

advocacy. learning. leadership.



MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF
ADMINISTRATORS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION



The **Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE)** is a statewide professional organization dedicated to advancing the field of special education leadership.

MAASE supports educational leaders by:

- Promoting effective, inclusive practices for all learners
- Providing professional learning, collaboration, and mentorship
- Advocating for equitable special education policy and systems
- Developing leadership capacity across Michigan

MAASE plays a key role in shaping the vision and practice of special education across the state — supporting administrators, special educators, and now, through new projects, paraeducators and administrators.

You have paraeducators.

You have teachers who could benefit from intentional professional learning around high leverage practices that bring both general education and special education together.

You have special education administrators who are new and/or need additional support.

You want to ensure that students with IEPs are spending as much time as possible with their general education peers. (Maybe you have an LRE issue?)

You have principals who are working towards their admin certifications

You have principals who are interested in being intentional with their professional growth and are looking for resources

You have special education administration who do not currently hold the correct certification as supervisors or directors.



We Can Help



HORIZON^{+SE}
Leadership Academy



MEMSPA

MICHIGAN ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION



MASA

Michigan Association of
Superintendents & Administrators



Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals



MAISA





Developing Inclusive Leaders



Launched January 2025



The slide features a background image of six diverse professionals (three men and three women) standing together in an office environment, smiling. Below this, three white rectangular cards are displayed against a blue background, each representing a different stage of a process: Foundations, Advancing, and Transformation. Each card contains an icon and a list of associated resources.

FOUNDATIONS

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads

ADVANCING

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads
- Guidebooks
- Reference Materials
- 6 In Person Events

TRANSFORMATION

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads
- Guidebooks
- Reference Materials
- 6 In Person Events
- Coaching/Mentoring
- University Credit
- MDE Enhancement

Unit	Title
1	Defining Inclusive Leadership
2	Embracing Legal Protections as an Inclusive Leader
3	Developing Effective Inclusive Schools
4	Promoting Quality Instructional Practices
5	Supporting Behavioral Needs
6	Thinking About Discipline
7	Empowering Leaders in the IEP Process
8	Fostering Collaboration
9	Facilitating, Coaching, and Problem Solving
10	Cultivating a Climate that Promotes Staff Wellness



Cohort 1



Developing Inclusive Leaders

3 Pathways

Current in-state offerings:

- 2 Year Pathway leading to an Enhancement
- Hybrid Model
- Partnership with MASSP and MEMSPA



2 year Transformation Pathway Financial Value

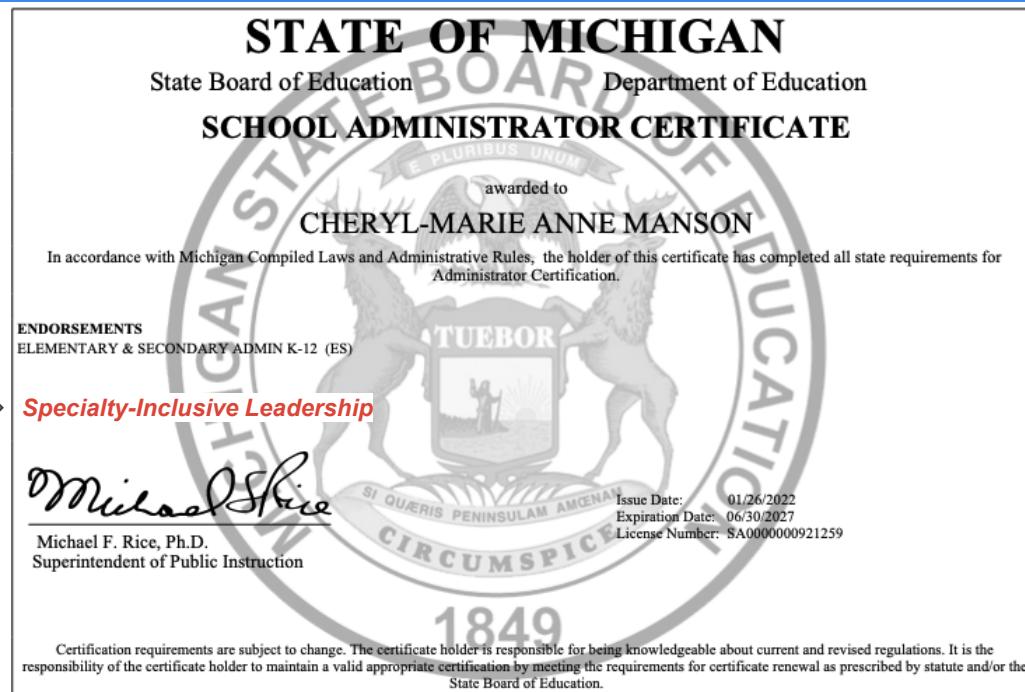
MAASE Developing Inclusive Leaders Program Cost = **\$5,500**

- 12 Western Michigan University credits **\$10,012.92**
- 15 Western Michigan University credits **\$12,516.15**
- Mentoring/Coaching by MASSP or MEMSPA **\$1,500 - \$3,000**

Total Value: \$15,516.15 (up to)

Savings: \$10,16.15

MDE Enhancement



Initial Data: Program Impact Highlights

Early evaluation results show that administrators in the *Developing Inclusive Leaders* program experienced **statistically significant growth** in their knowledge and confidence as inclusive leaders. Key areas of growth include:

1. Increasing student time in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**
2. Reducing classroom removals
3. Leading staff to improve instruction and academic outcomes
4. Shifting mindsets toward inclusive practices

Participant testimonial

"The Developing Inclusive Leaders program is helping me work on the hardest and one of the most important parts of my job as a principal: special education. The content is challenging and practical-and, somehow, exactly what I need to know. I'm so grateful for the opportunity and recommend it to any principal!"



