

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Leap to Teach?

The Leap to Teach, Learn, and Earn Apprenticeship program was designed for those who, upon completion, will seek employment in the early childhood profession.

The structure of the Leap to Teach program is designed to complement the CDA national credentialing program's competency standards. Those who complete the Leap to Teach coursework requirements and 480 hours of field experience will be able to apply for their CDA.

FAQs

We understand that you may have questions about the Leap to Teach Program. Here are some frequently asked questions:

What is a CDA?

The Child Development Associate is a nationally recognized credential that has been accepted as a state requirement for working in many early childhood centers. The CDA National Credentialing Program is a professional development opportunity for early educators working with children ages birth to 5 years old to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the early childhood education field.

A person who earns a CDA has demonstrated the ability to meet the specific needs of children and work with parents and other adults to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth in a child development framework.

Is a CDA a college degree?

No, a CDA is a professional credential and must be renewed every 3 years.

What is required to obtain a CDA?

High school diploma or GED

First Aid/CPR

120 hours of formal coursework based on a core set of competency standards

480 hours of supervised fieldwork

A Professional Portfolio

A formal observation with a Professional Development Specialist

CDA exam consisting of 65 multiple choice questions

What is a Professional Portfolio?

It includes the following:

CDA education

Family Questionnaires

Reflective statements that demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of your teaching practices

A collection of early childhood resources

Professional Philosophy Statement

Will I be able to use the 16 college credits toward an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood?

The Leap to Teach program fulfills the 120 hours that are the minimum required for the CDA. Offering 16 college credits places our candidates at an advantage in furthering their education. This establishes the foundation for career advancement in pursuing an Associate's degree and Bachelor's degree. The Michigan Transfer Network is a resource to view transfer course equivalencies between many Michigan colleges and universities. <https://www.michigantransfERNetwork.org/>

Who is providing the coursework?

Wayne Metro, in response to the need to have early childhood professionals who have mastered the knowledge and skills needed to create effective learning environments for children, partnered with Wayne County Community College District to provide the college coursework to prepare students to think critically and creatively, learn and use technology and demonstrate cultural awareness. The Early Childhood College courses are taught by approved higher education faculty who have degrees in early childhood education as well as extensive experience working in the field.

http://www.wcccd.edu/academic/pdfs/Programs%202019/Early_Childhood_Ed_PS_11-2018_FINAL.pdf

Where are the courses held?

Coursework will take place in a hybrid asynchronous platform. This means that participants will have independent work that they will be required to complete and they will meet virtually at designed times with an instructor in real-time teacher-led interaction.

How does the stipend work and how much will I get paid?

A monthly stipend payment is provided and is based on cohort attendance and practicum participation spent during fieldwork at a rate decided upon by the program.

When is the next Cohort?

Cohorts are scheduled to occur once per year

Do I have to have background experience as an assistant teacher?

It is an advantage but not essential for admission.

Does it cost anything?

The program is free but in exchange you will be expected to complete the required paperwork indicating that you agree to the terms and significant time commitment to make this a positive learning experience.

What are the additional requirements?

Candidates must possess a high school diploma or High School Equivalency diploma and must be able to speak, read and write well enough to fulfill the responsibilities of a CDA.

What is the selection process to be enrolled in the Leap to Teach Program?

Applications will be reviewed to determine whether prospective students can satisfy the requirements and overall responsibilities and commitment.

Individuals placed with a licensed childcare provider must have a comprehensive background check to include FBI fingerprints, sign a statement of ethical conduct, and pass physical, drug, and tb screenings

Falsifying or omitting information will result in the individual being found ineligible.

The number of applicants selected varies depending on available funding. Cohort sizes are kept small (12-15) to maximize individualized attention. Academic supports are also available. If you are interested in joining the program it is on a first-come, first-served basis. Others will be placed on a waiting list.

What are the 480 hours of fieldwork experience requirements?

Fieldwork is required as part of the completion of the certification and is supervised by an assigned mentor teacher for hands-on work providing opportunities to learn through experience. This is an opportunity to practice the new knowledge acquired from the coursework and will take place in person.

Does my experience working with young children replace the 480 hours of fieldwork requirements?

The goal is for the students to experience how the content of the coursework is translated into practice in a classroom environment.

Babysitting, Before and After School Programs, Sunday school programs, and Drop-in Programs are not eligible settings where a Candidate can prove his or her competence around the Competency Standards.

Experience hours in these settings should not be counted towards the 480 hours of experience.

www.cda.org

How many hours per week should I expect to spend as an apprentice?

Participation in Leap to Teach is a full-time commitment and only those who are seriously interested in working in the field of early childhood should apply. A typical week consists of completing daily course work and includes a strict attendance policy that requires arriving on time and participating in all

meetings, training, and scheduled activities. Expect to dedicate a minimum of 4 hours towards coursework each day and expect to commit 6 to 7 hours per day during the practicum experience.

How long is each cohort?

This is a fast-track 7-month program that consists of two components: On-the-job training working within a licensed Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms and professional early childhood education training covering the growth and development of children in 8 CDA subject areas.

How often are the courses?

You will be expected to complete weekly coursework.

When can I apply?

This program is currently being offered once a year. Online applications are available prior to the start of a cohort. Once you complete the online application along with uploading the required documents, your application will proceed for review to determine if you are a good fit. Potential candidates will receive a phone call to be scheduled for an interview.

What if I have already started the CDA process, am I a good candidate?

The Leap to Teach program is designed for participants to begin and complete the program cohort together.

What if I already have an AA or BA degree, can I still be a part of Leap to Teach?

It is possible that you still qualify to participate depending on if the degree is in a field unrelated to Early Childhood Education.

Where will I complete my practicum experience?

We aim to place you where you can have the best possible experience. We have

Who manages the program?

The Workforce Development team works individually with each student to apply for and obtain their CDA credentials from the Council for Professional Recognition.

What if I have more questions?

You can email your questions to: LeaptoTeach@waynemetrometro.org