

Arkansas Leadership Academy Transition
Frequently Asked Questions
Updated April 27, 2021

A. ALA Reach

1. What is ALA Reach?

ALA Reach is a set of professional learning offerings that any Arkansas educational leader or aspiring leader may choose to join. These offerings range from an ongoing, virtual community of practice to one-time webinars that can be watched live or on-demand. There is no application process for ALA Reach. Participants may register and join single events or series as their schedule allows.

2. What are the dates for the ALA Reach sessions?

There will be many offerings throughout the course of the year. Some will be pre-recorded and available on-demand. Others will be offered live and recorded when possible, for later viewing. Dates will be published on the ALA Website and advertised several weeks in advance.

3. When will we be able to sign up to participate in ALA Reach offerings?

ALA Reach offerings that are available on-demand will not require registration but may ask for participant information at the time of viewing for record-keeping purposes. We anticipate there will be many groups accessing the ALA Reach offerings, and we need to document correctly the number of participants accessing the training.

Each ALA Reach offering with limited participation will have its own registration. Registration will be available several weeks in advance.

4. What time will these sessions be? Are these offerings going to happen during the school day? Will teachers or aspiring leaders need a substitute?

Some sessions may occur during the school day, while others will be offered outside of school hours. Sessions specifically designed for teacher leaders and aspiring leaders will be offered at times when most teachers would be able to participate. The majority of sessions will be recorded and available for later viewing for those whose schedules do not allow live participation.

5. Will there be costs associated with any of the offerings?

At this time, there are no ALA Reach offerings planned that would have a cost associated.

6. Is this a program for teachers to participate, or is it only for administrators?

Teacher leaders and aspiring leaders are encouraged to participate in ALA Reach events that relate to the teachers' interests, career goals, and schedules. Administrators are also encouraged to participate based on their own interests, career goals, and schedules.

B. ALA Collaborative, including Master Principal Program, Teacher Leader Program, Instructional Leader Empowerment, School Team Empowerment, and Executive & Policy Leader Empowerment

1. What is the ALA Collaborative?

ALA Collaborative is the collective name for all programs and experiences offered by the ALA that require application and a long-term commitment. Some programs, like the Master Principal Program, are specifically designed as a multi-phase, multi-year process. Other programs and experiences are designed to last approximately one school year; however, all of the ALA Collaborative programs and experiences are personalized to the participants and teams who apply. Participants and teams will have personalized journeys that include the following:

- Common professional learning in the ALA focus areas of Collaborative Leadership, Collective Efficacy, and Cultural Competence;
- Personalized professional learning and application based on team goals, individual career goals, and current roles in education; and
- Opportunities to demonstrate professional growth, school outcomes, and student outcomes.

2. What programs and experiences will be offered as part of the ALA Collaborative?

The ALA Collaborative will include the Master Principal Program, Teacher Leader Program, Instructional Leader Empowerment, School Team Empowerment, and Executive & Policy Leader Empowerment.

3. What are the costs associated with the new offerings? Will there be a charge to the school districts for the attendees?

Costs associated with participation are primarily related to travel for face-to-face events. These costs include hotel rooms, meals, and mileage to and from the event venue. The Master Principal Program is unique in that overnight accommodations and meals are provided by the State funding.

4. Where will the face-to-face sessions be held?

Face-to-face sessions will be scheduled based on venue availability and the number of participants for each event. Some face-to-face sessions will be held in a centralized location, while others will be held more regionally/locally to reduce the need for travel and overnight accommodations. Some sessions may be offered in retreat settings allowing for more extensive cohort relationship building, while other sessions may be held in larger venues to support cross-collaboration among cohorts.

5. When will the ALA Collaborative sessions be held?

Sessions will be scheduled throughout the year and dates provided to potential participants as part of the application process.

6. What are your plans for Teacher Leadership Institute, Team Institute, Assistant Principal Institute, Student Voice, School Support/Organizational Development Performance

Coaches, Facilitation of Adult Learning Workshops, and Executive Leadership Collaborative?

