



# PROGRAM HANDBOOK

**Cohort 21**

**June 2018 – August 2019**



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### **Our Vision**

To be the definitive choice for individuals seeking principal certification and preparation by providing high quality training aligned with current best practices to create a strong, balanced leadership foundation.

### **Our Mission**

To assist school districts with the identification and development of quality school leaders aligned with diverse needs is the primary mission of the Cohort of Leadership Associates program (CoLA). In accordance with the guidelines of Chapter 230 Professional Educator Preparation and Certification, Subchapter K, Alternative Certification of Administrators, ESC-20's CoLA program is an intensive 15-month program of training and field-based work resulting in Principal Certification.

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### **Equal Opportunity Policy**

*All Recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel actions comply with the principle of Equal Employment Opportunity and are made without regard to race, color, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran or military status. The Associate Director of Business and Human Resource Services has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements on the basis of disability. Additional information may be obtained from this source. Additionally, the Education Service Center does not discriminate against an applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminating employment practice. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jeffrey Stone, 210-370-5201.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education Service Center, Region 20 is presently one of the alternative administrator certification program sites in the state of Texas that has been approved by the State Board of Education. ESC-20 Cohort of Leadership Associates works cooperatively with school districts to implement this program. Under this program, persons who hold degrees from accredited institutions of higher education can complete requirements for administrator certification within a 15-month period. These individuals must satisfactorily meet specific requirements for entry into the program and training requirements that are outlined by ESC-20. They must complete an internship/practicum under the supervision of ESC-20 staff and their respective school district/charter school. All TEA/SBEC requirements must be met in order to be recommended for the principal certificate. The Cohort of Leadership Associates (CoLA) Program provides for the certification of persons who have chosen not to attend a traditional university administrator program.

## **BACKGROUND**

The first two-year cycle of CoLA began in the 1998-99 school year with three priority districts: Northside ISD, North East ISD, and Edgewood ISD. These three school districts were among districts that participated in the Leadership Symposia sponsored by ESC-20 during the 1996-1997 school year and participated as members of the South Texas Leadership Assessment Center. Based on their strong focus on leadership development and their existing relationship with other quality programs, it was agreed to initiate the Alternative Certification for Administrators program with them. The first cohort was limited to 15 Associates. Associates applied for the program and participated in an assessment center and structured interview in the spring of 1998, pre-assignment coursework began in June 1998, and their administrative assignment began in August of 1998. Thereafter, all school districts in ESC-20 were invited to participate with a maximum of 25 Associates for each cohort. Applications for the program are accepted throughout the year, with new cohorts forming each June.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **Program Conceptualization /Development**

This field-based model is performance oriented and designed to meet the individual needs of each Leadership Associate. Each candidate will complete the recommended 200 clock hours of coursework training and the minimum 200 administrative internship hours in a practicum set up on a school campus. Associates will submit a portfolio of artifacts and reflections demonstrating application of the Learner-Centered Standards for Principal Certification, design and implement a stewardship/action research project, and meet formally at least 5 times within the 15-months of the program with his/her mentor/site supervisor. The campus-based administrative experience, with the support of a trained site supervisor, is the core of this field-based program. Each Leadership Associate will serve in the capacity of an administrative intern/practicum for all or part of the 15-months, with the constant support of their site supervisor and will demonstrate application of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes grounded in the Principal Certification Standards and the TExES 268 Principal Certification Examination. The CoLA staff, along with a trained site supervisor for each Associate, will support and assist him/her to assure continuous learning and quality application.

### **Program Commitment and Resources**

Education Service Center, Region 20 is committed to providing trained staff, adequate space, and sufficient resources for delivery of quality services to the Cohort of Leadership Associates and their school districts. CoLA is currently under the direction of the Certification Program Coordinator and CoLA Administrative Specialist. The CoLA staff will screen and accept candidates, maintain records, supervise the Associates, and monitor the program as well as the budget. All fully accredited school districts/charter schools in ESC-20 are eligible to participate in the program. An advisory board/committee of local administrators, university personnel, professional organizations, community members, business members and service center staff collaborated to develop the program, and continue to meet once a year for continuous program improvement.

### **Program Equity**

Each candidate must be employed within and have the support from his/her school district/charter school while participating in the CoLA program. The Associate must secure an administrative position and/or a manner in which the administrative internship hours can be acquired in order to complete the requirements for certification. Admission to the program will rest on the recommendation of the CoLA Coordinator. This policy is designed to ensure districts/charter schools in ESC- 20 are able to recruit candidates who reflect the diverse needs of the district.

Initial paper screening of all applicants will be conducted by the CoLA staff and will focus on the applicants' meeting the requirements of the State Board for Educator Certification. Applicants successfully completing the initial paper screening will participate in an interview as part of the screening process.

It is anticipated that future program data will indicate that CoLA enables districts to identify, train, and retain high quality administrators to lead their public/private/charter schools into the future.

### **Unique Program Characteristics and Partnership**

This field-based and performance-based program is unique to administrator programs offered by the Institutions of Higher Education in our region. ESC-20 is uniquely qualified to offer this program based on the success in its alternative certification program for teachers, TOPP, its high level of client satisfaction with the professional development and assessment programs currently offered to administrators, its strong technical support system, and the fact that clients appealed to ESC-20 to apply for and offer this program.

The new partnership with the University of the Incarnate Word allows participants to work through our CoLA program while earning university credit hours towards a Master's or Doctoral degree with a School Leadership specialty. Interested candidates register as a student at the university, enroll in specified courses, and attend program courses both at UIW and at ESC-20.

All program fees are paid to the university in the form of their regular tuition and no other fees are paid to ESC-20 as the program fees are embedded within that tuition paid to UIW. Each course is pro-rated so if a student/Associate chooses to drop a course or withdraw from the partnership

program, only those courses / sessions completed are paid in full without refund and no future fees are incurred. ESC-20 is the certification entity while the university is the entity that awards the degree.

