



IUP Graduate Handbook

Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program

Department of *Professional Studies in Education*

Handbook 2023-2024

Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program
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Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Professional Studies in Education (PSE) on the beautiful campus of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) in charming Indiana, PA. PSE is situated in the College of Education and Communications (COEC) with departmental offices located in Stouffer Hall.

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility (SLoE) program is a competency-based, preparation program that is geared to experienced, practicing school principals and other school administrators and supervisors who wish to lead PK-12 schools at the district level. We expect our students to develop a spirit of camaraderie that promotes the development of ethical beliefs and a constructivist philosophy. The program is an intense year of study and is considered a challenging, part-time program leading to application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the Superintendent Letter of Eligibility. Courses are online; however, live, synchronous instruction is part of the coursework in this program as are internship hours in a Pennsylvania school district with a mentor superintendent and with university supervision. Students are expected to attend class sessions and participate fully in cohort discussions. Attendance and participation are important parts of this program for successful completion. Because of the unique design of the program, we ask applicants to consider the commitment that being a student in the program entails prior to applying and carefully review this handbook. Students complete standards-aligned district-embedded activities and projects during the course of an entire school year. The program begins in the summer with students taking two, 3-credit courses which include internship project development, and then two, 6-credit, 180-hour internships follow in the fall and spring for a total of 360 hours of internship.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) has an extensive history in the field of education. In 1875, IUP served only 225 students in a single building—the historic John Sutton Hall which remains at the heart of our campus today, on the beautiful Oak Grove. IUP began as a “normal school”—a teacher training program. In May 1927, Indiana State Normal School became a college with the right to grant a teaching degree, and the name was changed to the State Teachers’ College at Indiana, Pennsylvania. In 1959, it became Indiana State College and, in 1965, Indiana University of Pennsylvania. With its new university status, IUP was given the authority to expand its curriculum and grant degrees at the master’s level, primarily in the educational field. At that time, the first doctoral program—the Doctor of Education in Elementary Education—was initiated.

Today, IUP is part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). The university is nationally recognized as a "Public Ivy" in company with other public colleges and universities that offer academic environments comparable to those at Ivy League schools but at affordable prices. The College of Education and Communications is fully accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the university is regionally accredited by Middle States.

IUP's Civility Statement

As a university of different peoples and perspectives, IUP aspires to promote the growth of all people in their academic, professional, social, and personal lives. Students, faculty, and staff join together to create a community where people exchange ideas, listen to one another with consideration and respect, and are committed to fostering civility through university structures, policies, and procedures. We, as members of the university, strive to achieve the following individual commitments:

To strengthen the university for academic success, I will act honestly, take responsibility for my behavior and continuous learning, and respect the freedom of others to express their views.

To foster an environment for personal growth, I will honor and take care of my body, mind, and character. I will be helpful to others and respect their rights. I will discourage intolerance, hatred, and injustice, and promote constructive resolution of conflict.

To contribute to the future, I will strive for the betterment of the community, myself, my university, the nation, and the world.

Affirmative Action

<https://catalog.iup.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=951>

Title IX Reporting Requirement

<https://catalog.iup.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=959>

Student Conduct and Student Rights

<https://www.iup.edu/studentsupportandstandards/policies/index.html>
www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

Department of Professional Studies in Education

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility Program is housed in the College of Education and Communications (COEC) in the Department of Professional Studies in Education (PSE). Our department has a strong history at IUP. We offer a number of educator preparation programs, including Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral programs in education, which lead to teacher and administrator certification. PSE works collaboratively with other IUP departments that also offer educator preparation programs. Our faculty complement consists of highly experienced educators who have previously served in various PK-12 capacities, including teaching and administration. Our faculty members are also teacher-scholars and teacher-leaders, teaching courses, serving on and chairing doctoral research dissertation committees, as well as presenting at regional, state, national, and international conferences, and publishing original work. We view ourselves as teachers and scholars as well as learners and leaders, and provide service to our profession in various ways, including the preparation of future school leaders.

