



Leading Early Learning Fellowship—Pre-K-3

A Professional Learning Series for Elementary Administrators

2026-27

Offered through a partnership between the Maine Department of Education, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network, and the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children

Purpose

The *Leading Early Learning Fellowship* is a professional learning series designed to build understanding of the components of evidence-based, high-quality early childhood (Pre-K-3) learning environments and approaches that promote diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices. The series promotes knowledge of best practices in early childhood education and leadership abilities to support children, teachers, and families during this pivotal time in children’s development.

Audience

This series is geared toward elementary administrators who work in the Pre-K-Grade 3 span. Administrators can participate on their own but are encouraged to participate with a colleague in their school system who also supports grades Pre-K- 3 so that a more systemic application of series content can be achieved. Colleagues could include another elementary administrator, a curriculum leader, a special education director, an assistant superintendent, or teacher leader.

Intended Outcomes

Participants will:

- increase their knowledge of early childhood development and pedagogy.
- strengthen their early childhood leadership abilities within their school districts and communities.
- identify resources and key components of high-quality early childhood programming.
- engage with a network of colleagues to grow their understanding of early childhood.

Series Design and Schedule

The Leading Early Learning Fellowship will kick off on September 22, 2026 with an in-person session from 12:00-3:30 p.m. The introductory session will be followed by 5 asynchronous modules. Each module is 4 weeks long. Each week includes short readings, video clips, and a short assignment (observation, reflection, post to classmates). The time commitment each week is approximately 90 minutes. At the end of each module, participants engage in a 90-minute professional learning community experience held virtually. Fellowship participants will also attend the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children’s ECE Conference on October 23, 2028. The Leading Early Learning Fellowship

culminates with the final PLC which will be a half-day gathering on March 30, 2027 during which participants will explore application of series learning to ongoing practice and share concepts for self-designed application projects they plan to implement following the series. The fellowship schedule is summarized below. Participants will earn approximately 40 contact hours for completion of all series components.

Series Component	Date/Date Span
Series Kick-off Session (In-person)	September 22, 2026, 12:00-3:30
Module 1	September 22-October 26, 2026
Statewide Early Childhood Conference	October 23, 2026 in Bangor, all day, in person
Module 1 PLC	October 27, 2026, Virtual, 5:00-6:30 pm
Module 2	October 28-November 30, 2026
Module 2 PLC	December 1, 2026, Virtual, 5:00-6:30
Module 3	December 2, 2026-January 11, 2027
Module 3 PLC	January 12, 2027 Virtual, 5:00-6:30
Module 4	January 13, 2027-February 22, 2027
Module 4 PLC	February 23, 2027, Virtual, 5:00-6:30
Module 5	February 24, 2027-March 29, 2027
Final PLC Gathering	March 30, 2026, in person, 12:00-3:30 p.m.

Cost

The cost of the fellowship is \$200 per participant. This includes all series content (kick off meeting, modules, facilitated PLCs, optional conference attendance, and final gathering) and materials. Participants will be responsible for travel to the kickoff, conference and the final gathering. A process for payment will be provided after applications are accepted.

Applications

The application for the 2026-27 Leading Early Learning Fellowship is [available here](#). Applications will be accepted through July 10, 2026.

Additional Information

Please contact Lee Anne Larsen, Director of Early Learning, leeann.larsen@maine.gov, with any questions or for additional information.