### **Program Planning**

An advisory committee comprised of selected district representatives within ESC-20, CoLA coordinators, former and current Associates and mentors, university staff and ESC-20 staff as well as community/business representatives collectively meet once a year to advise the CoLA staff on issues related to program planning and development.

### **Program Assessment for Continuous Improvement**

Program quality is assured by ongoing internal and external evaluation processes. Evaluations from Leadership Associates, Site Supervisors, CoLA progress reports and other pertinent data will be submitted for review to the Advisory Board/Committee and will result in appropriate program adjustments to assure quality of the program for the certification of Associates. Evaluations are conducted internally as well as externally with a contracted external entity. This survey is sent to all parties involved during the last phase of the program.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Admission into the ESC-20 CoLA program requires that all applicants meet the recognized and required standards set by State Board rule. The applicant must present official transcripts or notarized copies of official transcripts from an accredited university. All foreign transcripts must be translated and evaluated by an accredited agency before they are submitted to CoLA for evaluation. A non-refundable application fee must accompany the application.

### Pre-entry Requirements

- a. Master's degree from an accredited college or university and official transcript indicating a grade point average of no less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. \*  
(If a Master's degree is not completed before acceptance to the CoLA program, the GPA will be calculated based on the last 60 hours of the Bachelor's degree.)
- b. Valid Texas Teaching Certificate and a minimum of two years teaching experience.
- c. Evidence of at least two years of leadership responsibility (preferred).
- d. Evidence that candidates will have secured employment with a district or campus.
- e. Recommendation from current supervisor and at least two other professionals.

CoLA may apply for a waiver of any exceptions to the above as provided for in rule based on individual circumstances.

*\*Note: Applicants requesting to be admitted to ESC-20 Educator Certification Preparation Program with a GPA below 2.5, and who meet all other admission criteria, are required to take part in an interview with the program coordinator. During the interview the program coordinator asks questions related to the applicants work or volunteer experience, offers the applicant an opportunity to provide context for the GPA finding, and inquires about the applicant's decision to pursue his/her teacher certification. Based on the applicant's responses during the interview and taking into consideration all other application requirements, the program coordinator makes a determination to accept or deny admission. Should a decision be made to approve admission into the program, a letter summarizing the information gleaned from the interview related to the applicant's experience and circumstances which impacted their performance in undergraduate coursework are noted in a letter and filed in the applicant's program folder. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(B)]*

## **Admission Process**

The ESC-20 CoLA staff is responsible for screening and accepting CoLA applicants. Each applicant must be recommended by a school district and have secured an administrative position and/or an administrative internship/practicum opportunity.

- Initial paper screening of all applicants seeking entry into CoLA will be conducted. The initial screening effort will focus on the applicant's status including grade point average, references, and satisfactorily meeting State Board for Educator Certification requirements.
- Applicants successfully completing the initial paper screening will participate in an interview process as part of a more comprehensive screening of leadership potential.

Associates who successfully pass their screening interview and meet all application requirements will be sent an acceptance letter, which must be signed and returned prior to formal admittance into the CoLA program. The CoLA Coordinator will have the final decision on admission.

## **Retention and Support**

- CoLA Administrative Specialist and/or Field Supervisors will:
  - Conduct at least three formal observation visits per year to the campus and disseminate reports to Associate, Site Supervisor, and CoLA Staff.
  - Provide ongoing feedback and support through program progress monitoring.
- Campus Site Supervisor will:
  - Participate in required mentor training
  - Meet with the Associate a minimum of five times throughout the year to provide guidance and feedback.
  - Review Associate's portfolio and site visit observation reports periodically, focusing on application and assessment of demonstrated proficiencies.
  - Assist in planning, monitoring, and evaluating the stewardship/action research project.
  - Report to the CoLA staff the progress and developmental needs of the Associate.

## **Attendance Policy for Coursework/Training Sessions**

Attendance at training sessions is one indication of an Associate's commitment to the program. The expectation is that Associates will be present at all training sessions. Any extraordinary circumstances causing non-attendance must be approved by the CoLA Administrative Specialist. Communication from the Associate to the CoLA Administrative Specialist is essential.

In the event that a session is missed, the Associate must make up that session the following time the session occurs. Every effort will be made to provide the Associate with a make-up opportunity during the program 15-month window. This may mean the Associate will need to take a personal day to attend training during the school day. In the event Associates are not able to make up sessions within the 15-month window due to excessive absences, a program extension will be required and additional fees may be incurred. Only one excused absence per course (one session) will be allowed. Without exception, the following sessions are required in order to be recommended for certification: Educator Ethics, Mental Health Training, Dyslexia, and Test Preparation.

All Associates must pre-register for training sessions through the Connect 20 system at least two days prior to the scheduled session date. Upon arriving to the session, Associates must sign in on the sign in sheet provided and document time of arrival. If attendance is ever in question, the physical sign in sheet will be the ultimate proof of attendance. If the Associate leaves a session early, it is their responsibility to make the CoLA Administrative Specialist aware and also document the time they left the session on the sign in sheet. Credit hours will be based on the time documented on the sign in sheet. Make up time for partial session attendance will be assigned at the discretion of the CoLA Administrative Specialist.

It is the Associate's responsibility to print and retain an attendance certificate for each CoLA session attended. Attendance certificates can be obtained through individual Connect 20 accounts.