Mission Statement and Program Objectives

The Superintendent Letter of Eligibility program is designed around Pennsylvania State Department of Education (PDE) program requirements, and state and national leadership standards to prepare current, experienced school leaders to become Pennsylvania school superintendents. The 18-credit, competency-based, post-graduate program is geared toward working Pennsylvania school administrators and offers a rich mixture of leadership approaches and application through specifically designed courses, including intense, hands-on school district internship experiences. The program focuses on school leadership through community building, conflict resolution, implementing change, adult development, and management of school resources. The classes combine contemporary readings and school-based projects and prepare for the internships within Pennsylvania public PK-12 school districts where candidates plan and implement standards-based projects. Candidates must meet good moral character requirements set forth by the PDE and pass the superintendent PRAXIS Examination and meet experience requirements as required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and by the program for Public School Administrators.

For candidates to be successful, they must have the support of their school board of education, their superintendent of schools, who serves as internship mentor, in order to implement district level internship projects based on Pennsylvania Department of Education and national leadership standards.

PA Leadership Standards

Core Standards

- I. Knowledge and skills to think and plan strategically creating an organizational vision around personalized student success. (Major concepts: Personalized student success, organizational change, leadership, shared vision, strategic thinking and planning).
- II. An understanding of standards-based systems theory and design and the ability to transfer that knowledge to the leader's job as an architect of standards-based reform in the school. (Major concepts: Standards-based systems; federal, state, and district laws and guidelines; architect of reform; systems thinking; education reform).
- III. The ability to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making at all levels of the system. (Major concepts: Technology; continuous improvement; problem solving; shared decision making; multiple uses of data).

Corollary Standards

- I. Creating a culture of teaching and learning with an emphasis on learning. (Major concepts: Research; leadership for creating a learning environment; modeling for learning; organizational behavior and culture)
- II. Managing resources for effective results. (Major concepts: Resources; personnel practices; policy; fiscal planning and management; technology use)
- III. Collaborating, communicating, engaging, and empowering others inside and outside the organization to pursue excellence in learning. (Major concepts: Communication; community engagement and empowerment; leadership development; team building)
- IV. Operating in a fair and equitable manner with personal and professional integrity. (Major concepts: Ethics; conflict resolution; diversity; equity and fairness; sound judgment)

V. Advocating for children and public education in the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. (Major concepts: Political skills; law and legal structure; child advocacy)

VI. Supporting professional growth of self and others through practice and inquiry. (Major concepts: Professional development; continuous improvement; develop leaders; capacity building)

Program outcomes include:

Students will be able to lead school district strategic planning.

Students will be able to evaluate data-informed and equitable management, communication, technology, governance, and operation systems at the district level to support schools in realizing the district's mission and vision.

This program is also aligned with the seven National Education Leadership Program (NELP) District Level Standards, which can be found here: <https://www.npbea.org/nelp/>

Faculty and Staff

Faculty members in PSE represent a wide variety of expertise and experience, including PK-12 school experience as well as research expertise. Faculty and staff listings are available on the departmental website.

<https://www.iup.edu/pse/faculty/>

Courses in this program are sometimes offered in collaboration with other IUP departments or taught by invited, temporary faculty members.

Admission

Graduate Admissions: www.iup.edu/admissions/graduate/

Students who are admitted into the program must also meet all IUP School of Graduate Studies and Research requirements.

An earned master's degree with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA is required to apply. Applicants should be current administrators and hold PDE Administrative II certification as such, in order to have the "six years of satisfactory school experience, of which at least three must be in a supervisory or administrative capacity" needed to earn the Superintendent's Letter of Eligibility per PDE guidelines. Applicants are required to have the support of their employer, a PA public school district and superintendent of schools as an internship mentor in order to participate in this program, as well as support from the school board of education to enter into an internship agreement with IUP. Application materials include: two letters of recommendation (one from the applicant's current superintendent of schools and one from the applicant's current supervisor. If that description is the same person, then the second letter is from a current administrative colleague or former supervisor while the candidate was working as a school administrator. Letters of recommendation must be current and specifically for this IUP program), a goal

statement explaining why the candidate would like to obtain this credential and work as a superintendent of schools, a current and complete resume, a copy of PDE certifications showing PDE Administrative II or Supervisory II certification, and official undergraduate and graduate transcripts.

