



LEAD LEARN EXCEL™

Leadership For Excellence

School leaders need the opportunity to focus on what matters most—the classroom and helping students succeed. We know early childhood education has a positive impact on a student's school readiness and later academic success. Preschool offers a unique window to grasp that opportunity. With so much at stake in the pre-k years, what options do school leaders with limited resources have to make the most of early learning's potential?

Introducing Lead Learn Excel

The Ounce of Prevention Fund is offering a new program, funded by the State of Illinois, to help school leaders achieve instructional excellence in their early childhood classrooms and progress in the state's quality rating and improvement system, ExceleRate Illinois. We do this through an innovative approach that helps leaders focus on creating the necessary supports and conditions for effective teaching and learning.

Why This Approach?

We focus on strengthening leadership and creating an environment to deliver ongoing professional development. We believe teacher effectiveness and student achievement hinges on it. Research has found that professional development that is routine, fixed within an organization and led by school leaders is effective in changing teaching practices and sustaining improvements. It's more effective than traditional professional development that is focused on the teacher in isolation and doesn't have a process for applying new knowledge in practice.

What Will Leaders Receive?

The Ounce, in partnership with the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University, will provide leaders with the following support services during a 16-month engagement:

1. **Training:** Knowledge development for leaders on instructional leadership and organizational supports and conditions for effective teaching and learning
2. **Technical Assistance:** Individualized support to help leaders apply knowledge, establish systems and change practice
3. **Peer Learning and Support:** Community of practice for leaders to reflect, examine their practice, learn from and with their peers
4. **Resources & Tools:** Protocols, job aids, guides and videos of effective leadership and teaching practices
5. **Mini-Grants:** Leaders may apply for a small monetary grant to support their quality improvement efforts

Contact Us with General Questions:
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Contact Project Director Marsha Hawley:
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Learn More & Sign Up to Participate:
www.theOunce.org/lead

More Information about ExceleRate Illinois:
exceleerateillinoisproviders.com

What Does It Cost?

Lead Learn Excel is offered at *no* cost to eligible programs. Participants are also eligible for travel reimbursements. This work is funded by a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, in partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development.

What Programs Are Eligible?

Any Silver- or Gold-rated program in ExceleRate Illinois that serves at-risk children may apply to participate.

Who Can Participate?

This program is designed specifically for instructional leaders, including: school principals, assistant principals, PFA program administrators, preschool coordinators, special education coordinators, etc.

How Will This Affect Your Rating in ExceleRate?

Lead Learn Excel can help Silver-rated programs move toward Gold, and help Gold-rated programs maintain their rating. Lead Learn Excel also includes support services for Gold-rated programs that wish to pursue an Award of Excellence in Preschool Teaching & Learning and/or Infant & Toddler Services, becoming an exemplar in Illinois.

When Does It Start?

These are the next scheduled groups to begin:

- Elgin: September 21–22
- East St. Louis: October 14–15
- Aurora: November 4–5
- Chicago: December 2–3

This is a limited-time offer.

Visit www.theOunce.org/lead to see the most current dates and locations, and to download a sign-up form to apply.