***Note:** All Associates must secure an administrative intern position or an administrative practicum opportunity no later than August for any given program year.*

*If an applicant exits the program at any time, any coursework or other requirements satisfied at that time may or may not be applicable to the next program cycle. Reapplication/extension fees will apply if the associate chooses to re-enter the program. Money applied towards ESC-20 training is non-refundable at any time during the program.*

## **Individualized Developmental Plan**

In the event an Associate is in need of intensive support, or an extension is warranted, an individualized developmental plan will be created. The IDP will be initiated upon the request of the administrator/site supervisor or the CoLA staff. The plan will target behaviors and corrective action required with realistic expectations and timelines for remediation and with roles and responsibilities delineated.

Important Considerations:

- Associates will not be eligible for certification if work for CoLA is not completed.
- Associates must remain in good standing and employed by a sponsoring school district to remain in CoLA.

## **Certification Requirements**

Recommendation for certification is dependent upon the completion of the following requirements:

- Attend ESC-20 training sessions and successfully complete all required assignments (minimum of 200 hours of training/coursework).
- Make-up any training session missed.
- Complete stewardship/action research project and portfolio during the 15-month program (minimum of 200 hours of field based internship/practicum experiences).
- Receive passing score on required TExES Principal (268) exam.
- Receive recommendation by site supervisor, field supervisor and the CoLA staff.
- Submit required SBEC application forms and fees.

## **PROGRAM DESIGN**

The Cohort of Leadership Associates (CoLA) Program is a 15-month, field-based, performance-oriented program designed to prepare Associates to become effective school administrators. While completing the approved curriculum, Leadership Associates also complete the required internship/practicum under the supervision of a trained mentor/site supervisor, as well as, an ESC-20 field supervisor.

The ESC-20 CoLA Principal Certification Program offers an alternative route to the traditional university certification program.

### **Training Sessions**

All CoLA program courses are specifically designed to provide Associates with a comprehensive overview of the administrative process and up-to-date information on effective leadership practices. Each session topic is unique and specialized, therefore, Associates can expect to receive a well-rounded leadership skill set that will prepare them to become effective school administrators. For this reason, Associates are expected to attend and participate in all training sessions.

Our CoLA Program training is divided into eight courses. They are: Principalship, Instructional Leadership, School Leadership, School Finance Policy and Law, School/Home/Community Relations, Internship/Practicum I, Internship/Practicum II, and State Appraisal Certification Development. Content for each session is directly aligned to the Principal Certification Standards (TAC 241.15), the Principal Standards (TAC 149), the TExES Principal Exam Domains/Competencies, and UIW curriculum standards. All sessions are provided by field experts or ESC-20 personnel.

All sessions take place at ESC-20. Summer sessions take place from 8:30-3:30 and are usually held on consecutive days. During the fall and spring, sessions are held on a specific weekday evening from 5:15-8:15, or on Saturdays from 8:30-3:00, where a 30-minute lunch will be given. No more than four sessions per month will be scheduled during the year. Semester calendars will be issued at least one month prior to the start of the new semester with detailed information outlining the session date, workshop number, room, session title, instructor, and the alignment to TExES domains/competencies.

All weekday evening sessions are also held via the online conferencing platform called Zoom. This option is provided to Associates who work or reside a distance from our service center. The

Zoom link to join our session remotely will be sent out on the day that the session takes place. Associates participating via Zoom must have a computer or laptop equipped with a camera and microphone, as full participation with the in house group is required. Zoom participants must have their cameras on and be able to participate during the entire session in order to receive full credit for attendance. Under no circumstances are Associates permitted to join Zoom while operating a motor vehicle.

### **Program Goal Setting**

In alignment with the state instrument to evaluate principals, known as T-PESS, Associates will create one administrative goal to serve as a focal point throughout the program. Associates will participate in a T-PESS training session during the program where they will become familiar with the T-PESS growth tool and process. Progress monitoring will be imbedded throughout the program through Site Visit Observations, conducted by the Field Supervisor, and Site Supervisor meetings, conducted by the campus principal /Site Supervisor, with the intent being to create a mindset dedicated to the importance of reflection and growth.

### **Action Research Project**

Each Associate must plan, develop, and lead a Stewardship/Action Research Project that evolves over the internship/practicum of the program. The project focus should be aligned to the campus improvement plan, be service-based, and promote positive change in the campus culture and with student achievement. The campus principal /Site Supervisor and CoLA Program Administrative Specialist will approve the project focus. Associates will present their project findings/conclusions to the cohort at the end of the program in June/July.

### **Portfolio**

Each Associate must develop a portfolio of artifacts and reflections that span the duration of the internship/practicum period. A minimum of 200 administrative activities/experiences will be documented in the portfolio. All activities must be aligned to the Principal Certification Standards and TExES Principal Exam Domains/Competencies. Some of the hours spent on the action

research project may be used, but are limited to 20 hours. Portfolios are due at the end of the spring semester in June.

- Hours must be divided equally among the six domains- 34 hours per domain.
- Once all hours are completed, the Associate is required to write a summative reflection illustrating their experiences for each of the six principal certificate standards.
- Artifacts collected should be included
- Site Supervisor signature is required to verify acquisition of all hours.

### **Internship/Practicum Journal**

In order to promote constant reflection throughout the internship/practicum experience and also document progress towards the Action Research Project, Associates will be expected to maintain a journal and submit weekly entries. Journal entries will be guided either by specific prompts or by individual preferences. Specific parameters regarding the mode of the journal will be left to the discretion of the Associate. Associates will, however, be responsible for bringing their journal, or being able to access it, during each training session to provide opportunities for peer coaching.

### **TExES Principal Exam Preparation**

Our program offers Associates two opportunities to participate in a TExES Principal Exam test preparation session to help them succeed on their exam. These consist of two sessions where Associates will review test taking strategies and the 268 principal exam competencies. An additional session will consist of taking a mock test. A passing score of an “80” is required in order to receive test approval to register to take the actual Principal TExES exam. Feedback will be provided in order to strengthen skills in each competency.

### **Canvas (LMS)/Grading**

Each Associate will submit all program assignments/projects on the Learning Management System called Canvas.