Upon notification of acceptance into the program by the Dean of the Graduate School, candidates are permitted to register for graduate classes.

Financial Assistance

Graduate Assistantships

Because our students are busy working as school administrators and this program is an intense learning experience, graduate assistantships are not recommended. Please see the link below for other financial aid possibilities:

- <https://www.iup.edu/admissions/graduate/financialaid/index.html>
- Office of Financial Aid: www.iup.edu/financialaid/

Academic Advisement

Throughout the student's coursework, the coordinator of the program or other PSE faculty members generally serves as academic advisor. Students and advisors work together to register for coursework and meet other program requirements. Students receive registration PIN numbers and semester class schedules via their IUP e-mail accounts.

Students are responsible for their successful completion of the program. Each student must read and understand all IUP policies pertaining to the program including those policies outlined in the Program Handbook as well as official university websites and the University Graduate Student Handbook and Graduate Catalog. IUP email is the official means of communication with all students. It is each student's responsibility to maintain and frequently check their IUP email account.

Campus Resources & Student Support

The School of Graduate Studies and Research: www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/

Graduate Catalog: www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

Office of Student Billing: <https://www.iup.edu/student-billing/>

Office of the Registrar: www.iup.edu/registrar/

Disability Support Services: www.iup.edu/disabilitysupport/

Office of Social Equity: www.iup.edu/social-equity/

IUP Campus Library: www.iup.edu/library/

MyIUP: www.iup.edu/myiup/

IT Support Center: www.iup.edu/itsupportcenter/

Veterans and Service Members: www.iup.edu/veterans/resource-center/

IUP Writing Center: www.iup.edu/writingcenter/

IUP Career and Professional Development Center: www.iup.edu/career/

IUP Parking Services and Visitor Center: www.iup.edu/parking/

University Policy: www.iup.edu/police/ |724-357-2141

Crisis Intervention 24/7 Hotline: 1-877-333-2470

Student Registration: www.iup.edu/registrar/students/registration-resources/index.html

IUP Email

IUP offers an email account to all active students. **Your IUP email address is the primary means by which the university will contact you with official information and you should use for all IUP official communications. It is your responsibility to check your IUP email regularly.** Visit <https://www.iup.edu/itsupportcenter/get-support/e-mail-and-calendar/general/> to learn more about setting up this account. For more information regarding University Policy on email communications, view the Graduate Catalog: www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) represents the graduate student body's interests at IUP and within the Indiana community. The GSA makes recommendations related to University-wide and graduate-specific policies and in areas of concern in the cultural, intellectual, and social life of the part- and full-time graduate student. Visit www.iup.edu/graduatestudies/gsa for more information.

Programs and Degrees

Certification

The IUP Superintendent Letter of Eligibility prepares candidates to apply for the PA Department of Education Superintendent Letter of Eligibility. Students must successfully complete all coursework and pass a PDE required PRAXIS exam, as well as verify PDE work experience and moral character requirements. Upon successful completion of the program and PRAXIS exam, IUP will assist students to apply to PDE for the letter of eligibility. Students are responsible for all costs and fees associated with IUP and PDE applications.

In this type of program, all students are respected as future district level leaders and sequence through courses until they complete the program coursework. Students in this program may also combine with students from other graduate programs during coursework. The inclusion of faculty and learners from other programs strengthens the learning opportunities by diversifying expertise, views, and learning experiences. If, for some unforeseen reason, a student cannot take a particular class in sequence order or does not take the recommended number of credits each

term, it will take longer to complete the program due to the rotational nature of course offerings. Students in this situation should consult with the program coordinator about a completion plan to finish the program within the eight-year time limit. However, please be advised that it will take longer to complete the coursework portion of the program if individual courses or semesters are missed. Course sequence is not guaranteed and missing any course offerings once a student starts the program is likely to significantly delay completion. Furthermore, changes in program standards or PDE requirements may change the nature of this program and require additional coursework or testing to meet those standards regardless of time completion limitations.

Course Descriptions

The following program Course Sequence is current and subject to change based on PDE requirements.

Students are required to complete 18 credit hours with all courses being required.

