

Building leaders to transform the future of education.

-CCCOE PACP Vision

Research confirms the enormous impact school leadership has on student achievement. Our program is committed to developing leaders who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions vital to leading complex change, grounded in compelling evidence that **leadership matters**, and designed to equip aspiring leaders to **successfully and ethically lead in the 21st Century**. Work of researchers and leadership experts such as Fullan, Darling-Hammond, DuFour, Noguera, Hattie and Barth have guided our program mission, course development, and CAPE alignment.

Foundational to our mission is the commitment to **equitable, inclusive outcomes**. Research suggests when an organization's goal focuses on student achievement, schools need strong instructional leaders (Hattie). WestEd's *Center for Teaching and Learning* identifies instructional leadership as the leadership component most related to student outcomes. McREL Institute's guidance urges training programs to emphasize instructional leadership. In *The Principal*, a program textbook, Fullan cites bodies of research supporting the significant impact instructional leadership has on improved student outcomes, identifying "leading the learning" as a core practice. With an emphasis on educational justice, courses provide opportunities to develop instructional leadership and feature experiences designed to apply key practices. Guided by DuFours' work, virtual PLCs offer another avenue to practice and refine skills.

Improvement science research from the Carnegie Foundation and University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning influenced the study of systems woven throughout our program. Continuous improvement is integral to successful organizations and crucial for ensuring equitable, inclusive outcomes. Participants experience Investigate-Plan-Act-Reflect inquiry cycles, a research-based improvement science practice. Throughout all courses, participants develop strategies for data analysis, shared goal development, and implementation, directly involving them in practice.

"Family engagement is one of the strongest predictors of children's school success, according to over 40 years of steadily accumulating evidence" (CDE; Weiss, Bouffard, Bridgall, & Gordon). This, coupled with a study of actions taken to develop collaborative cultures involving

all parents and families, is paramount to our coursework. We've drawn from Blankstein and Noguero's work to deepen development of socially responsible leaders. Their book, *Excellence Through Equity*, is a program text embedded in each course and one of many resources relied on, deepening reflection around attitudes and biases impacting educational justice. Our mission to ensure equitable, inclusive outcomes cannot be accomplished without understanding students' assets to develop authentic partnerships.

Research suggests "effective leaders are **relationship builders**", most true when developing trusting relationships with staff, students, families, and community. Drawing from the work of Kouzes and Posner in *The Leadership Challenge*, we provide ongoing study of their Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership throughout coursework and our Leadership Learning Seminar.

Adult learning theory guides course activities and projects, providing problem-centered, student-centered experiences that are relevant and involve choice. (Knowles, CDE). Research from Wallace Foundation informs us that programs toggling between theory and practice enhance participants' depth of understanding around leadership practices. Fullan suggests the same, students who experience leadership opportunities can access theory quickly. Consequently, our candidates begin field experiences early on, providing rich experiences to draw upon.