Upon the beginning of each course, the Associate will receive an invitation via email from ESC-20 with a link needed to join the course. For the first course only, the Associate will be asked

to create a username and password for their account. At the onset of each additional course and once the Associate has received the invitation, they will use the link provided to access the new course.

After each session and throughout the program, Associates will be given guiding questions, activities or assignments to help gauge knowledge learned either through application and/or reflection. Each reflection /activity/assignment will have a set due date in which to be submitted onto the Canvas LMS and can receive a maximum grade of “100.” Assignments submitted after the due date, and up to 3 days past, will incur a maximum grade of “80.” Assignments submitted after the 3<sup>rd</sup> school day past the due date will incur a maximum grade of “60.” Without exception, reflections/activities/assignments must be submitted for all sessions attended.

Field supervisors are responsible for grading all assignments and posting feedback on Canvas for review. In the event an associate is absent for a session, the appropriate practice will be to submit a blank assignment onto Canvas indicating the Associate was not present for the session.

As future administrators, Associates are expected to communicate in written form both effectively and professionally at all times. Therefore, assignment grades will reflect points being deducted for writing that: goes off topic, that lacks depth, with poor grammar or spelling mistakes, run – on sentences, etc., and/or offering only one application of knowledge, to include submitting late work. Common practice will include assignments using descriptive, analytical, and reflective writing, as these types of writing will be expected on the TExES 268 constructed response items.

It is important to note; Associates are required to maintain an overall 3.0 (B) GPA in all coursework in order to meet program certification requirements. In addition, all work submitted is expected to meet a high level of quality and be in alignment with acceptable use policies for technology and online learning.

### **Administrative (Campus-based) Internship/Practicum and Ethical Standards**

It is the responsibility of the CoLA Associate to secure an administrative position or administrative practicum within an accredited public/private/charter school no later than August of the first summer and maintain this position for the duration of the remainder of the program. During the administrative internship/practicum, Associates are responsible for completing their Action Research Project and maintaining their portfolio.

Associates must abide by all policies and procedures as established by the school district/charter school. Failure to do so will result in being dismissed from the school and the program. If an Associate voluntarily leaves his/her position of employment, or is asked to leave by the school, he/she will no longer be allowed to attend training as prescribed by ESC-20. University coursework may be completed if in progress and the Associate chooses to do so. Securing another position in another school district/charter school will be an option; however must be approved by the Certification Coordinator. It is imperative to discuss any change or anticipated change in placement with the CoLA Administrative Specialist as soon as possible.

Since Associates are considered the administrator or teacher of record and have all the responsibilities of the position, they must abide by the code of ethics and are subject to being dismissed from the district and the program for a code violation.

**Associates reflect both their district and the ESC-20 Cohort of Leadership Associates and are therefore expected to practice professional behaviors and reflect high ethical standards at all times.**

### **Intern/ Probationary Certificate Eligibility**

Participation in an educator preparation program, such as CoLA, entitles Associates to obtain either their *intern* or *probationary* principal certificate if they obtain an administrative position with a district.

Effective September 1, 2017:

Individuals who are accepted and enrolled in an Educator Preparation Program approved to prepare candidates for the certificate sought, such as CoLA, and assigned in the certificate area being sought in a Texas school district, open enrollment charter school, or pursuant to TAC 228.35 other school approved by the TEA, will be eligible for an *intern* certificate. Without obtaining a standard certification, the *intern* certificate shall be valid for a maximum of one 12-month period from the date of issuance.

Individuals who are accepted and enrolled in an Education Preparation Program approved to prepare candidates for the certificate sought, such as CoLA, and assigned in the certificate area being sought in a Texas school district, open enrollment charter school, or pursuant to TAC 228.35 other school approved by the TEA, will be eligible for a *probationary* certificate if they pass the appropriate examination for the principal certificate (Principal TExES exam). Without

obtaining a standard certification, the *probationary* certificate shall be limited to two 12- month periods maximum.

In order to initiate the process of obtaining either an *intern* or *probationary* certificate, the Associate must first be offered and placed in an administrative position with their district. They must then request a *Statement of Eligibility* form from CoLA staff. This form must be signed by the district superintendent and returned to the CoLA Administrative Specialist. The Associate must apply for, and pay the required certification fee to SBEC prior to being recommended for either an intern or probationary certificate. The program will then recommend the Associate for the certificate they are eligible to obtain.

Upon successful completion of the CoLA program, the Associate will be recommended for their Standard Principal Certificate.

*Note: Obtaining an intern or probationary certificate is not a CoLA program requirement.*

### **Site Supervisors/Mentors**

The Associate's Site Supervisor, or mentor, will play a major role in their success. This individual is most often the Associate's principal or principal designee. The relationship between the Associate and their Site Supervisor provides opportunities for them to discuss respective administrative experiences, seek and accept feedback, and analyze and assess progress on proficiencies and refinement of developmental plans. The primary purpose of the Site Supervisor role is to support and develop the Associate's skills.

Site Supervisors are encouraged to share their feedback with the Associate during a conference immediately following any observation of the Associate performing an administrative activity. Over the year, the resulting collection of recommended strategies becomes a valuable resource for the Associate. Associates are encouraged to implement the suggested strategies and document their effectiveness in their Internship/Practicum journal.

Both the Site Supervisor and Associate are required to participate in a Site Supervisor Mentor training in preparation for their respective roles. This training will be provided by CoLA staff at ESC-20.

Site Supervisors shall be selected using the following criteria:

- a. A minimum of three years of experience as a school administrator and understanding of the Associate's job responsibilities;
- b. Currently certified in the certification class (Principal) in which the practicum candidate is seeking certification;
- c. An accomplished educator as shown by student learning;
- d. Commitment to the preparation of aspiring school administrators and a willingness to invest time and energy on mentoring activities;
- e. Practices effective listening skills and is sensitive to the needs and concerns of others;
- f. Accessibility to the Associate and willingness to make the necessary arrangements to have time available to work with the Associate over an extended period of time.

