STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEADING
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 290-3-3
TEACHER EDUCATION - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

290-3-3-.34 Instructional Leadership (Grades P-12).

1. **Rationale of Instructional Leadership Programs.** The study of instructional leadership begins at the Class A level. These standards build upon the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards, ISTE Standards, Alabama Specific Standards, and the Praxis for Educational Leadership. The Class A leadership program shall be to prepare leaders to serve effectively in P-12 positions. The Class A is an initial certification program in leadership. Implementation of the standards will be in the Alabama Continuous Improvement guidance.

2. **Institutional and Program Requirements.**

a. Institutions that meet accreditation standards at the master's degree or higher level may offer a Class A leadership program.

b. Institutions must have and enforce policies that prevent candidates from using courses for credit at a lower level from using the same course for credit at an advanced level.

c. Completion of a Class A program for instructional leadership requires at least 30 semester hours of graduate credit appropriate to instructional leadership and not used for prior-level certification or degree in any teaching field or area of instructional support.

d. Institutions must be CAEP accredited. If the institution has advanced programs, they must meet the approved CAEP advanced standards at the time of accreditation. See the CAEP website for the most up to date CAEP advanced standards.

3. **Unconditional Admission to Class A Program in Instructional Leadership.** Each institution shall establish and enforce a policy that specifies when the candidate must meet criteria for unconditional admission to the program. Admission to the graduate school is not equivalent to unconditional admission to an approved program. Requirements for unconditional admission shall include:

a. A criminal history background check. See Rule 290-3-3-.03 (College and University Requirements).

b. A valid bachelor's- or master's-level professional educator certificate in a teaching field or a valid master's-level certificate in another area of instructional support. If an individual is unconditionally admitted to an Alabama Class A program based on a valid professional educator certificate in another state, completes a Class A program, and subsequently applies for Alabama certification at the Class A level, then the individual must hold at least a valid Class B Alabama Professional Educator Certificate before applying for Class A certification.

c. Experience: Applicants to the Instructional Leadership program must meet one of the following criteria:

i. Have a minimum of three full years (or six full semesters) of full-time, acceptable professional educational experience in a P-12 setting, which must include at least one full year of full-time P-12 classroom teaching experience.

ii. Have a valid Alabama Professional Educator Certificate endorsed for library media or school counseling, document a minimum of four full years (or eight full semesters) of full-time employment, in the school system, as a library media specialist or school counselor in a P-12 setting, and provide a written recommendation from the current employing superintendent.

d. Submit an admission portfolio before an interview consisting of the following:

i. Three letters of recommendation including the applicant's principal or supervisor. Each local superintendent will establish requirements for recommendations from the principal and/or supervisor.

ii. Complete copy of the most recent performance appraisal.

iii. Evidence of ability to improve student learning.

iv. Evidence of leadership potential, including evidence of the most recent accomplishments in educational leadership.

v. Summary of candidate's reasons for pursuing instructional leadership certification.

vi. Summary of what the candidate expects from the preparation program.

e. Pass an interview conducted by a program admission committee including both P-12 instructional leaders and higher education faculty.

f. Individuals must be unconditionally admitted to the Class A Instructional Leadership Program prior to enrolling in any instructional leadership courses in the program. Individuals may complete supporting courses prior to the date of unconditional admission.

4. **Curriculum** of an Instructional Leadership Program. The curriculum for instructional leaders builds on candidate knowledge and abilities acquired through preparation for an employment as an educator. These standards contain a more detailed description of each of these standards. To promote each student's academic success and well-being, prospective instructional leaders learn to do the following:

a. Develop, advocate for, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education.

b. Act ethically and according to professional norms.

c. Develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

d. Cultivate a caring and supportive school community.

e. Develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel.

f. Foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff.

g. Engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways.

h. Manage school operations and resources.

i. Act as agents of continuous improvement.

5. Requirements for **Class A Certification in Instructional Leadership**. Readiness to serve as an instructional leader shall include:

a. An official transcript from an accredited institution documenting an earned master’s degree in instructional leadership. The institution must have been approved at the time of degree conferral.

b. Satisfactory completion of an instructional leadership program approved by the Alabama State Board of Education with a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all courses in the program.

c. A **Survey of Special Education course** is required if not previously completed. The course may not be older than 10 years unless the candidate has teaching experience within the last 5 years, or he/she used the course for prior level certification.

d. Successful completion of an **internship** that allows candidates to benefit from purposeful hands-on experiences designed to prepare them to lead the essential work of school improvement and higher student achievement. The internship experiences shall be co-constructed by university and LEA partners to ensure that experiences are meaningful, real-world, in the cooperating schools, comprehensive, and valuable. The experiences must include practical experiences, field or clinical, that must occur in every instructional leadership course taken and an additional residency. The residency must be uninterrupted service in an active school while students are present for the equivalent of 10 full days. A comprehensive portfolio must be maintained that indicates the experiences and knowledge gained during the instructional leadership internship experiences. The portfolio will be evaluated collectively by university faculty and cooperating school leaders. The internship should include the following:

i. Opportunities to work on real-world problems with instructional leaders that provide appropriate support, guidance, and supervision.

ii. Explicit school-based assignments that provide opportunities for the application of knowledge and skills that are central to the responsibilities of an instructional leader.

iii. Practice progressing from observation to participation to leading school-based activities inclusive of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of real-life problems at each level.

iv. Field placements where candidates work with students, teachers, parents, and communities.

v. Ongoing supervision by program faculty who have the expertise and experience working in a school leadership capacity.

vi. Rigorous evaluations of interns' performance based on standards, exit criteria and consistent procedures.

6. **Testing** for Class A Certification for Instructional Leadership. Applicants for initial Class A certification in instructional leadership must meet the requirements of the Alabama Educator Certification Assessment Program (AECAP) as a precondition for certification.

7. **Interim Employment Certificate.** An Interim Employment Certificate (IEC) allows a superintendent or administrator to employ an applicant who is completing requirements for initial Class A certification in instructional leadership through a State-approved Class A program at an Alabama institution. Additional information, including requirements and restrictions is provided in the current Educator Certification Chapter (290-3-2) of the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

8. **Reduced-Hour Option.** A person who holds a Class A Professional Educator Certificate and meets the program admission may be able to complete a reduced-hour program to be recommended for a Class A Instructional Leadership Certificate. Although the number of semester hours of required credit for instructional leadership courses may vary by EPP, depending on the courses needed to document compliance with program approval standards, at least 18 semester hours of credit for instructional leadership courses are required for this option. EPPs may choose to require additional courses or set a higher GPA requirement. Every instructional leadership course required for the reduced-hour option must include either field or clinical experiences. None of these courses may be taken prior to unconditional admission.

9. **Faculty.** An institution shall meet the following criteria.

a. At least two faculty members who are full-time to the instructional leadership program shall hold earned doctorates in instructional leadership (educational administration) or related fields.

b. A minimum of two full-time faculty members in instructional leadership (educational administration) shall each have a minimum of three years of experience as a practicing assistant principal, principal, central office supervisor, assistant superintendent, or superintendent, or any three years combination thereof.

c. Instructional leadership faculty with recent experience in instructional leadership shall supervise interns. The institution shall have and follow a written policy pertaining to teaching load credit for supervising candidates in field experiences and residencies.

d. To ensure recency of exemplary instructional leadership in a P-12 setting(s), an EPP may request permission from the State Superintendent of Education to meet one of the two required faculty positions by combining the work of no more than two part-time faculty members whose combined workload equals one full-time position.

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