



TCNJ THE COLLEGE OF
NEW JERSEY

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**Graduate Programs in Educational Leadership
Handbook**

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Introduction

The faculty would like to welcome you to the department of Educational Administration and Secondary Education at The College of New Jersey. We are pleased that you have chosen one of our educational leadership programs for your professional and personal growth.

TCNJ's educational leadership programs are aligned with professional leadership standards and accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Each of our programs has also been approved by the New Jersey Department of Education as meeting the college preparation and degree requirements for state certification.

This handbook is intended to provide assistance in planning and completing your course of study. It contains basic information regarding procedures, exit requirements, and curriculum. If you do not find the answers to your questions in these pages, your academic advisor or the educational leadership program coordinator will be happy to advise you personally concerning your particular academic and career aspirations. The department telephone number is 609-771-2395. For questions about the certification process you may also contact the Certification Office at 609-771-2396.

We wish you success in your graduate studies and will do all that we can to prepare you for the professional position to which you aspire.

Warmest regards,

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Principal Certificate of Eligibility

The principal endorsement authorizes the holder to be employed in a position that involves services as an administrative officer of a school or other comparable unit within a school or district in public schools in grades preschool through grade 12. Positions that require this certification include principal, assistant principal, vice principal, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, and director.

The State of New Jersey requires the following:

1. Degree
A master's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
2. Experience
At least five years of successful, full-time teaching or educational services experience under a valid provisional or standard NJ or equivalent out-of-state certificate
3. Required Graduate Courses
A minimum of 30 graduate credits, aligned with the quality components of preparation as set forth in the Professional Standards for School Leaders (PSELs).
4. Internship
A 300-hour internship in educational leadership aligned to the PSELs
5. Passing score on the [School Leaders Licensure Assessment](#)

TCNJ courses required for the Master of Education and Post-Master's in Educational Leadership are listed on the following pages.

For the most current certification requirements, please visit the [NJ DOE website](#).

Principal Preparation Program Overview

The Principal Preparation Program includes three checkpoints designed to keep you on track for successful program completion.

Checkpoint 1

Each candidate must:

1. Complete the application for admission to graduate school
2. Provide a narrative and references that demonstrate educational leadership dispositions and readiness for graduate studies
3. In your first semester, develop an individualized plan of study and submit it to the program coordinator.

[Master's Planning form](#)

[Post Masters Planning form](#)

Developing Knowledge and Skills

Educational leadership courses focus on developing leadership skills and collaboration strategies, facilitating equitable educational opportunity, and designing effective systems of instruction and management. Courses may be taken in any sequence:

EDAD 525 Introduction to Educational Administration	(3 credits)
SUPV 520 Staff Supervision	(3 credits)
CURR 514 Curriculum Theory and Practice	(3 credits)
EDFN 520 Leadership for Social Justice	(3 credits)
EDAD 530 Group Dynamics (master's only)	(3 credits)
EDAD 572 School Law	(3 credits)
ELEM 555 Contextual Issues in the Development of Curriculum	(3 credits)
EDAD 540 School Finance and Resource Management	(3 credits)
EDFN 508 Introduction to Research (master's only)	(3 credits)
EDAD 617 Organizational Leadership and Supervision	(3 credits)

Checkpoint 2

Each candidate must:

1. Successfully complete at least four educational leadership courses at TCNJ
2. Maintain a 3.0 GPA
3. Demonstrate educational leadership dispositions.
4. Work with the internship professor and individuals at your district to identify an appropriate principal mentor.

Practicing Leadership

The internship offers candidates real-world experiences and in-class discussions focused on demonstrating proficiency in the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL). Each principalship course includes 100 hours of internship under the guidance of a practicing school leader.

The internship courses may be taken ONLY after completing a minimum of 12 credits and require approval for registration.

EDAD 691 Principalship I	(2 credits)
EDAD 692 Principalship II	(2 credits)
EDAD 693 Principalship III	(2 credits)

EDAD 700 Comprehensive Exam (master's only)

Prior to taking the comps, candidates must:

- have successfully completed 30 hours of coursework
- be in good academic standing, as demonstrated by a minimum grade point average of at least 3.0 for all courses completed at TCNJ as part of the master's program.

Checkpoint 3

Each candidate must:

1. Apply for graduation
2. Successfully complete courses in Modules 2 & 3
3. Pass the comprehensive exam (master's only)
4. Submit scores from the [School Leadership Licensure Assessment](#) (SLLA)
5. Submit Administrative Portfolio for review by the internship advisor

Program Planner Master of Education, Educational Leadership

Name: _____ TCNJ ID#: _____

Retain this sheet to record progress toward your degree.

Eligibility for graduation requires:

- 1) Satisfactory completion of courses printed below
- 2) A minimum of 30 graduate semester hours earned at The College of New Jersey (transfer credits require prior departmental approval)
- 3) A minimum total of 36 graduate semester hours
- 4) A cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.0
- 5) Completion of all departmental requirements/prerequisites

Eligibility for NJ principal certification requires a master's degree, 5 years of successful educational experience under a valid state certificate, and successful completion of the School Leaders Licensure Assessment.

<u>Required Courses</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Term</u>
EDFN 508: Introduction to Research	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDFN 520: Leadership for Social Justice	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 525: Introduction to Educational Leadership	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
SUPV 520: Staff Supervision	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 530: Group Dynamics for Educational Leaders	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 572: School Law	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 540: School Finance and Resource Management	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 617: Organizational Leadership and Supervision	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
CURR 514: Curriculum Theory and Practice	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
CURR 555: Contextual Issues in the Development of Curriculum	<u> 3 </u>	_____	_____
To be taken in the candidate's final year:			
EDAD 691: Principalship I (100 hours fall internship)	<u> 2 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 692: Principalship II (100 hours spring internship)	<u> 2 </u>	_____	_____
EDAD 693: Principalship III (100 hours summer internship)	<u> 2 </u>	_____	_____
To be taken in the candidate's final semester:			
EDAD 700: Comprehensive Exam	<u> 0 </u>	_____	_____

Program Planner: Post-Master's, Educational Leadership

Name: _____ TCNJ ID#: _____

Advisor: _____

Retain this sheet to record progress.

