



Building Professional Capital to Lead State Early Childhood Policy Reform: Overview of CEELO Leadership Academy

Ensuring improved learning outcomes for young children necessitates leaders with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions to effectively navigate and promote program and system goals. Early education state administrators vary in their leadership and management competencies, yet scant attention has been given to preparing and developing their leadership skills. The CEELO Leadership Academy is designed to address this gap.

What Is the CEELO Leadership Academy? The CEELO Leadership Academy is a signature project of CEELO, a national technical assistance center funded in 2012 by the U.S. Department of Education. By the end of its first three years, the CEELO Leadership Academy will have strengthened leadership and management competencies of individuals with responsibilities for early childhood education programs in state departments of education (SEAs), Early Learning Agencies and other state early childhood education agencies (ELAs). It also will have introduced a model of leadership and management development tailored to state early education administrators.

Who? The target audience is Individuals at the state level with major responsibility for programs in early childhood education, serving children birth to third grade and with demonstrated accomplishments in state departments of education or other state early childhood education agencies in the United States and its territories.

What Is the Application Process? Cohort 1 will meet during 2014-2015 and include 8 - 15 individuals selected via a competitive application process managed by CEELO's co-directors.

Applications will be available the week of July 7, 2014 on the CEELO website and be due on August 15, 2014. Applicants will be asked to identify personal and professional goals, respond to questions designed to determine current strengths, areas of growth, and commitment to effecting program and policy change, plus describe a job-embedded project.

Semi-finalists and their references will be contacted for follow-up phone conversations in August. Information gathered at this step in the process will be used to select a cohort representing a diverse range of education, experience, leadership styles, and goals.

Final decisions on the first cohort of CEELO's Leadership Academy will be made by September 10th, 2014.

What are the time, travel, and financial commitments? The 2014-2015 Leadership Academy is approximately one year in duration, beginning in December 2014 and concluding in October 2015. Participants will have four opportunities, totaling 7.5 days, to meet in person. This requires the ability to secure release time and permission to travel out of state. Participants also will be expected to meet regularly by phone with their coach and commit time to preparing for in-person meetings, coaching sessions, and completing a job-embedded goal related project.

What will we study and learn? The CEELO Leadership Academy is designed as a customized executive leadership development program with job-embedded projects identified by participants. It will include guided reading, discussion and peer learning, as well as guest speakers. Topic areas include reflective leadership practices, systems thinking, project management, change management, negotiations, strategic communications, implementation science, and leadership challenges confronting SEA/ELAs and/or early childhood education overall.

What are expected outcomes for participants and/or for CEELO?

- Improved effectiveness of publicly-funded programs for children from birth through age 5
- SEA/ELA policies and initiatives that improve Kindergarten-3rd grade teaching and learning opportunities
- Partnerships with state leaders and organizations to build a more unified, equitable, and efficient state birth – 3rd grade early childhood system

Who are the staff, faculty and coaches? CEELO Leadership Academy co-directors are Jana Martella and Lori Connors-Tadros. Working closely with CEELO is Stacie Goffin of the Goffin Strategy Group. National and state experts will serve as guest presenters and also form the pool for coaches.

How Much Does it Cost? The cost to participants is \$2,000, which supports participation in the CEELO Leadership Academy.

ABOUT CEELO: One of 22 Comprehensive Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) will strengthen the capacity of State Education Agencies (SEAs) to lead sustained improvements in early learning opportunities and outcomes. CEELO will work in partnership with SEAs, state and local early childhood leaders, and other federal and national technical assistance (TA) providers to promote innovation and accountability.

The Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) is a partnership of the following organizations:

