to the Leadership Academy? The Leadership Academy is open to all individuals who are eligible to be [full agency members](#). These are state agency employees with major responsibilities related to early childhood care and education. Applicants can be located in a variety of state agencies serving children in this age range, including state departments of education, Governor's Offices, and other state early childhood education agencies, including Head Start Collaboration Offices, Early Intervention, Early Childhood Special Education and Child Care Administrators. Membership in NASLEE is not required to apply to the LA but will be required of all those accepted.

How Much Does the LA Cost? There is no monetary cost to participants. All travel to the in-person meetings will be covered by NASLEE.

What is the goal of the Leadership Academy? The goal is to increase leadership and organizational capacity of state early education leaders to implement effective early education programs and policy. Selected state early education leaders will increase their knowledge and competencies in various dimensions of leadership. In turn, these increased leadership skills will result in more effective policy implementation and stronger impact on teachers, administrators, and ultimately children.

What will we study and learn? The Leadership Academy is designed as a customized executive leadership development program and will include training to learn new skills, guided reading, journaling, discussion and peer learning, as well as guest speakers. The core competencies of the LA are built upon three pillars of leadership:

Personal Leadership. This pillar focuses on deepening self-awareness and personal change in the exercise of leadership and crafting personal visions for achieving high quality early learning teaching and learning environments. This includes representing the voice and expertise of early childhood educators in developing prenatal to 3rd grade policies and extending one's competence in articulating and building collective commitment around a shared vision.



Program Improvement. The second pillar attends to coherent implementation of multiple policy initiatives in conjunction with data from children, families, communities and schools to (a) accelerate early learning across diverse learners and programs and (b) prevent and ameliorate early learning disparities and inequities.

Organizational Leadership. The third pillar addresses leadership in the context of state governance of early childhood policy, legislatures, state boards of education, early childhood professional and advocacy organizations. Navigating state agency bureaucracy, cross-agency collaboration, and the political process of state policy and budget development are focal topics of interest.

The curriculum of the Leadership Academy will provide learning experiences that will weave these three pillars of leadership, and related skills and competencies throughout the LA. The content is embedded in adult learning principles and will be woven throughout the in-person meetings, interim webinars, personal reflections/journaling, peer learning, coaching and mentoring.

What are the expected results of participation in the Leadership Academy? By the conclusion of the Leadership Academy, we strive for the following impact on you, your role and your organization:

- *Increased self-knowledge of personal leadership skills and application to the exercise of leadership.*
- *Improved implementation of the state's publicly funded programs for children from birth through third grade.*
- *Strengthened partnerships with state leaders and organizations to build a more unified, equitable, and efficient state early childhood system.*

Who are the staff, faculty and coaches? [Mandy Sorge](#), Executive Director and Nicole Madore, Program Coordinator of NASLEE, together with [Lori Connors-Tadros](#), strategic advisor to NASLEE oversee the implementation of the Leadership Academy. We have identified core faculty with significant expertise in critical aspects of leadership and experience in early childhood education, including systems thinking, results based accountability, adaptive leadership, and strategic communications. Each fellow is also assigned a personal coach, drawn from our membership of colleagues with considerable experience in leading transformative change in early childhood education.



What are the time commitments? The 2025 Leadership Academy will begin in February 2025 and conclude in October 2025 at the NASLEE Annual Roundtable.

Four in-person meetings will be held in March, May, July and October 2025 pre-conference meeting at Fall NASLEE Roundtable as final meeting. The March, May and July in-person meetings will be held in the Washington, DC area. The final meeting will be held in October at the location of the Annual Roundtable. Four webinars will be held in February, April, June, and August/September, 2025. Additional, pop-up “office hours” virtual meetings will be scheduled periodically as needed.

Fellows accepted into the Leadership Academy will be required to secure release time for the dates indicated below including permission to travel out of state. Fellows are expected to attend each meeting and webinar, unless there are extenuating circumstances. Participants also will be expected to meet regularly by phone with their coach and commit time to preparing for in-person meetings, interim webinars, and completing a job-embedded project.

Thursday, February 6, 2025, (Webinar #1) 2:00-4:00 PM EST-- Welcome and Kick off of the 2025 NASLEE Leadership Academy and preparation for Systems Thinking training.

(In-Person #1) March 3 (travel day), March 4, 5, 6 Training, March 7 (travel day), 2025 - three full days of training on Systems Thinking for Early Education Leaders.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025, (Webinar #2) 2:00-4:00 PM EST-- Introduction to Leading for Results and the job-embedded project.

(In-Person #2) May 5 (travel day), May 6-7 Training, May 8 (travel day) 2025- two full days of training on Leading for Results.

June 12, 2025, (Webinar #3) 2:00-4:00 PM EST -Introduction to Organizational Leadership.

(In-Person #3) July 14 (travel day) July 15-16 Training, July 17 (travel day), 2025- 2 full days of training on Organizational Leadership.

August and September, Dates to Be Determined (Webinar#4) - A series of four 1.5 hour webinars that are planned by and for the leadership fellows.

(In-Person Meeting #4)- October TBD- at the NASLEE Annual Roundtable- 1 day preconference training just for the Fellows. Fellows are expected to attend and participate in the 3 days of the Annual Roundtable.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE APPLICATION PROCESS SEE THE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY WEBPAGE AT <https://www.naslee.org/leadership-academy>

