Leadership Academy
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Leadership Academy?
The Leadership Academy is a collaborative effort between local school districts and the University of Tennessee’s Center for Educational Leadership to prepare and develop the next generation of outstanding school leadership in our communities. This rigorous 15-month experience is intended to significantly shorten the learning curve for the increasingly complex and demanding job of school principal. Through the Leadership Academy, a small and extremely talented cohort of aspiring principals will learn successful strategies of effective instructional leadership from experienced leaders, researchers, professors, and each other.

Who should apply for the Leadership Academy?
Teachers, instructional coaches, teacher leaders, counselors, assistant principals and others with at least three years of successful educational experience and instructional knowledge are encouraged to apply. Applicants should aspire to be a school principal in their sponsoring school district within the next 1-5 years.

I applied last year. Must I complete another full application?
Yes. You will need to submit an entirely new packet with new evaluation forms, references, transcripts, etc.

When will the program begin?
The program runs from June 2, 2016 through July 6, 2017.

How is the program structured?
Fellows begin their work on June 1st and are essentially full-time students at the University of Tennessee for the summer. Fellows are placed in a school from their sponsoring school district for the academic year, spending four days a week with an excellent mentor principal, learning instructional leadership hands-on. The fifth day (generally Friday) is spent in coursework and seminars at the University of Tennessee with both professors and practitioners learning the theory and research associated with effective educational leadership. The second summer entails capstone courses meant to culminate the experience. Full-time university coursework is required in both summers of the program.

I am already licensed as a principal. Can I still apply for this program? Will my license put me at a disadvantage for selection?
Licensed principals can apply to the Leadership Academy and will not be at a disadvantage. Participants are identified based on who the selection committee feels will benefit the most from the program and will complete the program ready to
assume a school leadership role in their sponsoring school district. Selected
individuals who already have completed a Master’s program for licensure can utilize
the Academy to work toward an EdS. In addition, plans are in process for offering a
Doctor of Leadership Practice associated with the Leadership Academy, but final
approval for this degree has not yet been received.

**I haven't been admitted to the UT Graduate School. Can I still apply?**

Yes. If you are admitted to the Leadership Academy and have not yet been admitted
to the Graduate School, you will be required to be admitted to both the Department
of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in the College of Education, Health, and
Human Sciences and to the UT Graduate School prior to the start of the 2016-2017
academic year.

**Am I guaranteed a principalship position after completing the program?**

No. For the past several years, sponsoring school districts have hired approximately
5-10 new principals per year, as well as a number of assistant principals. Participants
who are successful in all aspects of the program will be very competitive candidates
for these openings but are not guaranteed principalships.

**Are the graduates of this program going to get preference for open positions?**

The Leadership Academy has been created to address the ongoing need for school
leaders who are well versed in their sponsoring school district’s goals. These school
districts will seriously consider all successful candidates for principal and assistant
principal vacancies.

**What is my obligation to my sponsoring school district if I am not hired as a principal?**

In return for receiving a stipend while serving as a Leadership Academy Fellow,
graduates commit to working in their sponsoring school districts for a minimum of
four years after completion of the program. If a graduate is not placed in a
principalship, he/she may be appointed to an assistant principalship, other school
administrative position, or a teaching position.

**Have you already selected the mentor principals? How are matches made?**

Mentor principals are selected based on their demonstrated leadership skills, their
schools’ success in implementing their school district’s goals, raising student
achievement levels, and their skills in and commitment to mentoring. The Leadership
Academy team will identify Mentor principals. In order to qualify as a mentor
principal, the mentor must attend the training session during the month of May.