

The LEAP Program

Leading Educators through Accelerated Pathways

Information Brief for K–12 School Leaders

Wiley University has launched the LEAP Program (Leading Educators through Accelerated Pathways), a flexible, accelerated teacher preparation initiative designed to address critical educator shortages in Texas and across the nation. This brief shares the essential information school principals need to identify, refer, and support candidates who are ready to enter or re-enter the teaching profession.

Why This Matters for Your Campus

Texas schools continue to face significant teacher shortages, particularly in elementary, science, social studies, and health education. The LEAP Program offers a streamlined pathway that brings qualified, mission-driven educators into classrooms faster, including paraprofessionals already serving on your campus, career changers, and community members with prior college experience.

Program at a Glance

Program Name	LEAP — Leading Educators through Accelerated Pathways
Institution	Wiley University, Marshall, Texas
Format	Hybrid: virtual synchronous and asynchronous learning combined with in-person residency and clinical experiences
Term Length	Five-week accelerated terms (adult degree-completion format)
Pathways	Two flexible tracks based on prior college credits and academic preparation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerated Track • Hyper-Accelerated Track
Certification Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EC–6 Elementary Education • Health EC–12 • 4–8 Social Studies • 4–8 Science
Field Experience	Required clinical experiences at Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved K–12 campuses

Who LEAP Is Designed For

LEAP is intentionally built for adults whose lives and schedules do not fit traditional pathways. Candidates well-suited for the program include:

- Working adults seeking a meaningful career transition
- Career changers from other industries
- Paraprofessionals and instructional aides currently serving in schools
- Military veterans
- Transfer students and associate degree holders
- Adults with some college credit but no degree

How Principals Can Partner With LEAP

School leaders are often the first to identify future teachers already working in their buildings or community. There are several practical ways to support the pipeline:

- Refer paraprofessionals, substitutes, and aides who show classroom potential
- Share the program with parents, alumni, and community members exploring a career change
- Serve as a host campus for clinical and field-based experiences
- Partner with Wiley on mentor teacher placements for LEAP candidates
- Display or distribute LEAP information in faculty workrooms and community spaces

Built-In Off-Ramp Pathways

Candidates who begin LEAP but choose not to complete the certification path still leave with a credential. Off-ramp options include a B.A. or B.S. in Interdisciplinary Studies, a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, or a Fitness Trainer Certification. This protects candidates from walking away empty-handed and reduces the risk of starting the journey.

From Wiley University Leadership

“The LEAP Program is a transformative leap forward for education in Texas, and beyond. We are opening doors for passionate, driven individuals to become the highly qualified teachers our students deserve, faster than ever before.”

— **Professor Marsanell D. Butler, M.Ed., Director of Educator Preparation**

“The teacher shortage is not just a workforce challenge — it is a justice issue. LEAP is our response: a flexible, accelerated pathway to educator certification designed for working adults, career changers, and degree completers who are ready to answer the call.”

— **Dr. Morris Thomas, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Contact and Next Steps

Principals interested in learning more, referring candidates, or exploring a clinical partnership are encouraged to reach out directly to one of the contacts below.

PROGRAM CONTACT

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About Wiley University

Wiley University, formerly known as Wiley College, is a premier liberal arts institution affiliated with the United Methodist Church and historically a Historically Black College and University (HBCU). The university is dedicated to fostering social good and developing leaders who make a meaningful impact in their communities and beyond.