



MASTER OF EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

WHAT is the degree program?

This new degree program is a collaborative effort between the University of St. Thomas (UST), the Houston Independent School District (HISD), and the Aldine ISD. It is a 36 credit hour/two year program that results in a Master Degree and can lead to Principal Certification. Coursework includes five special education courses focused on leadership issues and five educational leadership courses focused on special education. A two semester practicum as well as two research seminars is required in the program too.

WHAT else do I need to know about the program?

You will have a two year service obligation for each of your two years of program participation. This service obligation will require you to be in a special education leadership role for four years following the completion of the program. This obligation is required because of the financial aid that you will receive for your participation in the program. If you are unable to secure a special education leadership position, you can meet this requirement in a non-leadership special education role.

WHY choose this program?

There are many Special Education Master Programs. There are many Educational Leadership Master Programs. However, these current master programs often fall short in preparing individuals for the unique challenges of special education leadership.

UST is a small university with small classes where you will develop close relationships with professors and colleagues.

The purpose of this program is to give a boost to school district efforts to achieve better outcomes for its students receiving special education services. To accomplish this goal, program participants will enhance their evidence-based special education and leadership knowledge, skills and tools. This will create better outcomes and brighter futures for the district's special needs learners.

WHY should I participate in this program?

Because this new program is part of a federal grant project, your cost for tuition and books will be significantly reduced.

Besides the financial incentive, this program will increase your opportunities for special education leadership advancement. Also, most courses needed for Principal Certification are included in your

program of study. Any additional coursework needed for this certification will be available at a reduced UST tuition rate.

WHO can participate in the program?

Special education teachers, other teachers, diagnosticians and speech therapists are prime candidates for the program. Individuals already in leadership positions, such as Department Chairs, are encouraged to apply. You must have a BA/BS. Additional University of St. Thomas Graduate School Admission requirements also must be met by program applicants. Special consideration will be given to candidates who are members of under-represented groups or who have a disability.

WHEN will the program begin?

The program's next cohort group of 20 students will start in the fall, 2014 semester. Additional cohort groups of 20 students will begin their programs of study in the fall semesters of 2015 and 2016.

WHERE will the classes be held?

Although at least half of the classes will be conducted online, others will be face-to-face. Face-to-face classes will be held at a location convenient for program participants.

HOW will the program work?

You will take two courses in the fall, spring, and summer semesters for two years. Some of your classes will be face-to-face in the evenings and others will be online. At least one course each semester will be online. Finally, you will be part of a small student cohort, which lends itself to receiving support from and developing network relationships with fellow cohort members.

HOW do I find out more about the program and apply for admission?

Please contact Dr. Randy Soffer, Director of the Preparation of Special Education Leaders (PSEL) Program or his Assistant, Ms. Debbie Fernandez, in the School of Education at the University of St. Thomas. You can e-mail them at psel@stthom.edu or call Dr. Soffer at 713-942-5922 or Ms. Fernandez at 713- 525-3829. On request, applications for admission are available electronically.