*Note: In the event an individual who meets the criteria listed above is not available, the CoLA staff and campus/district administrator will select an individual who most closely meets the criteria and document the reason for selecting such individual.*

### **Site Supervisor Feedback**

Each Associate must formally meet with their Site Supervisor at least five times during the internship/practicum period. The purpose of these meetings is to assess the Associate's internship/practicum experiences and continued development.

These sessions will be documented on a *Site Supervisor Feedback Form* and signed by both the Associate and the Site Supervisor. ***Site Supervisor Feedback Forms are due on the last working day of September, November, January, March, and May.*** Forms may be scanned and emailed to: [colastaff@esc20.info](mailto:colastaff@esc20.info). It is important that Associates keep copies of all documents submitted.

### **Field Supervisors and Site Visit Observations**

As per TAC 228.35, Associates must be supported through ongoing observations throughout the duration of the internship/practicum. A trained Field Supervisor will be assigned to each Associate for the purpose of on-site observations and support. All CoLA Field Supervisors hold a current principal certificate and have at least three years of experience.

Each Associate can expect to be observed at least three times throughout the internship/practicum period by their Field Supervisor. These formal observations are referred to as **Site Visit Observations** and must equal to a total of 135 minutes. The first will take place during the first third of the practicum, the second during the second third of the practicum, and the third during the final third of the practicum, with all observations covering a specific topic. It is the responsibility of the Associate to schedule all Site Visit Observations with their Field Supervisors in advance.

<b>Internship/Practicum Timeline</b>	<b>Topic</b>
August – October	Presenting Professional Development
November- February	Facilitating a Data or PLC meeting
March- May	Conducting a teacher walkthrough

For each Site Visit Observation, the following activities are required: a pre-observation conference and a post observation conference. Although preferred, neither are required to take place onsite. The purpose of the **pre-conference** is for the Field Supervisor and Associate to mutually discuss the upcoming observation with a focus on:

- The Associate’s self-assessment
- Specific high impact competences or standards
- The progression of performance towards these standards
- Goal Setting and Professional Development plan
- Observation look-fors

After the observation takes place, the Field Supervisor and Associate will agree upon a time when an interactive post conference will take place. The purpose of the **post conference** is for the Associate to process and reflect upon their experiences. The primary outcomes for the post conference are to:

- Link the observation event to the goals discussed during the pre-conference,
- Analyze and compare expected versus actual results,
- Reflect on implementation and impact using data and evidence,
- Determine purposeful refinement of practices and future actions, and
- Plan and design actions for next steps.

The Field Supervisor will document evidence of a pre-conference, an observation of professional practices, and a post conference on a *Site Visit Observation Form*. This form must be signed by the Associate, the Site Supervisor, and the Field Supervisor. A copy of this form must be provided to the Associate, their Site Supervisor, and the CoLA staff.

Field Supervisors will make a good faith effort to meet with the Site Supervisor to discuss the Associate's observation and progress after the post conference. In the event that the Site Supervisor is unavailable, the Field Supervisor will leave a copy of the Site Visit Observation Form with the Associate, who will arrange to obtain the Site Supervisor's signature on the form and provide them with a copy. They will then scan and send the signed form to [colastaff@esc20.net](mailto:colastaff@esc20.net). *Site Visit Observation Forms* are due within 5 school days of the observation. It is important that Associates keep copies of all documents submitted.

### **Benchmarks and Formative/ Summative Evaluations**

Associates will be evaluated on their progress in the program by use of several means. Benchmark assessments will be provided after each course. They will be used to determine how Associates are able to apply the leadership knowledge and skills they have obtained to respond to principal scenarios as found on the TExES Principal exam.

In addition, checkpoints have been integrated into the program to assess progress towards the Associates' portfolio, action research project, and development of administrative attributes. Twice throughout the program, in January and in June, Associates will submit a *Formative/Summative Self-Evaluation* form. This form must be completed and signed by both the Associate and the Site Supervisor.

The *Formative Self-Evaluation* will be due in January. Field supervisors will review the evaluation form and provide written feedback for the Associate. A copy will be given to the Associate for their reference. The *Summative Self-Evaluation* will be due in June and submitted with the Associate's portfolio. Overall scores will be documented on this form by the Field Supervisors, and a copy will be returned to the Associate.

Associates must perform at a satisfactory level on all program component requirements.

### **Recommendation for Certification**

Recommendations for certification will be solicited from both Site Supervisors and Field Supervisors at the end of the internship/practicum experience.

Associate behaviors listed below will be taken into consideration when the CoLA staff recommends an Associate for certification. This information will be collected through direct observations, verbal and written input from the Site Supervisor or other administrators, or through other means.

- working collaboratively with fellow Associates, CoLA staff and instructors,
- demonstrating a positive attitude,
- demonstrating a willingness to take constructive criticism,
- implementing suggestions offered by professional staff members- both in the field and in the program,
- taking part in campus/district committees and other related activities,
- submitting assignments or other required documents in a timely manner,
- submitting satisfactory, if not high quality, coursework,
- participating in discussions during coursework and training, and
- maintaining an administrative internship/practicum position during the program.

### **Program Extension**

An extension of the internship/practicum may be recommended for an Associate: by the Associate, Site Supervisor, District, or CoLA staff. Associates will have three years from the date of formal admission to complete all current program requirements and be eligible for their standard principal certificate. If after three years, the Associate has not completed all current program requirements, they will be exited from the program.