Pre-summer or Summer I Session

ALS 803-801 Leadership: Applied Practice

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: Admission to the program.

Students must develop and implement a field project that incorporates leadership and policy theories learned in previous courses.

Also, at this time, candidates are required to obtain liability insurance, internship agreements, provide proof of insurance clearances, and purchase a subscription to LiveText, and a membership to PA School Administrators Association.

Summer I or II Session

ALS 850-801 School and Community

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: Admission to the program.

Development and maintenance of a purposeful program of communication between the school and the community through study of selection, organization, and functions of citizen advisory committees and cooperative use of various community services.

Fall

ALS 898 Internship in Administration and Leadership Studies

Credits: 6

Prerequisite: Admission to the program and successful completion of ALS 803 and ALS 850.

A planned, field-based work experience proposed by the advanced graduate student to enhance professional competence, subject to approval by student's advisor and program director.

Spring

ALS 898 Internship in Administration and Leadership Studies

Credits: 6

Prerequisite: Admission to the program and successful completion of ALS 803 and ALS 850.

A planned, field-based work experience proposed by the advanced graduate student to enhance

professional competence, subject to approval by student's advisor and program director.

Following successful completion of coursework, students must also pass the Superintendent PRAXIS Examination is required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and by the program for Public School Administrators.

Once the PRAXIS and coursework are successfully completed, the candidate may apply to PDE through the IUP Office of Educator Preparation. There are fees for both the IUP application and the PDE application for which the candidate is responsible.

Internship

All ALS students are required to complete twelve credits of ALS 898 Internship in Administration and Leadership Studies, taking 6 cr. in the fall and 6 cr. in the spring. Internships may not start prior to the term in which students are enrolled. Students must be engaged and complete internship activities during the terms and semester schedule as set by the Registrar for which they are registered. In other words, it is not possible to start an internship and complete it prior to being registered for internship credits or outside the semester course dates.

Internship Requirements

The nature of this program is competency -based and internship requirements include completing projects aligned with state and national district level leadership standards within Pennsylvania PK-12 school districts. Therefore, internships in this program must be completed within a traditional school district in one of Pennsylvania's approximately 500 school districts. Internships can also possibly be completed at PDE approved private brick and mortar schools. Questions about whether private schools can provide successful internship platforms where candidates can complete standards' requirements should be directed to the program coordinator prior to applying to the program.

Internship requirements cannot be met in prison schools, cyber schools, non-brick and mortar schools, intermediate units, or alternative schools, or other non-traditional school districts/systems. Please consult the program coordinator prior to applying to determine if you have questions about the internship requirements.

Interns must work under the mentorship of Commissioned Superintendent of Schools who is in service as a superintendent of schools. The mentor superintendent of schools must be the leader of a school district where the internship is taking place. Mentors may not be other non-Commissioned administrators, like assistant superintendents of schools, special education supervisors or directors, intermediate unit administrators, business managers, vocational directors, interim superintendents, etc. Furthermore, mentors must hold PDE PA Administrative II certification and be in-service, Commissioned Superintendent of Schools to mentor in this program.

All grades (K-12) must be covered in the two internships.

The projects in this program's internship courses are beyond the regular work of the candidate and aligned with the superintendent of schools' work as the leader of a school district.

Current School Administrators

Current school administrators seeking the Superintendent Letter of Eligibility certification are welcome to apply to our program. Most of our candidates are principals or other types of administrators or supervisors. Applicants should understand that students in this program complete internships *specifically to prepare to become a superintendent of schools*. Experience or certification as another type of school administrator (for instance, but not limited to special education director or supervisor, consultant, dean of students, vocational director, subject area supervisor, etc.) is not the same preparation as being a superintendent. The coursework and internships of the school superintendent letter of eligibility are required for this program. Internship projects are completed under the mentorship of a commissioned superintendent of schools. Candidates in this competency-based program must shadow and work under the mentorship of the superintendent mentor on activities and projects that meet PDE and NELP standards and that school superintendents do in their daily work. Although there may be some overlap of administrative activities, projects for this program's internships are those that meet district level administrative standards, and are approved by the IUP supervisor and completed under the mentorship of the superintendent of schools. The projects in this program are beyond the regular work of the candidate and aligned with the superintendent's work leading a school district.