- The Teacher Leadership Institute will become the Teacher Leader Program of the ALA Collaborative. It will be similar in content but may have some noticeable changes in delivery. The Teacher Leader Program will continue to allow participants to work toward Lead-Teacher Professional Licensure as part of the ADE's Career Continuum.
- The Team Institute will become School Team Empowerment of the ALA Collaborative. It will be similar in content but may have some noticeable changes in delivery. The intention of School Team Empowerment is to assist schools in accelerating implementation and impact of school initiatives and continuous improvement processes.
- The Assistant Principal Institute will be merged into Instructional Leader Empowerment of the ALA Collaborative. Participants will be grouped based on current role; therefore, assistant principals will continue to have access to colleagues across the state in the same position.
- The Student Voice Institute will not be offered by the ALA; however, it may be offered by other organizations or even individual partners of the ALA. The topics of student voice, educator voice, and community voice in school decision-making will be addressed as a key theme throughout ALA Reach and ALA Collaborative programs and experiences.
- School Support/Organizational Development Performance Coaches will not be offered through the ALA; however, they may be offered by other organizations or even individual partners of the ALA. Schools and districts wishing to continue support from the ALA may find the School Team Empowerment to be a useful experience. Teams in School Team Empowerment will receive individualized support and technical assistance as part of the experience.
- Facilitation of Adult Learning will be addressed through ALA Reach and ALA Collaborative programs and experiences.
- Executive Leadership Collaborative will be part of Executive & Policy Leader Empowerment of the ALA Collaborative. Participants will be grouped based on current role; therefore, executive leaders will continue to have access to colleagues across the state in the same position.

7. How will participants build relationships with one another?

Relationships are quickened by joint work, which is key to leadership development programs like the ALA. And lasting connections are often forged in the "down time" between formal sessions and in the evenings of overnight institutes. Participants will be encouraged to use these opportunities, both inside and outside of formal learning experiences, to develop relationships with colleagues across the state as well as those closer to home on whom they can rely for years to come.

The ALA Collaborative is set up as a cohort model, which supports both joint work and common "down time." Participants of one cohort will have opportunities to engage with

participants in other cohorts; however, the majority of learning and “down time” will likely be with others from the same cohort.

Over the past five years, research, evidence, and our own experience have shown that relationships can be built in a variety of contexts, including completely virtual cohorts when they are designed specifically with relationship-building in mind. It is *not* the intention of the ALA to have any completely virtual cohorts but rather to supplement face-to-face learning with virtual experiences. When virtual experiences are used as part of a cohort, those experiences will be designed to nurture the relationships already developed and build on the work begun in face-to-face sessions.

8. Is this a program for teachers to participate, or is it only for administrators?

Teacher leaders and aspiring leaders are encouraged to apply to ALA Collaborative, specifically for the Teacher Leader Program and School Team Empowerment. Administrators are also encouraged to apply to ALA Collaborative, specifically for the Master Principal Program, Instructional Leader Empowerment, School Team Empowerment, and Executive & Policy Leader Empowerment.

C. Applications for New ALA Collaborative Cohorts (*Note: See Section F for Master Principal Program Applications*)

1. When will applications be posted for new cohorts of the different ALA options? When will applications be due?

For this transition year (2021-2022), our first focus is on transitioning participants of the Master Principal Program because it is a multi-phase process and also on launching ALA Reach. Therefore, new cohorts of other ALA Collaborative programs and experiences will begin later in the school year. When applications are posted, notifications will be sent through a variety of channels. If you would like to make sure you are notified, please submit your email address [here](#).

2. Who is eligible to participate in the different programs and experiences? Are there spaces available to apply for each of the programs and experiences?

Any Arkansas educational leader or aspiring leader is eligible to apply for the ALA Collaborative. When you apply, you’ll be asked to identify which of the programs or experiences align with your current job role and career goals. If you are applying as part of a team for School Team Empowerment, you will also have an opportunity as an individual to select “add on” programming for Teacher Leadership, Instructional Leadership, or Executive & Policy Leadership.

3. Will the application criteria be different than the current ALA program?

Application criteria will be finalized and published on the [ALA Transition webpage](#) and/or [ALA website](#) when applications are available.

4. Can educators from outside of Arkansas participate in the Arkansas Leadership Academy? For example, could I participate virtually from my school in Abu Dhabi?

