



CATHOLIC
EXTENSION
SOCIETY



Loyola Marymount University
School of Education

Catholic School Leadership Development Initiative

Catholic Extension and Loyola Marymount University are engaged in a partnership to offer a graduate level online Certificate in Catholic School Administration program to novice and prospective leaders in Catholic schools in Extension dioceses. This program is designed for those that currently hold leadership positions in Catholic elementary and secondary schools (such as vice-principals, and new principals) or those that have been identified for a leadership role in the future. Although leadership development is often identified as a strategic concern for Catholic Schools in Mission Dioceses, these schools often lack opportunities for leadership development due to barriers of cost and distance.

This unique educational program, offered through LMU's *Catholic School Leadership Academy*, provides professional development that is specific to the Catholic school administration context. The one-year (4 course/10 graduate level units) program is designed to address three major themes in Catholic school administration: mission effectiveness, operational management, and instructional leadership. Some of the topics covered are Catholic identity, spiritual leadership, mission integration, vision implementation, instructional leadership, best practices in governance, budget development, laws, ethics, fundraising, finance, and human resource administration. The next national cohort will begin in July 2023.

This program has already shown outstanding success and impact in its first five years. As of 2024, 148 students from 43 Extension dioceses have participated, with 92% of all students advancing in their role or responsibilities within the first two years after receiving their certification.

Applications will be considered for up a maximum of three students per diocese, and must be leaders in their school and nominated by their principal and/or superintendent. All ten units of this coursework count toward a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership.

Students will be asked to commit a minimum of 2 years of service to a Catholic school in their diocese after they successfully complete the certificate program. Additionally, at the conclusion of the program students will be asked to apply their new skills by implementing specific projects that will enhance their local Catholic school in a strategic area identified by the principal. Project plans must be submitted to Catholic Extension in writing during the course of the program.

The normal cost of this educational program is estimated at \$16,230 per student (estimate pending final 2025-26 tuition confirmation), but with contributions from both Catholic Extension and LMU, the cost has been reduced to an estimated cost (including tuition and fees) of \$3,246 per student.

Desired Outcomes:

- **Building Leadership Capacity:** Dioceses and individual Catholic schools can retain their most promising leaders and create a pipeline of talent for future leadership positions or increased responsibilities in their current position.
- **Knowledge and Skills Applications:** Catholic school professional educators can apply the administrative knowledge and skills attained from the program to their current and future work as leaders, therefore strengthening their local Catholic school.

Expected Contributions & Responsibilities of Each Party:

1. Loyola Marymount University:

Financial – The School of Education will provide a tuition grant of 40% to each student.

Programmatic - LMU will be responsible for final admissions decisions for candidates who are selected to move forward after initial applications to Catholic Extension. LMU will also coordinate all academic content and logistics related to the certificate program.

2. Catholic Extension:

Financial - Catholic Extension will provide a tuition grant of 40% for each participating student. Funding will be provided directly to the diocese, who will then make final payment to LMU.

Communication - Catholic Extension will be responsible for communicating this initiative, and its terms and conditions, to the mission dioceses, and for collection of program applications to coordinate student selection with LMU.

3. School/Student:

Financial - Twenty percent of tuition and any remaining costs, or an *estimated* total of \$3,246, is the expected contribution of the student. At each school/diocese's discretion, they can choose to contribute toward this cost, but any cost sharing is up to the school, student, and diocese and must be negotiated internally. Regardless of the cost sharing arrangement, tuition bills for the remaining \$3,246 will be sent to the student for payment directly to LMU.

Programmatic – At the conclusion of the program, the student will be responsible for identifying a new project which will apply learned skills to enhance their local school.

Technology – Each student will be required to have a sufficient and stable high-speed broadband connection and computer with video and audio capabilities to participate in class sessions without noticeable interruption or delays.

4. Diocese:

Strategic – The diocesan Superintendent will be responsible for recruiting and nominating potential participants who are identified to be promising future leaders in their Catholic Schools.

Tactical - The diocese will be responsible for reporting results to Catholic Extension at the conclusion of the program.

Financial Details of Partnership

Contributor	Cost Per Student (estimated)	Cost for 3 Students
Catholic Extension 40% tuition (estimated for 2025-26) Travel to Los Angeles for <i>Invitation to Lead</i> weekend at LMU Lodging and Meals at LMU Total:	\$6,481 \$700 (est.) \$300 (est.) \$7,481	\$19,443 \$2,100 (est.) \$900 (est.) \$22,443
LMU 40% tuition Total:	\$6,492 \$6,492	\$19,476 \$19,476
School and Student 20% tuition Registration and Student Fees Total:	\$3,246 \$595 (est.) \$3,841	\$9,738 \$1,785 (est.) \$11,523
Total	\$17,814	\$53,442

Testimonials:

My experience at LMU was amazing. It redefined what a leader is and how to be a great leader. I learned skills that are sure to prove invaluable when in a leadership role. Along the way I also met some amazing mentors and other professionals that I know will be a great resource in the future. All in all, I would do this program again in a heartbeat and feel that all future leaders should be exposed to a program such as this one. It is an experience that I feel so blessed to have been given. – *Participant, Diocese of Charleston*

The Catholic Administrative Certification Program not only met but exceeded my expectations ... It has been the best experience in my lifetime. – *Participant, Diocese of Pueblo*

I'm now in my 8th year and our school has come so far in my time as principal, largely because of the lessons I learned as a brand new principal in this program. – *Participant, Diocese of Marquette*

This course is an absolute must for any Catholic personnel aspiring to be Catholic school leaders! – *Participant, Diocese of Shreveport*

I feel like this opportunity propelled me to another level that allowed me to have confidence and background knowledge to take on a leadership position within a catholic school. I would highly recommend this program to anyone looking to take a position of leadership in a catholic school. The program provided a great network for future references, advice, and support. I was able to directly apply the knowledge that I received from the program to my school. – *Participant, Diocese of Gaylord*

My participation has helped me build my confidence (and tool box) but more importantly it has given me a community in which to learn and lean on. Priceless and so appreciative. Every Catholic leader (and potential leader) should experience this program – *Participant, Diocese of Memphis*

Schedule of Courses

Summer 2025	Fall 2025	Spring 2026	Summer 2026	Total Units
EDLA 6420 (1 unit) with Invitation to Lead	EDLA 6430 (3 units) Mission-Focused Leadership in Catholic Education	EDLA 6431 (3 units) Organizational Leadership in Catholic Education	EDLA 6432 (3 units) Instructional Leadership in Catholic Education	10

Timeline

December 10, 2024	2025 - 2026 applications open for Extension dioceses
February 24th, 2025	Deadline for applications from dioceses
March 24th, 2025	Decisions communicated to applicant dioceses
April 15th, 2025	Admissions Deadline to LMU for students from approved dioceses
May 15th, 2025	LMU admissions decisions issued and enrollment in classes
June 24th, 2025	Summer 2025 Session Begins (self-paced independent coursework begins)
July 23rd - 25th 2025	Invitation to Lead, held on campus at LMU (required)
August 25th, 2025	Fall 2025 Semester begins
January 12th, 2026	Spring 2026 Semester Begins
May 12th, 2026	Summer 2026 Semester Begins
June 25th, 2026	Student project proposal submitted to LMU, Diocese, and Catholic Extension Program implementation begins in schools