A signed, valid affiliation agreement must be on file in the Educator Preparation Office (104 Stouffer) for the internship site. Students should check the IUP Internship iWiki for Internship, Externship, and Clinical Agreements at IUP website: <https://www.iup.edu/extended/internship-externship-and-clinical-agreements/>

to see existing agreements and secure an agreement if one is not already on file.

All IUP interns must complete Title IX training prior to beginning the internship. Certificates of completion will be provided in the first course of the program and before the internship commences. The website for Title IX training is: <https://www.iup.edu/socialequity/policies/mandatory-title-ix-and-protection-of-minors-training/>.

Clearances: Interns are required to have current clearances during their internship. Students who are employed in the setting in which they are completing their internship may submit in the first course of the program a verification from their employer that they have met the clearance requirements. Students who are not employed at their internship site will need to provide their clearances during the first course of the program and prior to beginning their internship experience.

Internships in School Districts: Interns should have Act 114, Act 34, Act 151, Act 24, Act 126, TB test, and professional liability insurance (e.g., PSEA or private insurance, minimum \$1,000,000.00 per claim/\$3,000,000.00 per occurrence), along with any other clearance requirements (such as Act 25) specified in the district's articulation agreement. Please check the IUP Internship iWiki of currently active agreements for Teacher Education/school districts, to

find the PDF of the agreement and its clearance requirements:

<https://iwiki.iup.edu/display/IAFE/PDFs+of+Currently+Active+Agreements>

This site is organized alphabetically to facilitate the search for an agreement.

Starting the first semester of the program and until completion, interns are also required to hold a membership in the Pennsylvania School Administrators Association (PASA) – the Associate Membership Level is acceptable- and to purchase a field experience module (FEM) subscription to LiveText.

Evaluation of Students

For information regarding School of Graduate Studies and Research policies on grading, view the Graduate Catalog: www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

The program’s approach to evaluation evolves as students proceed through the program. Students are evaluated through coursework, in which grades are assigned; and internship experiences, which are aligned with PDE and National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards. Detailed rubrics based on educational leadership standards are used in this program. Students must maintain a 3.0 overall GPA on a 4-point scale in all IUP classes to continue in the program. If a student’s GPA falls below 3.0, they will be placed on academic probation and will be given one semester to bring the GPA up to 3.0; otherwise, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Degree Completion

Students in this program will complete the program, rather than graduate, and are referred to as “Program Completers,” rather than graduates.

Students will not walk in graduation ceremonies or be conferred a degree.

This program is completed in four consecutive semesters over the course of one year, starting in the summer and ending in the spring semester.

To become a “Program Completer,” students are required to apply for Graduation in the last semester of the program.

For more information, view the Graduate Catalog: www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

University Policies and Procedures

University policy is the baseline policy. Programs may have policy that is more stringent than the University baseline policy; however, not less stringent than the University baseline policy. For questions regarding this statement, please contact [Program Coordinator] or the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

Academic Calendar

View the IUP Academic Calendar: www.iup.edu/news-events/calendar/academic/

The Following University and SGSR policies can be found at www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

Academic Good Standing

Academic Integrity

Bereavement-Related Class Absences

Continuous Graduate Registration for Dissertation and Thesis

Grade Appeal Policy

Graduate Fresh Start Policy

Graduate Residency Requirement

Leave of Absence Policy

Time Limitations

Time-to-Degree Masters/Doctoral Dismissal Appeal Policy

Time-to-Degree Extensions for Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation

Transfer of Credits Polic

Research

Although original research is not required in this program, students are engaged in reviewing current and historical research on topics related to leading a PK-12 school system. The IUP Libraries and its many databases are accessible to all students online and are an important part of this program.

www.iup.edu/gradcatalog

www.iup.edu/research/

Signature Page

My signature below indicates that I am responsible for reading and understanding the information provided and referenced in this program student handbook.

_____ [please initial] I understand my program coordinator may share this document with the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Submit to the IUP iRecruit system upon application to this program.