The designated timeline for program completion is 15-months. If an Associate requires additional time outside this timeframe, an Individualized Developmental Plan will be initiated by the CoLA Administrative Specialist. It will be up to the Associate to fulfill the requirements as outlined in this plan. Additional training may be required depending on the state certification requirements at the time of program completion. Associates must remain in good standing and employed by a sponsoring school district to remain in the CoLA program.

Additional program fees will apply if a program extension is needed and no refunds will be provided for services already provided. Associates will be assessed an extension fee of \$250 per

semester until the goals of the Individualized Developmental Plan are met. Additional site visits and coursework may be required.

Criteria for consideration include those Associates who have not:

- been recommended by their campus/district,
- attended all training sessions,
- completed all coursework,
- completed internship/practicum requirements,
- passed the Principal TExES exam, or
- made payments to cover all training fees.

In the event an Associate exits the program at any time, coursework or other requirements satisfied at that time, may or may not be applicable to the next program cycle.

## **UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD PARTNERSHIP**

For Associates interested in furthering their educational career while earning their principal certificate, ESC-20's CoLA Program has formed a partnership with the University of the Incarnate Word. Associates have the opportunity to earn either a Master's degree or a Doctorates degree through this partnership.

Associates will first submit an application to the CoLA program. Once accepted, they will need to submit an application with UIW and pay any application fee required. Upon acceptance into both programs, the Associate will attend a mandatory orientation designed to acclimate the Associate with the UIW policies, procedures, and schedules they will be required to follow as they proceed through the certification process.

For Associates following this track, all CoLA program costs will be absorbed through the tuition the Associate pays to UIW. Therefore, no payments shall be made to ESC-20.

In the event an Associate withdraws from the UIW and wishes to pursue their principal certification only, any outstanding balance towards the cost of the CoLA program, will be the responsibility of the Associate.

### **Master's Concentration Degree**

Associates must have obtained their Bachelor's degree from an accredited university with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The degree plan will consist of Associates taking 24 credit hours at ESC-20. The remaining 9 hours needed for a Master's degree will be taken at UIW either the first or second summer.

Associates seeking this track will need to submit their Master's degree transcript to CoLA staff prior to being recommended for their standard principal certification. If the suggested degree plan is followed consistently, the Associate can expect to receive both their Master's degree and their Principal Certification at the end of the 15-month program in August.

### **PhD Organizational Leadership Speciality Degree**

Associates must have obtained their Master's degree from an accredited university with a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. In addition to the 24 credit hours offered through the CoLA program mentioned above, Associates will complete a total of 45 hours at UIW in order to complete their doctoral degree. If the suggested degree plan is followed consistently, the Associate will receive their Principal Certification prior to completing their doctoral degree with UIW. The 24 hours earned through the CoLA program will serve as elective hours towards the PhD. For more information on UIW tuition costs, please refer to the University of the Incarnate Word website.

## **JROTC TEACHER/PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATION TRACK**

Associates who are current JROTC instructors and seeking their teacher certificate in order to obtain their principal certificate shall participate in this track.

Associates will work towards completing their teacher certificate through our alternate teacher certification program called TOPP from June to August 2017. Once the Associate successfully completes the TOPP program, they will be recommended for their teacher certificate in August. They will be eligible to join the CoLA program, with the cohort currently in progress, in September. Associates will follow the same CoLA course schedule as the current cohort and will need to make up any courses missed the first summer during the second summer of the program. If the program track is followed consistently and provided all CoLA program

requirements are met, Associates should expect to obtain their Texas Principal Certificate the following year by August 2018.

Applicants must complete an application, submit all required application documentation, and be formally admitted to both the TOPP and CoLA programs. They must complete the coursework requirement for the TOPP program which consists of 270 hours of face to face and online training (Some sessions will be provided by the CoLA program and will serve as dual credit to fulfill certification requirements for both programs). The course requirement for CoLA consists of 200 hours of face-to-face training as well as 200 hours of field based experiences. The Associate is responsible for complying with all TOPP and CoLA program guidelines, as well as fulfilling all respective program requirements as outlined in the TOPP and CoLA program participant handbooks.

## PROGRAM COSTS AND PAYMENT OPTIONS

The total cost to participate in the CoLA Alternative Principal Certification program is \$7,725.00. This does not include a non-refundable application fee of \$50.00.

The payment options we offer are listed below. All payments are due on the 5<sup>th</sup> of any given month. A late charge of \$25 will be assessed for payments made after the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month the payment is due. Payments may be made by check, money order, or credit card. To arrange for recurrent billing, please contact CoLA support staff at (210) 370-5778.

	CoLA Program Total Cost \$7,725.00	CoLA Program Total Cost for TOPP Graduates \$6,900.00	CoLA Program Total Cost for JROTC Track \$6,500.00	CoLA Program Total Cost for UIW Track \$7,725.00	<b>Due Dates</b>
<b>PAY IN FULL (IN ADVANCE) – 10%/5% DISCOUNT</b>	<b>10% discount \$6,952.50</b>	<b>5% discount \$6,555.00</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>By the first date of the start of the program</b>
<b>PAY BY MONTH</b>				<b>N/A</b>	<b>The 5<sup>th</sup> of every month</b>
<b>(15-months)</b>	<b>\$515.00</b>	<b>\$460.00</b>	<b>\$433.33</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup> pymt- June</b>
<b>(14 months)</b>	<b>\$551.78</b>	<b>\$492.85</b>	<b>\$464.28</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup> pymt- July</b>
<b>(13 months)</b>	<b>\$594.23</b>	<b>\$530.77</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup> pymt- August (last pymt Aug. 2019)</b>
<b>PAY BY SEMESTER (4 semesters)</b>	<b>\$1,931.25</b>	<b>\$1,725.00</b>	<b>\$1,625.00</b>	<b>Paid directly by UIW</b>	<b>The 5<sup>th</sup> of the month in which the semester begins</b>

## PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to the CoLA program making a recommendation for principal certification to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), an Associate must:

1. Hold, at a minimum, a master's degree from an accredited university;
2. Hold a valid Texas teaching certificate and have two creditable years of teaching experience as a teacher;
3. Satisfactorily complete all training, assignments, benchmarks, projects, activities, and college course requirements as prescribed by the state-approved program. Without exception, the following sessions are required for certification: Principal Ethics, Mental Health Training, Dyslexia, and Test Preparation;
4. Submit all required documentation - portfolio, action research project, observation and mentor meeting forms, formative and summative self-evaluations, etc.;
5. Receive a passing score on the TExES Principal exam (268);
6. Submit full payment of CoLA program;
7. Receive a recommendation from both campus/district and CoLA staff.