Eligibility requires:

- 1) Satisfactory completion of courses printed below;
- 2) A minimum of 30 graduate semester hours earned at The College of New Jersey (transfer credits require prior departmental approval)
- 3) A cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.0
- 4) Completion of all departmental requirements/prerequisites

Eligibility for NJ principal certification requires a master's degree, 5 years of successful educational experience under a valid state certificate and successful completion of the School Leaders Licensure Assessment.

<u>Required Courses</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Term</u>
EDFN 520: Leadership for Social Justice	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 525: Introduction to Educational Leadership	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
SUPV 520: Staff Supervision	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 572: School Law	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 540: School Finance and Resource Management	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 617: Organizational Leadership and Supervision	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
CURR 514: Curriculum Theory and Practice	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
CURR 555: Contextual Issues in the Development of Curriculum	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
To be taken in the candidate's final year:			
EDAD 691: Principalship I (100 hours fall internship)	<u>2</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 692: Principalship II (100 hours spring internship)	<u>2</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 693: Principalship III (100 hours summer internship)	<u>2</u>	_____	_____

Supervisor Certification

The Supervisor Endorsement is required for both supervisors of instruction and athletic directors who do not hold a standard principal's endorsement. The supervisor is defined as any school officer who is charged with authority and responsibility for the continuing direction and guidance of the work of instructional personnel.

The State of New Jersey requires the following:

1. Master's Degree

A master's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university

2. Three Years of Experience

At least three years of successful, full-time teaching or educational services experience

3. Required Graduate Study

You will need to complete 12 semester-hour graduate credits to include the following required areas:

- Three graduate credits in general principles of staff supervision for grades K-12.
- Three graduate credits in general principles of curriculum development grades K-12.
- Three graduate elective credits in curriculum development.
- Three graduate elective credits in staff supervision *AND/OR* curriculum development.

TCNJ courses required for the SUPERVISOR CERTIFICATION

- SUPV 520 Staff Supervision (3 credits)
- CURR 514 Curriculum Theory and Practice (3 credits)
- CURR 555 Contextual Issues in the Development of Curriculum (3 credits)
- EDAD 617 Organizational Leadership and Supervision (3 credits)

PLEASE NOTE: The courses required to attain a **Supervisor Certificate** are also embedded in the master's degree and Post-Masters Certification programs.

For the most current certification requirements, please visit the [NJ DOE website](#).

Program Planner: Supervisor Certificate

Name: _____ TCNJ ID#: _____

Advisor: _____

Retain this sheet to record progress.

Eligibility requires:

- 1) Satisfactory completion of the courses printed below;
- 2) A cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.0
- 3) Completion of all departmental requirements/prerequisites

Eligibility for NJ supervisor's certification also requires a master's degree and 3 years of successful educational experience under a valid state certificate

Required Courses

Credit Grade Term

SUPV 520: Staff Supervision	<u>3</u>	___	___
EDAD 617: Organizational Leadership and Supervision	<u>3</u>	___	___
CURR 514: Curriculum Theory and Practice	<u>3</u>	___	___
CURR 555: Contextual Issues in the Development of Curriculum	<u>3</u>	___	___

Teacher Leader Endorsement

The Teacher Leader Endorsement is for teachers who seek to promote student learning and support their colleagues in facilitator, coach, professional development, and other non-supervisory leadership roles. TCNJ's Teacher Leader program is based on the [Teacher Leader Model Standards](#) from the Teacher Leader Exploratory Consortium.

The State of New Jersey requires the following:

1. At least four years of teaching experience, with three effective or highly effective annual evaluation ratings.
2. Successful completion of an approved teacher leader preparation program that includes clinical experiences.
3. Passing score on the Commissioner-approved performance assessment.
4. Application for the endorsement within one year of completing an approved preparation program.

TCNJ courses required for the Teacher Leader Certificate

- EDFN 520: Leadership for Social Justice (3 credits)
- EDAD 530 Group Dynamics (3 credits)
- EDAD 545 Instructional Leadership for Teachers (3 credits)
- EDAD 565: Facilitating Professional Development for Teachers (3 credits)
- EDFN 508: Introduction to Research and Data-Based Decision Making (3 credits)
- EDFN 701: Teacher Leader Practicum (0 credits)

For the most current certification requirements, please visit the [NJ DOE website](#).

Teacher Leader Certificate Program Overview

The teacher leader program includes three checkpoints designed to keep you on track for successful program completion.

Checkpoint 1: Admission to the Program

Each candidate must:

1. Provide a narrative and references that demonstrate leadership potential and readiness for graduate studies.
2. Upon admission, work with the program coordinator and your school supervisor to identify an appropriate teacher leader mentor.
3. Develop an individualized plan of study and submit it to the program coordinator.

Checkpoints 2& 3: Semesters 1 and 2

1. Successfully complete teacher leader coursework and associated assessments while maintaining a 3.0 GPA.
2. Submit clinical experiences logs documenting 20-hours of substantive standards-aligned experiences for each course in which you are enrolled.

Checkpoint 4: Final Semester

1. Successfully complete all teacher leader coursework and related assessments while maintaining a 3.0 GPA
2. Enroll in EDAD 701 and submit your mentor teacher's letter of endorsement and obtain a passing score on your electronic portfolio documenting 100 hours of substantive standards-aligned experiences. The electronic portfolio is the Commissioner-approved assessment.