The Arkansas Leadership Academy is a State-funded program for educational leaders and aspiring leaders serving in Arkansas schools. It is not open to educators working in schools outside of Arkansas.

D. Teacher Leaders

1. What opportunities will teacher leaders have to extend their learning about leadership in and through the classroom?

Teacher leaders are encouraged to participate in ALA Reach and/or to apply for the Teacher Leader Program. Teachers may also apply as part of a team for School Team Empowerment. All of these offerings will extend a teacher leader's learning about leadership in and through the classroom.

2. In what ways will classroom teacher leaders be supported to grow and expand their reach?

Through the Teacher Leader Program, School Team Empowerment, and ALA Reach, teacher leaders will be provided knowledge and skills to expand their reach throughout their school, district, region, and state. Teacher leaders who have already gained such knowledge and skills are encouraged to consider applying to be a mentor, learning facilitator, or presenter who helps lead and facilitate ALA offerings statewide or regionally.

3. How will teacher leader mentors be utilized in this new format? Will there be opportunities for Teacher Leadership Participants to become Table Facilitators to continue to grow and learn about the processes and successful practices of action research, data collection, and student improvement?

Teacher leaders who can demonstrate mastery of teacher leadership knowledge and skills will have opportunities to serve as mentors, learning facilitators, and presenters – both as part of ALA Reach and through the ALA Collaborative programs and experiences.

4. Will there be ways for teachers to learn about working with other adults to build strong structures within departments and across departments?

Yes, the Teacher Leader Program, School Team Empowerment, and ALA Reach will incorporate strategies for working with other adults to build strong structures within and across departments.

5. Will the Lead-Teacher Designation that was launched last year still be supported and recognized?

Yes. DESE created Lead-Teacher Designation as part of the [Teacher Career Continuum](#). "To encourage teacher leadership and provide Arkansas Teachers with viable career options, the state's Teacher Leader Advisory Group created the Teacher Career Continuum, effective May 2019... Lead-Teacher Professional designations recognize teachers for demonstrating

job-embedded professional learning. [This designation distinguishes] these teachers as expert practitioners and leaders in the teaching profession. Teachers with lead... designations may become mentors to aspiring teachers or early career professionals, and assume leadership positions with their school communities.”

The Arkansas Leadership Academy’s Teacher Leader Program is designed to incorporate the requirements for Lead-Teacher Designation for those who would like to pursue that career pathway.

To learn more about the Lead-Teacher Designation, please see <https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/educator-effectiveness/impact-tomorrow-grow-through-the-career-continuum/lead-teacher-designation-pathways>.

E. Master Principal Program

1. What is the Master Principal Program?

The Master Principal Program was created by law to provide “training programs and opportunities to expand the knowledge base and leadership skills of public school principals.” It consists of three phases:

- “Phase one”, which shall expand the knowledge base and leadership skills of the principal;
- “Phase two”, which shall require the principal to apply strategies and to collect evidence of improvement in student learning and school processes; and
- “Phase three”, which shall require the principal to publicly demonstrate the ability and skills that lead to sustained academic improvement in a school and a school district.

Any Arkansas principal with one year of experience may apply for Phase 1. A school principal successfully completing all phases and designation requirements of the program is designated as a Master Principal by the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

2. What will the transition look like for principals that have already completed MPP Phase 1 or 2?

Our intention is to provide as smooth of a transition as possible for those already in the Master Principal Program; therefore, we will assess current knowledge and skills of those already in the program using the portfolio of evidence they submit to the current ALA facilitators in May 2021. We will then modify our program to best meet the needs of each cohort already in the Master Principal Program.

3. Will those who are currently in MPP Phase 1 or 2 continue using the same performance strands and rubrics on which their plans are based? Or will they transition to a new rubric?

Once we begin operation of the ALA in July 2021, our Master Principal Program Director will convene a group of stakeholders to review the current performance strands and rubrics and crosswalk these with the Arkansas Leadership Standards, LEADS 2.0, and other state

expectations. If a decision is made to modify the current performance strands and rubrics for new cohorts entering the Master Principal Program, a subsequent decision will be made about how best to transition or continue the current performance strands and rubrics for those participants currently in MPP Phase 1 and 2.

