



Advisor Questions and Answers

What is the NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy®?

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP™) Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® is a program designed to promote and build the capacity of national principals and directors to lead Pre-K-3 communities.

Who is sponsoring this initiative?

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP™), Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS), and the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECA) are partnering to provide high-quality professional learning and a resource program to meet the needs of elementary principals and Pre-K program directors serving children from age three to eight or Pre-K-Grade 3.

What is the role of the Advisor?

The advisor plays a crucial role in ensuring that program participants take full advantage of the resources that will be available to them through this blended learning environment. Throughout the program, participants will receive guidance from an assigned advisor who will support them in completing the online coursework by participating in an online community, and developing and implementing a Capstone Project. In the initial launch meeting, the advisor will have the opportunity to meet with cohort participants and develop a virtual communication process that the advisor and each cohort participant will use to build their relationship during the program. The advisor will also guide and encourage participants to develop relationships with one another through online discussions. The communication can be in the form of, but not limited to, e-mails, monthly virtual meetings, conference calls, and individual calls with program participants as needed. The launch, mid-year, and program wrap-up meetings will also provide in person connections for advisors and program participants to build their relationship.

What are Advisor responsibilities?

The advisor's responsibilities include maintaining a positive relationship with NAESP™, their assigned cohort participants, CLAS, and NAESP staff who will serve as a resource for advisors to help them serve as an effective resource for participants in a blended learning environment. Additional responsibilities are, but not limited to, the following:

- Participates in a virtual advisor training prior to the first in-person meeting.

- Attends and participates in three in-person meetings and one Capstone Project webinar.
- Supports, encourages, motivates, and guides assigned participants in completing course lessons and Capstone Project implementation activities within established course due date timelines.
- Facilitates group meetings and fosters interactions among participants in a virtual learning environment.
- Keeps NAESP staff informed, via email, on any learner support needs and/or technical problems with the NAESP Learning Management System (LMS).
- Posts timely written feedback in the LMS on each assigned participant's course lessons, capstone project proposal, written capstone project report, and slide presentation.
- Participates in Advisor Check-in Zoom meetings and submits timely participant progress reports.
- Reviews course lesson materials/resources and fosters LMS discussion thread interactions between participants.
- Guides assigned participants to apply their Academy learning in the development of a Capstone Project problem of practice that aligns to their chosen competency area.
- Facilitates consistent written and verbal communications via e-mails, electronic chats, and conference calls with assigned participants on a bi-weekly basis through-out the program.
- Communicates identified program requirements, changes, and/or resources to assigned program participants.
- Completes annual program self-assessment survey.

Will program Advisors receive training and support?

Selected NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® Advisors will participate in an advisor training prior to the first in-person meeting. Advisors will also receive ongoing support and guidance from CLAS and NAESP™ that may consist of webinars, conference calls, individual calls, emails, and online activities.

Will Advisors be compensated for program participation?

NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® Advisors will be compensated by CLAS as specified in the Advisor contract plus limited travel expense for program participation.

What are characteristics of an effective Advisor?

The following characteristics are a result of research studies which state that ongoing support via online and face-to-face components are an effective way to reinforce and improve transfer and development of adult learning. Advisors who support program participants should demonstrate the following characteristics while guiding, teaching, and coaching:

1. Meet ethical guidelines and professional standards

2. Establish online coaching skills
3. Establish trust
4. Maintain a coaching presence
5. Utilize active listening and powerful questioning
6. Facilitate learning
7. Create awareness
8. Design action
9. Encourage goal setting
10. Manage progress and accountability

How will program content and training be delivered to participants?

The year-long program will consist of a multifaceted and highly engaging blended professional learning environment that will include three in person and/or virtual meetings, multi-media online coursework, and collaboration with peers in a learning management system through on-line discussions and group Zoom meetings. The culminating Capstone Project will provide program participants with an opportunity to apply what they are learning to their current setting. Cohort participants will, with the guidance and support of a trained Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® Advisor, progress through the online training program that is aligned to NAESP™'s foundational competency guide, *Leading Learning Communities: A Principal's Guide to Early Learning and the Early Grades (Pre-K-3rd Grade)*. Cohort participants and advisors will also participate in three in-person and/or virtual full-day learning sessions to help take theory, learning, and content into practice.

What are the six competencies that characterize *Leading Learning Communities: A Principal's Guide to Early Learning and the Early Grades (Pre-K-3rd Grade)*?

- Understand Child Development and Its Implications for High-Quality Instruction and Interactions, Pre-K-3rd Grade
- Develop and Foster Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Embrace and Enact a Pre-K-3rd Grade Vision
- Ensure Equitable Opportunities
- Share Leadership and Build Professional Capacity
- Promote a Culture of Continuous Improvement

What are prerequisites for program participants?

While the program will be particularly focused on selecting principals/directors in underperforming schools/programs, applications are encouraged and will be considered by any principal, director, or leader of a Pre-K-3 school or agency.

What is the tentative program timeline?

- March 4, 2022: Applications released.
- April 1, 2022: Applications due to CLAS by 4:30 p.m. CST
- April 2022: Notification to Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® applicants.
- April 2022: Program timeline released to participants and advisors.
- May 4, 2022: Advisor Orientation Meeting (Virtual)
- May 5, 2022: In-person orientation and launch meeting for program participants and advisors.
- May 2022 – September 2022: Course 101 online lessons with cohort and advisor online discussions.
- September 22, 2022: Second in-person meeting for program participants and advisors. Recap of Course 101, review Course 201 online lessons, and Capstone Project.
- September 2022 – April 2023: Course 201 online lessons and Capstone Project development and implementation.
- April 6, 2023: Final in-person meeting for program participants and advisors. Capstone Project presentations by program participants.

How will program participants be assessed?

The NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® will offer multiple methods for program participants to assess their learning. Initially, participants will complete an assessment of their current skills and practices. Then cohort participants will assess their knowledge and application of each competency in the *Leading Learning Communities: A Principal's Guide to Early Learning and the Early Grades (Pre-K–3rd)*. Program participants and advisors will also complete surveys following each in-person meeting and complete a final program evaluation noting the effectiveness of the NAESP Pre-K-3 Leadership Academy® on their school, level of leadership and professional growth. Upon completion of the blended program coursework, advisors will guide participants through the development and implementation of a culminating Capstone Project focused specifically on each participant's unique experiences and application of learning. The final in-person Capstone Project sharing meeting will be the culminating activity and add lasting value to the professional growth of each program participant.