Program Planner: Teacher Leader Certificate

Name: _____ TCNJ ID#: _____

Advisor: _____

Retain this sheet to record progress toward your degree.

Eligibility requires:

- 1) Satisfactory completion of courses printed below
- 2) A cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.0
- 3) 100 hours of clinical experience

Eligibility for NJ Teacher Leader endorsement requires 4 years of successful educational experience under a valid state certificate and successful completion of a state approved assessment.

Required Courses

	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Term</u>
EDFN 520: Leadership for Social Justice	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 530: Group Dynamics for Educational Leaders	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 545: Instructional Leadership for Teachers	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDAD 565: Facilitating Professional Development for Teachers	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDFN 508: Introduction to Research and Data-Based Decision Making	<u>3</u>	_____	_____
EDFN 701: Teacher Leader Practicum	<u>0</u>	_____	_____

Field Experiences and Internships

Clinical experiences are an invaluable part of TCNJ leadership preparation programs because they enable candidates to practice leadership in authentic school environments.

Field Experiences

Candidates in the principal, supervisor, and teacher leader programs complete assignments that require school-based application during each of their educational leadership courses. These experiences may take place in the candidate's own school, the candidate's internship placement, or a school designated by the instructor. Candidates should anticipate investing approximately 20 to 25 clock hours per course in field-related activities.

Principal Internship

Principal candidates participate in an intensive educational leadership internship that requires three consecutive semesters of leadership experiences in schools. Each leadership candidate has a mentor principal and a TCNJ professor to serve as a support team. Mentor principals are chosen collaboratively by the intern, school district representatives, and TCNJ faculty. Mentor principal qualifications include appropriate certification, demonstrated experience as a school leader, and on-site status in the building where the candidate is serving the internship.

All candidates should have their mentor principals secured and submit a signed Mentor Principal Verification Form before embarking on the internship. As aspiring administrators, the candidate holds primary responsibility for ensuring that the mentor verification form is completed and submitted on or before the first day the internship course meets. Candidates who fail to submit an approved mentor form on time may have to delay the onset of the internship until the next semester. **Candidates seeking an internship placement in a school or district where they are not employed should begin the process of finding a mentor at least three months prior to the onset of the internship** to allow sufficient time to secure a placement and obtain approvals from district administrators and boards of education.

To facilitate a diverse experience, candidates must conduct at least part of the internship at a site that differs in school level (elementary, middle or high school) or type (urban, suburban, Title 1, private, charter) than the main internship placement.

Internship Time Commitment

The State of NJ requires each candidate for principal certification to accumulate a **minimum** of 300 hours of leadership experience in a school environment, or approximately 100 hours per internship semester. The specific activities comprising the internship experience will vary depending upon the individual's school assignment, skills, and needs.

Unless prior permission has been granted by the program coordinator and the instructor of the Principalship courses, the three internship courses must be taken consecutively over the course of one calendar year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Leadership Candidate

- works collaboratively with the mentor principal and TCNJ professor.
- commits the time and energy to meet the challenges in becoming a knowledgeable transformational leader.
- acts as a quasi-administrator, adhering to the timetables of the practitioners, following the policies and rules of the district, and becoming immersed in district activities.
- maintains an open and inquisitive mindset, seeking greater self-awareness and deeper understanding of the micro-political perspective of the school system regarding a leader's influence on school culture.
- gradually becomes more assertive and independent, performing more complex projects over the course of the internship.
- sets goals and reflects on progress in becoming an effective school leader during the process of developing and implementing substantive personalized internship plans.
- regularly completes and submits reflective logs and other assignments documenting personal progress and field-based experiences.
- communicates with the mentor and the TCNJ professor, arranging for meetings when needed and responding readily to messages and inquiries.

The Mentor Principal

The mentor principal assists TCNJ faculty in preparing leadership candidates to enter the principalship with the skills and abilities needed to be successful, caring principals.

The mentor principal:

- works with the candidate to develop an internship plan for the semester.
- supervises the candidate's internship with guidance from TCNJ faculty.
- delegates significant responsibilities to the candidate, as appropriate for the candidate's stage of development.
- provides opportunities for the candidate to observe the mentor in all aspects of the principalship.
- provides frequent constructive feedback to the candidate in a positive and caring way.
- provides honest feedback to the TCNJ professor at the end of each internship experience.
- communicates with members of TCNJ faculty to share information and concerns regarding the candidate or the program.
- ensures the school building personnel, the central office staff, and members of the board of education are aware of the candidate's internship.
- provides appropriate counsel for the candidate when he/she is ready to secure a leadership position.

TCNJ Faculty Mentor

The TCNJ faculty mentor has primary oversight of the candidate's internship program.

The faculty mentor:

- Ensures candidates and mentor principals understand the expectations related to the internship experience.
- distributes and explains the PSEL Standards.
- provides guidance to the candidate and mentor principal for planning the internship experiences each semester.
- approves internship plans.
- counsels and problem solves with mentor principals and candidates, as needed.
- regularly reviews the intern’s log and reflections to ensure the candidate is accumulating substantive and varied experiences.
- meets regularly with candidates in a face-to-face seminar component that facilitates collaborative reflection and collective problem solving
- assumes final responsibility for evaluating the candidate’s internship experiences, using TCNJ’s grading system to indicate the extent the candidate’s internship conformed to the requirements.
- advises the candidate in the development of a portfolio that accurately reflects his/her experiences in the leadership program.

