

6A-5.081 Approval of School Leadership Programs.

This rule sets forth the requirements and implementation of the approval process for each type of school leadership program offered by a Florida postsecondary institution, ~~or~~ public school district, charter school, or charter management organization.

(1) Definitions. For the purposes of this rule, the following definitions apply.

(a) “Academic year” means the period of time during which program candidates attend or complete a state-approved school leader preparation program. This includes summer term, fall term and spring term, ~~usually mid-May to mid-May of each calendar year.~~

(b) “Competencies and Skills Required for Certification in Educational Leadership in Florida” mean those practices described in Rule 6A-4.00821, F.A.C., which is incorporated herein by reference (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07637>). A copy of Rule 6A-4.00821, F.A.C., may be obtained from the Florida Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Room 124, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400.

(c) “Competency-based” means that participants in school leader preparation programs must demonstrate the skill sets and knowledge bases outlined in the Florida Educational Principal Leadership Standards.

(d) “Continued approval” means that subsequent to an initial approval, a school leadership program has been granted the authority to operate for a five-year period. The basis for continued approval is outlined in the documents entitled Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards for Level I Educational Leadership (EL) Programs, Form EL CAS-2023 2016; and Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards for Level II School Principal (SP) Programs, Form SP CAS-2023 2016.

(e) “eIPEP” or “electronic Institutional Program Evaluation Plan” means a Department-maintained web-based tool that serves as a data repository, data collection and reporting tool for both program performance data as well as a repository of continued approval goals and strategies for state-approved school leadership programs ~~from Florida postsecondary institutions and school districts.~~

(f) “Field experiences” mean activities conducted in a variety of prekindergarten through grade 12 settings that are designed to give the program candidate ~~aspiring instructional leader~~ the ability to practice and demonstrate competence in the core expectations of effective school administrators outlined in the Florida Educational Principal Leadership Standards.

(g) “Florida ~~Educational Principal~~ Leadership Standards” mean those practices described in subsection 6A-5.080(2), F.A.C., which is incorporated herein by reference (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07638>). A copy of Rule 6A-5.080, F.A.C., may be obtained from the Florida Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Room 124, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400.

(h) “Initial approval” means that a new school leadership program has been granted the authority to operate for a five-year period. The basis for initial approval is outlined in the documents entitled Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level I Educational Leadership (EL) Programs, Form EL IAS-~~2023~~ 2016; and Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level II School Principal Leader (SP) Programs, Form SP IAS-~~2023~~ 2016.

(i) “Institutional Program Evaluation Plan” or “IPEP” means the annual plan developed by each approved Level I educational leadership or Level II school principal program to describe its review and analysis of program candidate and program completer data and how the results will impact continuous program improvements as part of its continued approval process.

(j) “Instructional expertise” means documented successful demonstration of the ~~core~~ standards for effective educators outlined in the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs) and a documented track record of achieving student gains. Acceptable documentation of instructional expertise must include a rating of “effective” or higher on the “Performance of Students” and “Instructional Practice” sections of the candidate’s two most recent performance evaluations per Section 1012.34, F.S. For candidates who are not employed by a Florida public school district, a provider may accept alternative equivalent documentation demonstrating two years of effective instruction with a record of student learning gains.

(k) No change.

(l) “Level I educational leadership program” (Level I program) means a program eligible to be offered by a post-secondary institution, school district, charter school, or charter management organization that leads to certification in educational leadership for the purpose of preparing individuals to serve as school administrators.

(m) “Level II school principal program” (Level II program) means a program eligible to be offered by a school district, charter school, or charter management organization that builds upon Level I program training and leads to certification as a school principal.

(n) ~~(h)~~ “Partner” means to develop and maintain a collaborative professional relationship with agreed upon goals and outcomes. Partnerships must include evidence that the institution, school district(s), charter school(s), or charter management organization(s) work together to:

1. through 3. No change.

(o) ~~(m)~~ “Placement rate” means the number of program completers reported annually by each program to the Department who are identified by the Department’s Staff Information System, as prescribed in Section 1008.385(2), F.S., as employed in a full-time or part-time school administrator position in a Florida public school district, including charter schools, within three years of program completion. If a program provides documentation of a program completer’s death or disability, the number of program completers included in the calculation will be adjusted.

