



ExcEL Leadership Academy Partners with BloomBoard to Offer Micro-credential-Based Professional Learning for Teachers of English Learners

Today, one of every 10 students is an English Learner. That means most classroom teachers are or will be working with English learner students. However, the majority of those teachers will tell you they are underprepared and lack confidence in their ability to work with these students or connect with them and their families. A 2017 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine confirmed that teachers who work with English Learners are often underprepared for the job.

The Excellence for English Learners (ExcEL) Leadership Academy is excited to announce a partnership with BloomBoard, the leading platform for educator training and advancement via micro-credentials, to offer a new micro-credential-based professional learning program designed to support and prepare all teachers working with English Learners (ELs). The program provides teachers with the opportunity to build deeper knowledge in a specific set of competencies that are required for working with EL students, while advancing their career by successfully proving proficiency in these competencies.

“We believe that high-quality professional learning should be accessible to all teachers,” said Lauren Avery, the Northeast Region Director of UCLA Center X. “Our goal is to ensure that every classroom teacher working with English Learners has the opportunity to develop the skills needed to ensure they feel prepared to support their students.”

As part of the new competency-based program, ExcEL Leadership Academy has developed a sequential, tiered approach to career advancement based on earned micro-credentials. Every classroom teacher working with English learners will complete six basic micro-credentials. Those who are interested in becoming an ESL specialist teacher may go on to complete a second set of micro-credentials. All micro-credentials are aligned to national and local professional standards, including the TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) standards. This means in those approved states and districts, teachers may earn ESL endorsement by completing job-embedded, competency-based micro-credentials.

A growing number of states are moving towards a competency-based approach to specialized endorsements. States such as Arizona and Rhode Island have established statewide plans for K12 Computer Science implementation, including specialized endorsements for teachers that can be earned via micro-credentials. In Louisiana, the Department of Education has implemented micro-credential-based licensure for all Mentor and Content leaders in the state. In Arkansas, educators who aspire to leadership roles can do so without leaving the classroom via the state’s Lead Professional Educator Designation, which also follows a micro-credential-based approach.

ExcEL Leadership Academy

Providing professional learning for all teachers to support high quality, equitable education for English Learners



“Educators are the most important driver of student growth and learning, and we’re excited to partner with ExcEL to support teachers of English Learners,” said Jason Lange, Founder and President of BloomBoard. “Micro-credentials are a great way to provide job-embedded, hands-on professional learning that enable educators to apply their learning in their practice. The ExcEL micro-credentials help educators develop the core competencies they need for working with English learners.”

ExcEL has piloted the micro-credentials with 13 schools from districts in Connecticut and New York, including Shelton School District and Nyack Public Schools. More than 50 micro-credentials were awarded during this initial pilot. This year the organization expects to award more than 200 micro-credentials to classroom teachers.

State Departments of Education and districts that are interested in learning more about ExcEL’s micro-credential-based professional learning program can visit <https://www.excelleadershipacademy.org/>.

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About ExcEL Leadership Academy

The ExcEL Leadership Academy is supported by UCLA Center X with funding from the US Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition through the National Professional Development program awards #T365Z170196 and #T365Z160244. Their mission is to provide professional learning opportunities for all K-12 teachers to support high quality, equitable education for English Learners. The organization believes every teacher wants, and needs, the skills needed to ensure English Learners are successful in their classrooms. To learn more, visit <https://www.excelleadershipacademy.org>

About BloomBoard

Founded in 2010, BloomBoard is leading the shift from professional development to educator advancement via micro-certification. The company partners with states and districts to enable a unique online learning experience where educators can improve their instructional practice and advance in their careers by earning micro-credentials. BloomBoard aims to help all organizations transition to meaningful, purpose-driven educator development and advancement based on measurable certification. For more information, visit bloomboard.com.