Reflection Logs and Administrative Portfolio

Principal candidates keep reflections and logs to provide a written record of significant leadership responsibilities assumed or observed during field experiences. Candidates compile this documentation in an administrative portfolio. The specific information to be kept in the portfolio must correspond with expectations explained by the TCNJ internship professor. By the end of the program, each candidate’s portfolio must provide thorough documentation of 300 hours of substantive, field-specific experiences that address all of the PSEL standards.

Candidate Evaluation

Assessment of the candidate’s progress will be based upon performance during the internship.

Evaluation by the candidate will include:

- Completion of a self-assessment at various points during the program
- Reflection logs

Evaluation by the mentor principal will include:

- A final evaluation letter that reflects the candidate’s leadership skills, progress toward identified goals, and verification of time committed to the experience.
- Mentor recommendations regarding whether the candidate should be approved for the principal endorsement.

Evaluation by TCNJ professor will be based on:

- Formal and informal feedback from the mentor principal regarding professional dispositions and behaviors of the intern
- Candidate self-assessment
- Successful completion of the Administrative Portfolio as assessed by the portfolio rubric

- Quality and substance of reflective logs

Teacher Leader Clinical Experiences

Teacher leader candidates accumulate clinical hours during the courses they take as part of the Teacher Leader Certificate Program. Each teacher leader candidate is assigned a mentor teacher who is chosen collaboratively by the candidate, the school supervisor, and the educational leadership program coordinator. Mentor teacher qualifications include tenure, appropriate certification, demonstrated instructional leadership skills, and on-site status in the building where the candidate is working.

Time Commitment

Teacher leader candidates must accumulate a **minimum** of 100 clinical hours in a school environment over the course of at least one school year. The specific activities comprising the internship experience will be a combination of activities assigned in the five teacher leader courses and candidate-specific activities that vary depending upon the individual's school context, skills, and needs.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Teacher Leader Candidate

- works collaboratively with the mentor teacher and the TCNJ professors who instruct the candidate's courses.
- commits the time and energy to meet the challenges in becoming an instructional leader.
- acts as an emerging leader while following the policies and rules of the school and district.
- maintains an open and inquisitive mind, seeking greater self-awareness and deeper understanding of how peer leaders can influence school culture, teaching, and learning.
- gradually becomes more assertive and independent, performing more complex projects and assuming greater responsibility over the course of the program.
- regularly submits clinical experience logs to the program coordinator.
- documents personal progress and field-based experiences in an electronic portfolio.
- communicates with the mentor teacher and program coordinator, arranging for meetings when needed and responding readily to messages and inquiries.
- ensures the school principal approves of the candidate's clinical experience.

The Mentor Teacher

The mentor teacher assists TCNJ faculty in preparing leadership candidates with skills and abilities needed to be successful, caring teacher leaders.

The mentor teacher:

- works with the candidate to complete clinical experience requirements.
- models excellence in teaching and mentorship.
- provides frequent constructive feedback to the candidate in a positive and caring way.
- provides honest feedback to the program coordinator at the end of the clinical experience.
- communicates with the program coordinator to share information and concerns regarding the candidate or the program.

Educational Leadership Program Coordinator

The TCNJ educational leadership program coordinator is responsible for overseeing the clinical experience.

The program coordinator:

- ensures candidates and mentor teachers understand the expectations related to the clinical experience.
- distributes and explains the Teacher Leader Model Standards.
- counsels and problem solves with mentor teachers and candidates, as needed.
- reviews the candidate's log each semester to ensure the candidate is conforming to program requirements.
- assumes final responsibility for assessing the candidate's electronic portfolio documenting that the candidate has successfully completed the clinical experience.

Clinical Experiences Portfolio

Teacher leader candidates maintain an electronic record of the significant leadership responsibilities assumed or observed during clinical experiences. The specific format and content of the portfolio must correspond with expectations explained by the program coordinator.

Candidate Evaluation

Candidates enroll in EDAD 701, a zero-credit course, in their final semester and submit their portfolio for review by the program coordinator at the end of the term.

Successful completion requires:

- a final evaluation letter from the mentor teacher that reflects on the candidate's leadership skills, indicates progress toward identified goals, and verifies the time committed to the experience.
- accumulation of 100 hours of field-specific experiences.
- documentation of substantive activities that correspond to each of the Teacher Leader Model Standards.

Change in Teaching Position

Changing schools during enrollment in the Teacher Leader Certificate Program disrupts the clinical experience because the teacher leader clinical experiences are embedded in coursework. Therefore, teacher leader candidates who change schools may need to temporarily suspend their program of study until they have begun a new teaching position and a new teacher mentor has been identified. In cases of job loss or transfer, candidates should immediately notify their advisor or the program coordinator, who will assist the candidate in identifying a new mentor and revising the program of study to facilitate timely completion. Failure to obtain a new teaching position may prevent a candidate from successfully completing the program.

Transfer of Credit

The College of New Jersey's Educational Leadership program consists of 30 to 36 graduate credits. According to [TCNJ's policy](#), a candidate in the Educational Leadership program may transfer up to 6 graduate credits from another institution or TCNJ program, with certain restrictions.

Candidates who wish to take a course at another institution while completing their TCNJ program must obtain approval **before** registering for the course.

Candidates who completed credits prior to entering the educational leadership program should obtain approval **during the first or second semester** of their enrollment.

Candidates who desire to transfer credits from another institution should adhere to the following steps:

1. Review the course description in the most recent [Graduate Bulletin](#) to determine the content alignment between the TCNJ course and the graduate course offered at another accredited institution. Course credits must be the same (substituting a 3-credit course for another 3-credit course) and the grade obtained must be at least a B. If you are not sure if a potential institution is accredited, you should speak with your advisor or the Educational Leadership Program Coordinator.
2. Complete the [Graduate Course Authorization](#) form. Submit both the form and the course description for the transfer course to the Educational Leadership Program Coordinator for his/her signature.
3. Forward the completed form to the Office of Records and Registration: balle@tcnj.edu. Keep a copy for your personal records.
4. Forward official transcripts from the external institution directly to TCNJ's [Office of Records and Registration](#).
5. After the Office of Records and Registration processes the information, the candidate should expect to see the transferred course recorded in PAWS.