***Note:** Completion of the above requirements does not guarantee recommendation for certification. If, in the professional judgment of ESC-20 staff, an individual has not demonstrated the professional qualities (as described above) that are in the best interests of students or has demonstrated attitudes or behaviors that detract from the learning environment of a campus, recommendation for certification would be withheld.*

### **Principal Certification Recommendation Process**

1. **Associate** completes all program requirements and receives recommendation approval by CoLA.
2. **Associate** completes on-line application for certification and pays all applicable fees to the State Board for Educator Certification, and sends confirmation to CoLA staff.
3. **CoLA** staff completes the balance of the Associate's on-line application.
4. **SBEC** adds *principal certification* to Associate's educator certificate in the TEA system.
5. Renew all educator certificates simultaneously every 5 years. Keep track of CPE hours.

## **COLA GRIEVANCE POLICY**

At any time during the course of the program from the inquiry and application process or any time within the program as well as upon completion, any Associate may file a grievance should an issue not be resolved at the basic conversation level. Once someone feels no other options are appropriate, the Associate may access the program grievance form found in the appendix of this handbook. Additionally, should the Associate feel that proper procedures were not followed, the Associate has the right to appeal or contact the Texas Education Agency for assistance at this link:

If the stakeholder is not satisfied with the complaint process or outcome, the stakeholder may file a complaint against the Program with the Texas Education Agency. The official Texas Education Agency complaint process can be found at:

[http://tea.texas.gov/About\\_TEA/Contact\\_Us/Complaints/Complaints/](http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Contact_Us/Complaints/Complaints/)

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Responsibilities of Campus/District**

1. Hire Associates and process all appropriate paperwork.
2. Conduct criminal record check.
3. Approve of Site Supervisor selection.
  - with appropriate administrative experience
  - at appropriate level
4. Provide release time for Associates and Site Supervisors (as appropriate).
5. Provide recommendation (as appropriate) for certification of Associates based on the following, but not limited to:
  - receiving satisfactory appraisal results
  - receiving passing scores on the required Principal TExES exam
  - completing all program requirements
  - following all district policies and procedures
  - showing cooperation with school administration and other professional staff members
  - receiving a satisfactory review of their action research project and professional portfolio

### **Responsibilities of ESC-20**

1. Coordinate program, work closely with district administrators/coordinators as well as TEA and/or SBEC.
2. Review transcripts to determine academic eligibility.
3. Counsel with applicants on pre-requisites.
4. Interview prospective candidates.
5. Approve applications for probationary or intern certificates as necessary to TEA/SBEC.
6. Design and deliver training for Associates and Site Supervisors.
7. Maintain files on Associates that include:
  - admission requirements
  - training attendance
  - coursework grades
  - internship/practicum documentation
  - examination reports

- program documentation
8. Verify Associate recommendations with districts.
  9. Evaluate all phases of the program and the progress of Associates through assessments and benchmarks.
  10. Review the professional administrative internship portfolio and stewardship/action research project.
  11. Maintain close ties with TEA/SBEC staff in program implementation and evaluation.
  12. Support aspiring administrators by developing their administrative skillset through feedback and reflection and instilling in them a growth mentality beneficial for all.

### **Responsibilities of Associate**

1. Know and follow the rules, regulations, and policies of the program, campus and district.
2. Maintain an ethical and professional attitude toward all members of the school community.
3. Maintain a positive attitude toward training and the program.
4. Continuously strive to reach self-assessment program goals.
5. Accept and be available for regular planning and feedback sessions with Site Supervisor and ESC-20 staff.
6. Complete Site Supervisor Feedback forms and submit to CoLA office by last working day of September, November, January, March, and May.
7. Be proactive in communicating with your Field Supervisor and coordinating Site Visit Observations
8. Attend all training sessions, workshops, and UIW classes (as appropriate).
9. Assume responsibility for your learning and make contributions to benefit the learning of others.
10. Take part in campus site-based decision-making activities, and volunteer to serve on other district committees.
11. Begin to form an administrative lens by actively experiencing the internship/practicum through the perspective of the principal.
12. For UIW students only, register for all courses through UIW, and communicate status changes with CoLA and UIW staff.
13. Complete all requirements of the 15-month program prior to the recommendation of the standard principal certificate.

## **SITE SUPERVISOR GUIDELINES**

The Associate's Site Supervisor serves as their mentor and therefore plays a vital role in their development. Few individuals have greater influence on the developing administrator than does their mentor. The Site Supervisor's decisions, to a large extent, determine the quality and quantity of Associate experiences. The Associate can grow in confidence, competence, and professional attitude through their mentor's guidance. The degree of the Associate's success in the school/district and in the field as a new administrator relates directly to the manner in which this relationship is nurtured. It is a role to be assumed willingly and with responsibility.

Researchers have studied mentoring and induction characteristics and activities. The following sections offer guidance in preparation for a successful internship/practicum experience for both the Associate and the Site Supervisor.