4. What is the plan for the Master Principal Program in regard to virtual or face-to-face sessions? Where will the face-to-face sessions occur?

The majority of the Master Principal Program will be face-to-face sessions, supplemented with virtual experiences to provide more frequent touch-points with program participants. When virtual experiences are used as part of a cohort, those experiences will be designed to nurture relationships already developed within the cohort and to build on the joint work begun in face-to-face sessions.

Face-to-face sessions will be scheduled based on venue availability and the number of participants for each cohort. The majority of Master Principal Program face-to-face sessions will be held in a centralized location; however, participants may also be required to attend some regional face-to-face experiences to increase their engagement with local leaders. Some sessions may be offered in retreat settings allowing for more extensive cohort relationship building, while other sessions may be held in larger venues to support cross-collaboration among cohorts.

5. Will Master Principal Program participation continue to be free to districts?

Yes, the Master Principal Program will continue to be free for participants and their districts, including lodging and meals.

F. Applications for Master Principal Program Transition and New Cohorts

1. Will there be a Master Principal Program offered for 2021-2022?

Yes, there will be a Master Principal Program in 2021-2022, and it will include all three phases of the program.

2. Will there be a new cohort for 2021-2022? If so, when will applications be due for MPP Phase 1?

Yes, there will be a new cohort for MPP Phase 1 in 2021-2022. Applications will be available on the [ALA Transition webpage](#) and/or [ALA website](#) as soon as they are available. The due date has not been finalized.

3. How will those currently in MPP Phase 1 or Phase 2 complete their programs? Will they need to complete applications for MPP Phase 2 and Phase 3?

Participants in Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the Master Principal Program have been asked to submit a portfolio of evidence about their professional growth, school outcomes, and student outcomes to the current Master Principal Program facilitator by May 9, 2021. Upon review of these portfolios, the current ALA operator will determine who has met the criteria for completing the current phase and is ready to move onto the next phase. Those current

participants who are committed to continuing in the program will complete our intake form, which includes signed expectations for the upcoming year.

4. If you were accepted into the MPP in 2020 or before but opted out of participation in 2020-2021 because of COVID-19 pandemic protocols, can you continue in 2021-2022? What would be the next steps?

Please contact us directly at ala@apsrc.net or [submit this form](#) to ensure we have your contact information. We will ask you to complete our intake form, which includes signed expectations for the upcoming year.

5. Will those who successfully complete the current 2020-2021 AAEA First Year Principal program still be entered into Master Principal Phase 1 in summer 2021?

Yes, the AAEA will be notifying us of who has successfully completed the 2020-2021 AAEA First Year Principal program so that we can provide those participants with our intake form, which includes signed expectations for the upcoming year.

6. If your school has High Reliability School (HRS) level 1 certification, would you still have to work through MPP Phase 1?

Yes. Our Master Principal Program is personalized, so some participants may be able to work through MPP Phase 1 at a faster rate than other participants; however, all participants must meet the expectations and pass the assessments of Phase 1 to move on to Phase 2. The Master Principal Program supports HRS implementation, but there is not a one-to-one relationship between MPP Phase 1 and HRS Level 1 certification.

7. What are the dates and locations for MPP Phase 1, 2, and 3?

Dates and locations for MPP Phase 1, 2, and 3 are in the process of being finalized. These will be communicated to participants already in the program and will be included in the application for the new Phase 1 cohort.

G. Master Principal Designation

1. What is Master Principal Designation?

According to state law, “a school principal successfully completing the program shall be designated as a master school principal by the academy.” Designated Master School Principals are eligible to receive financial incentives from the State as described below:

- All Designated Master School Principals
 - \$9,000 yearly incentive bonus for up to 5 years, while serving as a full-time, building-level principal in an Arkansas public school;
- Designated Master School Principals in High-Need Schools
 - \$20,000 yearly high-need salary bonus for up to 5 years, while serving as a full-time, building-level principal in a high-need Arkansas public school;
 - Plus \$15,000 at the end of the third consecutive year and \$10,000 at the end of the fifth consecutive year in the same school.

2. How does someone who has completed all three MPP Phases now apply for designation? What is the process to notify the ALA that they are ready to designate as a Master Principal?