Please note that failure to follow these steps may negatively impact the ability to transfer credits into the program.

Special Arrangement and Independent Study Courses

Special Arrangement Courses: Statement of Purpose

A special arrangement course is an experience in which the candidate covers the content of a regularly scheduled course through individual study under the guidance of a faculty sponsor. This approach is to be used only when scheduling difficulties would otherwise prevent the candidate from completing his or her program of study in a timely manner. **Candidates are required to plan out their courses of study in advance to avoid having to seek a special arrangement course.**

Enrolling in a special arrangement course requires signed authorization by the chair of the department offering the course and the dean of that school. Permission for a special arrangement course will not be granted during a semester in which the regularly scheduled course is available.

Special arrangement courses will be designated as such on the candidate's transcript by the following statement: *Requirements for this course were met through individual study under the sponsorship of a qualified faculty member.*

Independent Study: Statement of Purpose

Independent study should be used for individual pursuit of topics within or beyond a candidate's major field of study which transcend the regularly available curriculum. It will normally involve research, primary source reading, or field work. When planning for independent study, the candidate and his or her advisor should strive to maintain a balance between this mode of study and other elective courses. A disproportionate number of independent study courses may prevent a candidate from taking the courses necessary to complete their program of study in a timely manner.

Comprehensive Exam

All Master's in Educational Leadership candidates must pass a comprehensive examination (also known as the "comps") as a requirement for graduation.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the exam is to provide an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate knowledge of core leadership practices and dispositions and apply such ideas to a case situation. The exam is aligned with the [National Educational Leadership Preparation \(NELP\) Program Standards - Building Level](#). The exam evaluates:

- a. skill in organizing and expressing ideas in a logical, coherent, literate, and convincing fashion.
- b. ability to synthesize and apply knowledge of educational leadership
- c. facility in cogently analyzing the issues presented and generating recommendations for addressing them.

Dates, Registration, and Prerequisites

- The exam is offered three times per year, once during the fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- Candidates register for EDAD 700, a 0-credit course.
- Prior to taking the exam, candidates must:
 - have successfully completed 30 hours of educational leadership coursework
 - be in good academic standing, as demonstrated by having a minimum grade point average of at least 3.0 for all courses completed at TCNJ as part of their master's program.

Exam Logistics

- Exams are completed on a date to be communicated to candidates at least 4 weeks in advance.
- Candidates have 4 hours to complete the exam.
- Candidates will be held to the standards outlined in TCNJ's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) and the work submitted must be the candidate's own original work.
- Candidates may not use print or electronic materials during the administration of the exam.

Evaluating the Exam

Throughout the examination process, the candidate's identification is protected. A number is assigned to each candidate and this number is maintained with strict confidentiality by office personnel. No one evaluating the responses knows the respondent's identity. Evaluation involves the following steps:

1. At least two Educational Leadership faculty evaluate each answer using the scoring rubric.
2. After all answers have been read and rated, the raters meet to consider the performance of each candidate. If there is an evenly split decision, a third party will be

consulted evaluate the candidate's response and break the tie. The decision of the team is made as a single decision, pass or fail, for each question. Candidates who fail a question only need to retake the portion they failed. However, candidates must ultimately pass each question to pass the exam.

3. Candidates will be notified of having successfully completed the exam via email within two weeks after the comprehensive exam has been completed.
4. If a candidate is judged to have failed a question, written summary comments describing the major reasons the team judged the response to be unsatisfactory will be forwarded to the candidate. Written notification is also provided to the candidate's advisor, the candidate's departmental permanent file, and is submitted into PAWS.
5. If a candidate has failed a portion of the exam:
 - a. Candidates who wish to appeal the decision should follow the [complaint procedures](#) outlined in TCNJ's policies and procedures for graduate candidates.
 - b. The candidate should meet with the advisor to review the questions, the candidate's answers, and the comments given by the evaluation team.

Retakes

A candidate may take the comprehensive exam a maximum of two times. The candidate is only required to retake the question that was failed. A candidate who has taken the exam on two occasions and has failed to pass on both occasions will be discontinued from the master's program. Candidates must pass the exam within six years of beginning their educational leadership program at TCNJ or face dismissal from the program.

Suggestions for the Candidate

The exam requires higher order thinking that goes beyond mechanical recall or reporting facts. Responses should demonstrate deep understanding of leadership concepts and theories and how they relate to the case presented. Underlying theories should be identified, elaborated upon, and connected to the case to provide an explanation and rationale for the actions, behaviors, and events described in the case.

Candidates should:

- Take a direct approach to each question. Identify the fundamental issues or central concerns and address them in their responses.
- Use precise terminology, simple direct sentence structure, and avoid redundancies and run-on sentences.
- Organize thoughts logically and use numbering, headings, and key words to enable the reader to locate the required elements.
- Emphasize specifics and avoid sweeping general observations.
- Provide specific examples from the case, course material, and expert readings to support the response

Maintenance of Professional Credentials

Candidates enrolled in educational leadership programs that lead to state endorsements are responsible for maintaining their professional credentials (i.e., licenses, endorsements, and certifications) to meet state eligibility requirements for licensure. Maintenance of professional credentials is an important aspect of professionalism. Professionalism, as defined by the [Educator Dispositions Assessment](#) adopted by TCNJ's School of Education, includes maintaining "professional boundaries of ethical standards of practice." The department faculty, therefore, consider revocation or suspension of a student's professional endorsements to be a serious violation of ethical standards that could result in suspension or dismissal from TCNJ's educational leadership program.

