

MASTER OF EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

WHAT is the degree program?

This federally funded initiative is a collaborative effort between the University of St. Thomas (UST), Houston Independent School District (HISD), Aldine ISD, Spring ISD, Galena Park ISD, and Pasadena 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?

Your cost for tuition is significantly reduced and your textbooks are free.

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 final cohort group of 15 students will start in the fall, 2016 semester.

WHERE will the classes be held?

The 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. All of your classes will be face-to-face. In the fall and the spring semesters, your two courses will be consecutive—each will be 7 weeks in length. Your summer courses will be taught concurrently on different days during a five week period of time. 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.