After July 1, a notice will be published with instructions on how to indicate that you intend to apply for designation. If you would like to make sure you are notified, please email us at ala@apsrc.net or [submit this form](#).

3. If you have finished MPP Phase 3 but have not attempted designation yet due to COVID-19 and learning interruptions in the 2020 school year, is it still possible to attempt designation? Or would you need to go back through the three phases?

As long as you are still within the window of six years from the time you began the Master Principal Program, you may apply for designation without any additional steps. If you are not within the six years, you may seek a waiver based on extenuating circumstances. COVID-19 should not be a reason that someone would need to go back through the three phases.

4. Will people who have completed MPP Phase 3 under the original strands and indicators be designated using these same rubrics? Or will there be new rubrics and designation criteria? If it is the current rubrics, will those who are scoring and making decisions be well educated in these rubrics?

Our intention is to make the transition as smooth as possible for Master Principal Program participants. We do not intend to make any major changes to the rubric or designation process for those who have already completed MPP Phase 3. Each team of designation reviewers will include individuals who are experienced with the rubrics and designation criteria.

5. Will the evaluation rubric for MP designation be the same in the future?

This decision is currently under review and will involve input from a wide variety of stakeholders.

6. Since there will be a site visit during MPP Phase 3 in the future, would there still be a visit to determine master principal designation?

For those individuals who demonstrate mastery of the content through a site visit during Phase 3 programming, an additional site visit may not be necessary. If additional information is needed to confirm that the candidate has met the requirements for designation, an additional site visit may be scheduled.

7. Can a principal who has designated (already) work through the phases again and designate with the new model?

The law does not distinguish between the models; therefore, there would be no additional financial incentive to complete the process and designate again.

8. Are the districts responsible for the financial incentives to Master Principals?

No. DESE provides the stipends to eligible designated Master School Principals.

9. How will "high-need schools" be determined as related to Master Principal stipends? What criteria is used to make a high-needs designation?

High-need schools are identified as failing to meet certain established levels of academic achievement under rules adopted by the State Board of Education. The State Board is reevaluating Master Principal Program rules. We will make this information available as soon as possible.

H. Stakeholder Participation, Subject Matter Experts, Consultants, and Organizational Partnerships

1. Will you have an advisory board? If so, who will be invited to the table?

The ALA will have six advisory committees. These are:

- Governance Committee
- Finance Committee
- Audit Committee
- Publicity and Communications Committee
- Project Management and Leadership Committee
- Evaluation Advisory Panel

Each committee will include experts, partners, and key stakeholders, including current practitioners. If you are interested in serving on an advisory board, please email us at ala@apsrc.net or [submit this form](#).

2. How can I learn more about being involved with the new ALA as it develops?

Please visit the [ALA Transition Webpage](#) frequently. This page will be updated with information regularly. You may also contact us at ala@apsrc.net or [submit this form](#).

3. Will the in-state experts used in the ALA have to be part of the state cohorts for PLC @ Work and/or the High Reliability Schools initiative?

No, there is no requirement that in-state experts be part of other state programs. A variety of in-state experts will be needed for various roles. All applicants for consulting contracts and those interested in serving as mentors, presenters, or learning facilitators will be vetted for knowledge and expertise in their field.

4. Is it correct to assume that Arkansas State University and the University of Oklahoma will be receiving Arkansas funds to run an Arkansas program?

Arkansas Public School Resource Center is the lead partner on this project and the fiscal agent. APSRC will subcontract with its two partners, Arkansas State University and EDUTAS at the University of Oklahoma, to provide various aspects of the Arkansas Leadership Academy. Other national subject matter experts as well as in-state experts will be used in addition to these two partners to provide high quality professional learning.

I. Contact Information and Website

1. What is the current ALA website?

The current Arkansas Leadership Academy is continuing to use the website <https://www.arkansasleadershipacademy.org/> for ongoing work. That website will transfer over to the new operator after June 30, 2021. In the meantime, information about the ALA transition can be found on the [ALA Transition Webpage](#), which is part of the APSRC website.

2. Who do we email with our Master Principal Program questions?

You can email anyone on our team at ala@apsrc.net. We will make sure your question gets directed to the right person.

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