Student Retention Policy¹

If a student's conduct violates either applicable ethical standards or college conduct policies, the following steps are taken to address the problem while respecting the student's right to due process:

1. The faculty member who has become aware of any potential academic or conduct disciplinary issue meets with the student to explain their concerns and provide the student an opportunity to respond. The faculty member may ask the educational leadership program coordinator and any relevant additional School of Education personnel to attend the meeting. If appropriate, faculty will offer suggestions for possible changes in the student's conduct and develop an [Educator Disposition Assessment Intervention/Remediation Plan](#).
2. The faculty member will write a letter to the Department Chairperson outlining the meeting with the student and copy the student on the letter.
3. If, after the meeting with the student, the student's conduct is determined to potentially constitute a violation that could result in suspension or dismissal from the program, the Department Chairperson will appoint a retention committee and collect all relevant materials (including any materials submitted by the student) prior to determining a date for the Retention Committee meeting. The Retention Committee will be composed of three faculty members to investigate all aspects of the situation, make recommendations concerning the student's eligibility to remain in the program, and if permitted to remain in the program, under what conditions. The student is always informed, in writing, of these proceedings and is always interviewed by the Retention Committee.
4. The Retention Committee will only be convened within either a fall or spring academic term. The Retention Committee will complete its investigation and provide its report to the department faculty within 30 days of the committee's appointment. In the event the committee cannot convene because of an academic break (e.g. summer or winter break), the committee will convene within 14 days of the start of the next academic term.
5. In the interest of protecting the health, safety and/or welfare of the College, or any member of the College community, or any off-site activities associated with their

¹ Approved by department of EASE Sept. 8, 2021

- academic program, the Department may temporarily suspend a student from the program until the proceedings of the Retention Committee have been completed.
6. The Retention Committee's report, including recommendations and/or requirements, is presented to the department faculty, who are then responsible for implementing the recommendations.
 7. When the department faculty members have reviewed the retention committee's report, the Department Chairperson, the Program Coordinator, and the student's faculty advisor meet with the student to convey the department's decision(s) and/or recommendations. The Program Coordinator and the student faculty advisor subsequently monitor the student's progress in carrying out the department's recommendation for the student. If the student's Retention Committee recommends that the student no longer continue in the program, the department will dismiss the student from the program. Students who believe the disciplinary process was biased or followed without fidelity may appeal their case to the Dean of the School of Education.

Selected Policies and Complaint Procedures

Candidates should refer to [TCNJ's policy manual](#) for questions about procedures and requirements. We provide the following links for your convenience:

[Absence and Attendance Policy](#)

[Academic Integrity](#)

[Graduate Comprehensive Exams and Culminating Experiences](#)

[Graduate Non-Enrollment](#)

[Graduate Students Full-Time Definition](#)

[Incomplete and In Progress Grade](#)

[Registration](#)

[Repeating Courses](#)

[Student Conduct Code](#)

[Withdrawing from a Course](#)

Complaints

[Discrimination Complaints](#)

[Grade Appeals](#)

[Student Complaints](#)

Graduation

Applying for Graduation

Candidates apply for graduation using PAWS. (For directions: [How to apply for graduation](#))

There are four graduation times each school year: May, August, December, and January. These coincide with the end of the spring, summer, fall, and winter terms. May, August, and December applications are due in February and January applications are due in December. Visit the [academic calendar](#) for specific dates.

The graduation application fee is \$100.00. Candidates who apply after the application deadline will be charged a \$35.00 late fee.

Walking at Graduation

TNCJ allows graduate candidates who need three courses or fewer to complete the requirements for their degree to “walk” at commencement ceremonies in May, provided their program of studies can be completed by the December graduation date.

Professional Standards

Educational leadership program faculty have designed the principal preparation and supervision programs to align with the [Professional Standards for Educational Leaders \(PSELs\)](#):

1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values
2. Ethics and Professional Norms
3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness
4. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
5. Community of Care and Support for Students
6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel
7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff
8. Meaningful Engagement for Families and Community
9. Operations and Management
10. School improvement

The teacher leader certificate program is designed to align with the [Teacher Leader Model Standards](#):

1. Fostering a Collaborative Culture to Support Educator Development and Student Learning
2. Accessing and Using Research to Improve Practice and Student Learning
3. Promoting Professional Learning for Continuous Improvement
4. Facilitating Improvements in Instruction and Student Learning
5. Promoting the Use of Assessments and Data for School and District Improvement
6. Improving Outreach and Collaboration with Families and Community
7. Advocating for Student Learning and the Profession

Educator Dispositions

TCNJ’s School of Education has adopted nine educator dispositions describing the assumptions, values, and beliefs of exemplary educators. TCNJ’s educational leadership faculty, in cooperation with practicing school leaders, have developed three additional dispositions necessary for exemplary leadership.