### **Orienting Behaviors**

- Provide the Associate with information basic to the administrative role
- Expose the Associate to the leadership team and various leadership responsibilities

### **Inducting Behaviors**

- Provide opportunities for the Associate to study campus and/or district leaders and their learning processes
- Provide opportunities for the Associate to visit a variety of collaborative meetings to observe different committee structures

### **Guiding Behaviors**

- Help the Associate develop skills in planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and reflecting
- Work with the Associate in developing communication and coaching skills
- Assist the Associate in developing skills of self-discipline and self-control throughout the internship/practicum experience

### **Reflecting Behaviors**

- Observe the Associate and provide feedback on performance

- Inform the Associate of errors in a manner that does not cause embarrassment
- Ask coaching questions that will help the Associate focus and reflect on their experiences

### **Cooperating Behaviors**

- Accept the Associate as a co-worker of equal status in guiding the learning process
- Provide for interaction with the Associate through conferences

### **Supporting Behaviors**

- Encourage the Associate to explore and develop unique leadership behaviors
- Demonstrate sensitivity to the emotional needs of the Associate throughout this process

## **Working with the Associate**

During observations/activities, provide opportunities for the Associate to:

a. Use a variety of skills and strategies; for example:

- Facilitate small groups for discussion and projects
- Plan and facilitate large group presentations
- Coordinate audiovisual materials, technology, games, and other manipulatives in individual and small group work
- role playing to develop social concepts and skills
- behavior modification skills to change staff behavior in a positive way
- planning to develop individualized objectives and activities for staff
- discovery and inquiry techniques

b. Develop plans that:

- are individualized according to staffs' needs
- incorporate a variety of activities and materials

c. Become well acquainted with building personnel and procedures.

d. Help the Associate by:

- directing the Associate through a planned sequence of increasingly responsible activities
- maintaining a balance between the type and duration of the activities
- scheduling the complexity of possible activities

- Evaluating continuously through open critiquing and communicating
- Modeling effective leadership practices

### **Common Initial Anxieties Experienced by Associates**

- a. Does the mentor really want an Associate?
- b. What will the mentor expect of me?
- c. What standards does the mentor maintain? Will I measure up to those standards?
- d. Will the mentor allow me to use my own initiative?
- e. What are the mentor's special interests, personality characteristics, and likes and dislikes?
- f. What should I do if I make a mistake?
- g. Will the mentor criticize me harshly if I make a mistake?
- h. Can I deviate from the plan of work as outlined?
- i. What happens if I disagree with my mentor on administrative techniques or handling behavior problems?

## PROGRAM COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Collaborative Partners	Responsibility	Contribution	Evaluation
Local School Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To recruit, support, and retain qualified leaders.</li> <li>• To serve on CoLA Advisory Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek qualified and diverse educators for CoLA.</li> <li>• Assist in system for Associates applications.</li> <li>• Conduct criminal check.</li> <li>• Provide on-campus support.</li> <li>• Provide sufficient resources.</li> <li>• Provide mentors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of PEIMS data.</li> <li>• Recommendations for certification.</li> <li>• TAPR reports.</li> <li>• Mentor surveys and reports.</li> <li>• District administrator evaluation forms.</li> </ul>
Institutes of Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To design and provide coursework to meet individual needs and program requirements.</li> <li>• To serve on CoLA Advisory Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide professors or courses aligned with Learner-Centered Proficiencies.</li> <li>• Facilitate enrollment procedures/orientation for Associates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable grades.</li> <li>• Coursework evaluation forms.</li> </ul>
ESC- 20 CoLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To deliver quality preparation and certification program for school leaders focused on demonstration of proficiencies.</li> <li>• To ensure consistent monitoring, evaluation, and revision of CoLA program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep complete records on program for each Associate.</li> <li>• Provide training and ongoing assessment of Associates.</li> <li>• Provide TExES reviews.</li> <li>• Provide efficient application system.</li> <li>• Provide support for Associates, mentors, and district.</li> <li>• Plan, organize and serve on Advisory Committee to monitor and evaluate CoLA program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign-in sheets at trainings.</li> <li>• Workshop evaluation forms.</li> <li>• Evaluation of records, portfolios, and stewardship projects.</li> <li>• Recommendations for certification.</li> <li>• TExES test scores.</li> </ul>
Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To analyze, monitor, and provide continuous program improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide input, review, and suggest revisions of program implementation.</li> <li>• Support the efficacy of the CoLA Alternative Certification Program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee meeting minutes.</li> <li>• Evidence of program modifications.</li> <li>• Documents such as surveys/evaluations and relevant data.</li> </ul>

## **A NOTE TO OUR CoLA ASSOCIATE:**

As you begin your journey, please keep in mind that this year will be filled with challenges and rewards that you may not have experienced before. Your learning experiences throughout this program will be highly influenced by the effort you choose to invest.

We are aware that the internship/practicum can be stressful. You will be faced with the responsibilities and demands required of your current position, and in addition, the activities, requirements, and deadlines of your internship/practicum. Organization is key to success. As the year progresses, fatigue and frustration are common reactions. There are a great many support people around you ready to help. Do not be timid about asking for help and advice. Be sensitive to the atmosphere that you create with your comments and attitude and realize that what you say reflects on your abilities, personality, and coping style. We are counting on you to project a professional image. Associates contribute to the reputation of the CoLA Program, their district, and campus. Your attitude and behavior will have implications for future Associates and the profession's acceptance of the program.

It is important to realize that every person involved on your campus and in this leadership program have certain responsibilities. If you do run into problems, it is important that you let someone know so that the situation can be corrected as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the school year to try to correct a lingering problem or misunderstanding. Use your judgment in handling problems that arise, and go to the source that can best deal with them. The ESC-20 staff can help you with questions about the program, your certification or eligibility status, human relations dealing with mentors, and situations related to training.

We look forward to a year filled with learning experiences that will guide you throughout your administrative career.