(p) ~~(n)~~ “Program admission standards” mean the minimum requirements an applicant must meet to be considered for entry into an educational leadership preparation program. The program admission standards for all programs must define (1) candidate grade point average (GPA) requirements, (2) candidate professional qualifications, to include minimum “instructional expertise” and “leadership potential” standards, and (3) candidate selection processes used to determine admission status.

(q) ~~(o)~~ “Program candidate” means an individual who has been admitted into and is currently enrolled in, but has not yet completed an Level I educational leadership or Level II school principal program approved under this rule.

(r) ~~(p)~~ “Provider” means an entity that is authorized to offer ~~school leadership programs; these entities are a postsecondary institution, school district, charter school and a charter management organization. The term includes applicants and entities approved to offer school leadership programs~~ a Level I or Level II program, as defined in this rule.

(s) ~~(q)~~ “Program completer” means an individual who has satisfied all Level I educational leadership or Level II school principal program requirements approved under this rule.

(t) ~~(r)~~ “School leadership positions” mean the administrative personnel positions that are defined in Section 1012.01(3)(c), F.S.

(2) Requirements and processes for initial request and approval of Level I and Level II educational leadership programs and school principal programs.

(a) Requirements for approval of Level I educational leadership programs:

1. through 4. No change.

5. Providers shall describe how competency-based training is aligned to the Florida Educational Principal Leadership Standards.

6. No change.

7. Providers shall only endorse as program completers candidates who demonstrate all of the Florida Educational Principal Leadership Standards at the initial certification level and earn passing scores on all portions of the Florida Educational Leadership Examination required in Section 1012.56, F.S.

8. Except for postsecondary institutions, a provider shall offer its approved Level I professional development program ~~in educational leadership~~ only to its employees who hold a master's degree from an accredited or approved institution as described in Rule 6A-4.003, F.A.C. Programs may provide for admission of candidates without this degree, provided that the provider includes a process of formally notifying such candidates that they are not eligible to complete the program without official documentation of the master's degree.

(b) Processes for submission of an Level I educational leadership program for initial approval:

1. The president or chief executive officer of a Florida post-secondary institution, a charter school or charter management organization or a public school district superintendent who seeks approval to offer a Level I an educational leadership program or school principal program, shall submit a written request which is further described in the documents, Florida Department of Education Request to Submit Form-Educational Leadership, Form RTS-EL 2023 2016, and ~~Florida Department of Education Request to Submit Form School Principal, Form RTS-SP 2016~~ within thirty (30) business days prior to January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15. The Department will inform the institution or district superintendent in writing of the receipt of a fully completed request within five (5) business days.

2. Upon written verification by the Department of a fully completed request, the provider shall submit to the Department an electronic application file, which is further described in the documents, Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level I Educational Leadership Programs, Form EL IAS-2023 2016, and ~~Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for School Principal, Form SP IAS 2016~~ by January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

3. The Department shall conduct a review of the electronic application folio submitted in support of the request for initial approval within ninety (90) days of receipt of the application portfolio. The Department shall notify the provider in writing of the following:

a. Receipt of the electronic application folio.

b. through c. No change.

(c) Requirements for approval of Level II school principal programs:

1. With the exception of former military officers that qualify for admittance under Section 1012.55(1)(e)1., F.S., a provider shall only admit candidates who hold a valid Florida Educator's Certificate in the area of educational leadership, education administration, or administration and supervision pursuant to requirements of Rule 6A-4.0083, F.A.C., and who are employed in a public school within the district in a school leadership position through which the candidate can fully demonstrate the competencies associated with the Florida Educational Principal Leadership Standards.

2. No change.

3. The provider shall describe how it provides individualized instruction using a customized learning plan for each candidate, and the competency-based training that is aligned to its school administrator evaluation criteria under Section 1012.34, F.S., and the William Cecil Golden Professional Learning Development Program for School Leaders under Section 1012.986, F.S.