0-Needs Improvement: minimal evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

1-Developing: some evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

2-Meets Expectations: considerable evidence of understanding and commitment to the disposition

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
1. Demonstrates Effective Oral Communication Skills	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Does not consistently demonstrate professional oral communication skills as evidenced by making <i>major</i> errors in language, grammar, and word choice <input type="checkbox"/> Does not vary oral communication to motivate students as evidenced by monotone voice with visible lack of student participation <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of vocabulary is either too difficult or too simplistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment, yet makes some common and noticeable errors <input type="checkbox"/> Strives to vary oral communication as evidenced of some students demonstrating a lack of participation <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally uses vocabulary that is either too difficult or too simplistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates strong professional oral communication skills as evidenced by using appropriate language, grammar, and word choice for the learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> Varies oral communication as evidenced by encouraging participatory behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates at an age appropriate level as evidenced by explaining content specific vocabulary

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
2. Demonstrates Effective Written Communication Skills	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates in tones that are harsh or negative as evidenced by fostering negative responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates <i>major</i> spelling and grammar errors or demonstrates frequent common mistakes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates respectfully and positively but with some detectable negative undertones, evidenced by unproductive responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates <i>common</i> errors in spelling and grammar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Communicates respectfully and positively with all stakeholders as evidenced by fostering conventional responses <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates precise spelling and grammar

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
3. Demonstrates professionalism Danielson: 4f; InTASC: 9(o)	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Does not respond to <i>communications</i> and does not submit all assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to exhibit punctuality and/or attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Crosses <i>major</i> boundaries of ethical standards of practice <input type="checkbox"/> Divulges inappropriate <i>personal</i> life issues at the classroom/workplace as evidenced by uncomfortable responses from others <input type="checkbox"/> Functions as a group member with no participation	<input type="checkbox"/> Delayed response to <i>communications</i> and late submission of assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Not consistently punctual and/or has absences <input type="checkbox"/> Crosses <i>minor</i> boundaries of ethical standards of practice <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally divulges <i>inappropriate</i> personal life issues into the classroom/workplace, but this is kept to a minimum <input type="checkbox"/> Functions as a collaborative group member as evidenced by minimal levels of participation towards productive outcomes or monopolizes conversation	<input type="checkbox"/> Responds promptly to <i>communications</i> and submits all assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently exhibits punctuality and attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains professional boundaries of ethical standards of practice <input type="checkbox"/> Keeps <i>inappropriate</i> personal life issues out of classroom/workplace <input type="checkbox"/> Functions as a collaborative group member as evidenced by high levels of participation towards productive outcomes

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
4. Demonstrates a positive and enthusiastic attitude Marzano: 29	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Often complains when encountering problems and rarely offers solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Resists change and appears offended when suggestions are made to try new ideas/activities <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a flattened affect as evidenced by lack of expressive gestures and vocal expressions	<input type="checkbox"/> Seeks solutions to problems with prompting <input type="checkbox"/> May tentatively try new ideas/activities that are suggested yet is often unsure of how to proceed <input type="checkbox"/> Overlooks opportunities to demonstrate positive affect	<input type="checkbox"/> Actively seeks solutions to problems without prompting or complaining <input type="checkbox"/> Tries new ideas/activities that are suggested <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an appropriately positive affect with students as evidenced by verbal and non-verbal cues

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
5. Demonstrates preparedness in teaching and learning Danielson: 1e, 3e, 4a; InTASC: 3(p)	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejects constructive feedback as evidenced by no implementation of feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Possesses an inaccurate perception of teaching/learning effectiveness as evidenced by limited concept of how to improve <input type="checkbox"/> Comes to class unplanned and without needed materials <input type="checkbox"/> Does not have awareness to alter lessons in progress as evidenced by activating no changes when needed	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat resistant to constructive feedback as evidenced by a lack of follow through on some suggestions <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection contains inaccuracies as evidenced by needing assistance for corrective measures of improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Comes to class with some plans and most needed materials <input type="checkbox"/> Aware that lesson is not working but does not know how to alter plans to adjust	<input type="checkbox"/> Accepts constructive feedback as evidenced by implementation of feedback as needed <input type="checkbox"/> Learns and adjusts from experience and reflection as evidenced by improvements in performance <input type="checkbox"/> Comes to class planned and with all needed materials <input type="checkbox"/> Alters lessons in progress when needed as evidenced by ability to change plan mid-lesson to overcome the deficits

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
6. Exhibits an appreciation of and value for cultural and academic diversity Danielson: 1b, 2a, 2b; Marzano: 36, 39; InTASC: 2(m), 2(n), 2(o), 3(o), 9(m), 10(q)	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates inequitable embracement of all <i>diversities</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Is challenged to create a <i>safe classroom</i> as evidenced by ignoring <i>negative</i> behaviors by students	<input type="checkbox"/> Goes through the <i>expected and superficial motions</i> to embrace all <i>diversities</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Strives to build a <i>safe classroom</i> with zero tolerance of <i>negative</i> behaviors towards others but needs further development in accomplishing this task	<input type="checkbox"/> Embraces all <i>diversities</i> as evidenced by implementing <i>inclusive activities and behaviors</i> with goals of <i>transcendence</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Creates a <i>safe classroom</i> with zero tolerance of negativity to others as evidenced by correcting <i>negative</i> student behaviors

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
7. Collaborates effectively with stakeholders Danielson: 4c, 4d; Marzano: 55, 56; InTASC: 1(k), 3(n), 3(q), 7(o)	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is inflexible, as evidenced by inability to work well with others and does not accept majority consensus <input type="checkbox"/> Tone exhibits a general lack of respect for others as evidenced by interruptions and talking over others <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely collaborates or shares strategies and ideas even when prompted	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates some flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a respectful tone in most circumstances but is not consistent <input type="checkbox"/> Shares teaching strategies as evidenced by some effort towards collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates flexibility as evidenced by providing considered responses and accepts majority consensus <input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a respectful tone at all times, even during dissent as evidenced by not interrupting or talking over others <input type="checkbox"/> Proactively shares teaching strategies as evidenced by productive collaboration

