

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER (CIL) PROGRAM

A program designed to identify and recognize educational leaders who demonstrate the highest standards of school instructional leadership

2026-2027 Application Packet

Deadline: May 1, 2026



Offered through

The Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools



CERTIFIED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER (CIL) PROGRAM

A program designed to promote the highest standards of school instructional leadership offered by the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS)

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Certified Instructional Leader (CIL) program was established in 2013 to promote the highest standards of instructional leadership through the credentialing of school or district administrators. The CIL program is designed to identify educational leaders who demonstrate the knowledge and skills which are essential to the practice of effective instructional leadership. The purposes of the CIL certification program are to:

establish the body of knowledge for instructional leaders;

assess the level of knowledge demonstrated by instructional leaders in a valid and reliable manner;

encourage professional growth in the field of educational leadership;

formally recognize individuals who meet the requirements set by the CIL Commission; and

serve the school or district stakeholders by encouraging quality instructional leadership.

The CIL Commission, with the assistance and advice of proven instructional leaders, has attempted to develop a credential that will recognize accepted levels of expertise in the profession with the goal of improving professional standards in the educational leader profession. However, no certification program can guarantee professional competence. In addition, given the diverse makeup of Pre-K-12 schools, the CIL Commission cannot guarantee student or teacher growth. The CIL Commission welcomes constructive comments and suggestions from the Pre-K-12 stakeholders and the profession.

The CIL program designates those who have completed the rigorous coursework and in field experiences identified by CLAS & the CIL Faculty as essential to the instructional leader role. Achieving CIL status will be obtained after completing, in a cohort framework, extensive coursework and providing evidence of systemic, systemized, job-embedded implementation of the tasks necessary for competent instructional leadership. The candidate must also commit to ongoing professional development to remain abreast of current practices in instructional leadership.

PROGRAM PRE-REQUISITES

- Experience: Minimum of 5 years as a successful administrator in a Pre-K-12 setting. **Note: Applicant must be a principal or assistant principal who directly supervises curriculum and instruction.**

- Evidence from Superintendent verifying length of employment and support for the participant's decision to participate in the program – i.e., **Candidate Employment Verification Form**. You will upload this form to your online application.
- Recommendation: One letter of recommendation is required and must be from your immediate supervisor.

Form must be completed online at
www.clasleaders.org/CIL.

Attendance is required at all sessions to earn the CIL credential.

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Application Form

(Please type, word process, or print clearly)

Name Prefix First Middle Initial Last Suffix

~ Preferred Contact Information ~

Address Street City State Zip

Phone (Include Area Code) **E-Mail**

~ School System Contact Information ~

School Name

System Name **Superintendent Name**

Address Street City State Zip

Are you currently a member of CLAS? If yes, which affiliate are you a member of?

Have you participated in the CIL Program before? Yes/No
If yes, what year were you in the cohort? _____

~ Professional Information ~

Professional Experience (Current position listed first)

Position	School Name and System Name	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Total Number of Years as an Administrator _____ Total Number of Years in Current Position/School _____

Professional Preparation (Most recent listed first)

Degree	Name and Location of Institution	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

~ PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES, AWARDS, and HONORS ~
(Within the last 5 years)

Name of Professional Association/Organization	Offices Held / Awards Received	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

~ Leadership Challenges ~

~ DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION TO SOLVE A CHALLENGE. WHAT WAS THE SITUATION, WHAT ACTIONS DID YOU TAKE, AND WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME? ~

~ SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STATEMENTS ~

Please answer the following five questions regarding your professional beliefs, practices, and accomplishments in each of the following areas that qualify you to be selected for the Certified Instructional Leader (CIL) program.

Question 1: How do you balance leadership and management duties to best support student achievement? (250 word maximum)

Question 2: As an instructional leader, describe how you have leveraged student performance data to actively engage teachers and or faculty members in advancing student achievement. (250 word maximum)

Question 3: How do you support learners who are struggling, challenge learners who are excelling, and maintain high standards for all? (250 word maximum)

Question 4: How do you cultivate, monitor, and advance a positive climate in your school and/or district? (250 word maximum)

Question 5: How have your actions and decisions reflected ethical leadership in your role as a school and/or district leader? (250 word maximum)