4. The provider shall ensure individuals who are designated as program completers have satisfactorily performed instructional leadership responsibilities as measured by the school district's school administrator evaluation system under Section 1012.34, F.S., for persons employed by the school district or by the charter school or charter management organization.

(d) Processes for submission of a Level II program for initial approval:

1. The president or chief executive officer of a charter school or charter management organization or a public school district superintendent who seeks approval to offer a Level II program, shall submit a written request which is further described in the document, Florida Department of Education Request to Submit Form-Level II School Principal Program, Form RTS-SP 2023, within thirty (30) business days prior to January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15. The Department will inform the president or chief executive officer or district superintendent in writing of the receipt of a fully completed request within five (5) business days.

2. Upon written verification by the Department of a fully completed request, the provider shall submit to the Department an electronic application, which is further described in the document, Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level II School Principal Programs, Form SP IAS-2023, by January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

3. The Department shall conduct a review of the electronic application submitted in support of the request for initial approval within ninety (90) days of receipt of the application. The Department shall notify the provider in writing of the following:

a. Receipt of the electronic application.

b. Missing or deficient elements and provide a period of ten (10) business days for the program to submit supplemental information or documentation to address the deficit(s).

c. Approval or denial of approval for each program included in the request. A denial of approval shall identify the reason(s) for the denial and the deficiencies. A program that receives a denial of approval may reapply for initial approval.

(3) Requirements and processes for continued approval of Level I and Level II educational leadership programs and school principal programs.

(a) Reporting processes for continued approval are as follows:

1. No change.

2. By November 15 of each year, each provider shall submit via the Department's eIPEP platform located at <https://www.florida-eipep.org/>, a program evaluation plan in accordance with Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards, Form EL CAS-~~2023~~²⁰¹⁵ for Level I educational leadership programs; or Form SP CAS-~~2023~~²⁰¹⁶ for Level II school principal programs.

3. During the final year of the program approval period, the Department shall conduct a continued approval site visit that will include a review of each approved program. The purpose of the site visit shall be to review evidence of the program's implementation of the continued approval standards described in the document, Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards, Form EL CAS-~~2023~~²⁰¹⁶ or Form SP CAS-~~2023~~²⁰¹⁶. The site visit shall also include a review of the annual program evaluation plans described in subparagraph (3)(a)2. of this rule. At the end of the site visit, a summative rating score shall be calculated based on criteria outlined in the

forms: Form EL CAS-~~2023~~ 2016 for Level I educational leadership programs or Form SP CAS-~~2023~~ 2016 for Level II school principal programs.

4. No change.

(b) At the end of the continued approval period, the Department shall examine the summary findings with summative rating score from the site visit review. The Commissioner shall grant continued approval or denial of approval for each state-approved Level I or Level II educational leadership or school principal program based on the continued approval summative rating scale and shall notify the provider institution or school district in writing of the decision. The continued approval summative rating scale is as follows:

1. through 3. No change.

(4) No change.

(5) The following forms are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of this rule. Copies may be obtained from the Florida Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Room 124, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400.

(a) Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level I Educational Leadership (EL) Programs, Form EL IAS-~~2023~~ 2016 (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07639>), effective November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

(b) Florida Department of Education Initial Program Approval Standards for Level II School Principal Programs (SP), Form SP IAS-~~2023~~ 2016 (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07640>), effective November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

(c) Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards for Level I Educational Leadership (EL) Programs, Form EL CAS-~~2023~~ 2016 (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07641>), November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

(d) Florida Department of Education Continued Program Approval Standards for Level II School Principal Programs (SP), Form SP CAS-~~2023~~ 2016 (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07642>), effective November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

(e) Florida Department of Education Request to Submit Form-Level I Educational Leadership Program, Form RTS-EL ~~2023~~ 2016 (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07643>), effective November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

(f) Florida Department of Education Request to Submit Form-Level II School Principal Program, Form RTS-SP 2023 ~~2016~~ (<http://www.flrules.org/Gateway/reference.asp?No=Ref-07644>), effective November 2023 ~~December 2016~~.

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