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
8. Demonstrates self-regulated learner behaviors/takes initiative Danielson: 4e; Marzano: 57; InTASC: 9(l), 9(n), 10(r), 10(t)	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Is unable to self-correct own weaknesses as evidenced by not asking for support or overuse of requests for support <input type="checkbox"/> Does not conduct appropriate research to guide the implementation of effective teaching as evidenced by a lack of citations in work	<input type="checkbox"/> Is beginning to recognize own weaknesses and asks for support making some effort to become involved in professional growth <input type="checkbox"/> Level of research needs further development to acquire fully and integrate resources leading to implementing different and effective teaching styles	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes own weaknesses as evidenced by seeking solutions before asking for support <input type="checkbox"/> Researches and implements most effective teaching styles as evidenced by citing works submitted

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
9. Exhibits the social and emotional intelligence to promote personal and educational goals/stability Marzano: 37, 38	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates immaturity and lack of self-regulation as evidenced by overreacting to sensitive issues <input type="checkbox"/> Does not demonstrate perseverance and resilience (grit) as evidenced by giving up easily <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates insensitivity to feelings of others as evidenced by a lack of compassion and empathetic social awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates level of maturity to self-regulate after initial response is one of overreaction to sensitive issues <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates perseverance and resilience (grit) most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates sensitivity to feelings of others most of the time	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates appropriate maturity and self-regulation as evidenced by remaining calm when discussing sensitive issues <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates perseverance and resilience (grit) as evidenced by tenacious and determined ability to persist through tough situations <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates sensitivity to feelings of others as evidenced by compassionate and empathetic social awareness

Disposition	Associated Indicators		
10. Demonstrates fairness	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Resists considering other viewpoints or quickly jumps to conclusions <input type="checkbox"/> Undermines others by blaming or withholding information, materials, or support <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates favoritism or subjectivity in applying rules and policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Considers other viewpoints, but misperceives them <input type="checkbox"/> Treats everyone the same, but fails to consider that individuals differ in what they need to be successful <input type="checkbox"/> Consistently adheres to the "letter of the law" when applying rules and policies without regard to individual contexts or the "spirit of the law"	<input type="checkbox"/> Solicits diverse opinions and objectively listens with an open mind <input type="checkbox"/> Actively promotes the success of others by taking responsibility and sharing information, resources, and targeted assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Considers individual and contextual factors in applying rules and policies and interrogates how systems may perpetuate inequities

Disposition

Associated Indicators

11. Demonstrates belief in the growth of all learners	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Focuses primarily on deficits when speaking about students and/or families <input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly articulates lower expectations for some learners (e.g. English Language Learners; students with disabilities)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attributes success mainly to fixed characteristics such as intelligence or talent <input type="checkbox"/> Implicitly signals lower expectations by doing others' work for them or by rescuing them from struggle	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes that all students have assets and abilities that can be developed <input type="checkbox"/> Explicitly articulates to others that learning and performance will improve with practice and experience and encourages them to work toward challenging goals

Disposition

Associated Indicators

12. Demonstrates positive personal convictions	Needs Improvement 0	Developing 1	Meets Expectations 2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Makes destructive or hurtful comments <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressively advocates for own position by bullying others <input type="checkbox"/> Nihilistic (does not seem to care about anything in particular) or articulates negative convictions (e.g., disparages certain groups, overly punitive)	<input type="checkbox"/> Offers only shallow, vague opinions or provides only "happy talk" feedback to others <input type="checkbox"/> Deferential or indecisive, readily changes position when questioned <input type="checkbox"/> Unfocused- agrees with everyone or is unable to prioritize commitments	<input type="checkbox"/> Confidently and respectfully offers well-informed opinions and constructive feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriately advocates for a decisive course of action <input type="checkbox"/> Articulates a focused set of positive education-related passions, beliefs, or commitments

Educator Disposition Assessment Intervention/Remediation Plan

The form is completed by the Program Coordinator. Completed forms are submitted to the student, the faculty advisor, Department Chair, and the Dean. All forms are then placed in the candidate's departmental file.

Candidate: _____ Program: _____ Date: _____

Candidate Intervention/Remediation

The candidate who fails to maintain a 3.0 GPA, accumulate sufficient PSEL-aligned experiences during internship courses, or fails to demonstrate acceptable performance of educational leadership dispositions is referred to the faculty advisor for intervention/remediation.

Dispositions are assessed at two checkpoints during a candidate's program of study. If a candidate is referred due to dispositional concerns, he/she is required to participate in some form of intervention/remediation which is documented on this form and kept in the candidate's file. If the candidate's dispositions fail to improve, the Program Coordinator may recommend dismissal from the program. The final decision is that of the Dean, School of Education.

Reason for Intervention/Remediation (check all that apply):

_____ Academic Progress:

Comments _____

_____ Internship:

Comments _____

_____ Dispositions:

Comments _____

_____ Other:

Comments _____

Intervention/Remediation Plan:

I have read and understand the Candidate Intervention/Remediation Plan and its full implications regarding my continued progress in the Educational Leadership Program at The College of New Jersey.

Candidate Signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Signature: _____ Date: _____

Program Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Outcome of Remediation Plan

End of semester outcomes/results of intervention/remediation (check all that apply):

Candidate failed to fulfill academic/dispositional progress goals:
Comments:

Candidate fulfilled academic/dispositional progress goals:
Comments:

Follow Through:

- Candidate critical task is re-assessed and re-graded to indicate acceptable performance
- Candidate grade is changed from an "I" in the original course to the earned grade
- Other – Please explain

Plan of Action:

- Candidate is recommended to progress in the Educational Leadership Program
- Candidate is recommended for dismissal from the Educational Leadership Program

Additional Comments:

Program Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approval/Denial of Plan of Action:

- Plan of Action is Approved
- Additional Intervention/Information is Needed

Additional Comments:

Dean, School of Education Signature _____ Date: _____