Mrs. Meghan G. Evoy
Principal
Peck Elementary School



FOUNDATIONS

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads
- Earn 13 SCECHs

\$250



ADVANCING

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads
- Guidebooks
- Reference Materials
- 6 In Person Events
- Earn 13 SCECHs

\$1,200



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY**

TRANSFORMATION

- On Demand Modules
- Digital Downloads
- Guidebooks
- Reference Materials
- 6 In Person Events
- Coaching/Mentoring
- Earn 12-15 credits at WMU
- MDE Enhancement

\$5,500



Developing Inclusive Leader
First Course is FREE

DIL 2.0 - New Ideas for Growth

Regional Facilitation

- Training for ISD principal groups
- Fully facilitated by MAASE staff or guided locally

Online Modules for Completion Individually

- ~\$25 each
- Would allow for completion at user's convenience and topic-specific
- Combine with virtual checkpoints or PLC

Advertise through Partner Organizations Offerings

- MASSP, MEMSPA, MASA, MAISA, MSBO?

Consider a principal who might benefit from this program.



Send them a text!

Invite them with your flyer!

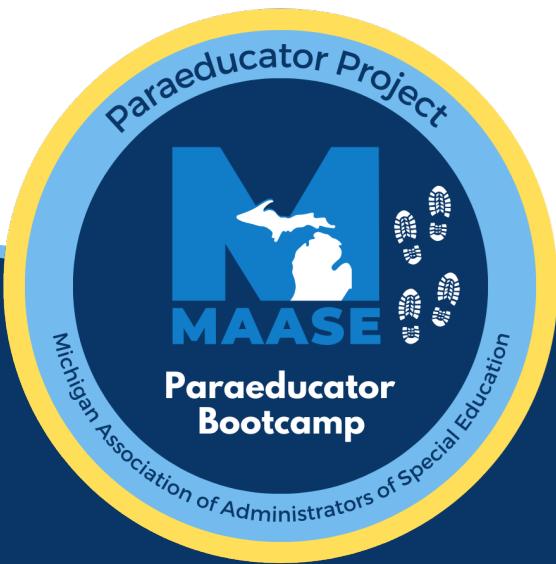
Share at your next Cabinet meeting!

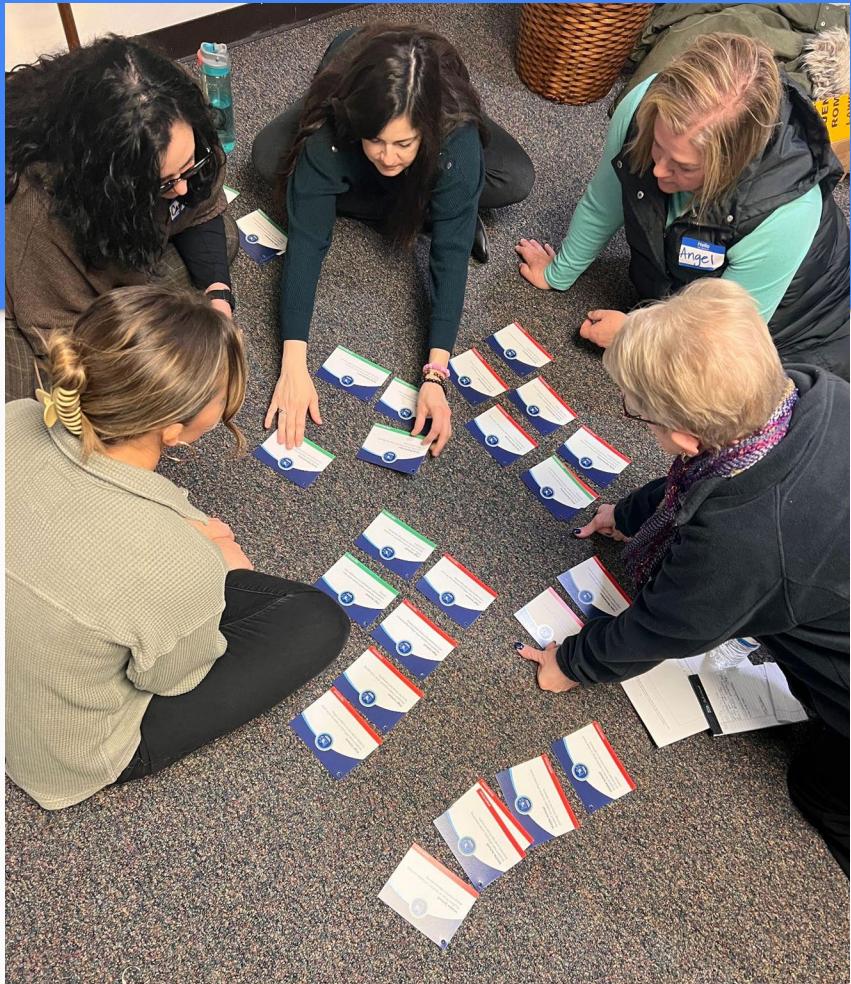


Paraeducator Bootcamp

16,000 paraeducators in the state of Michigan
First statewide training of its kind

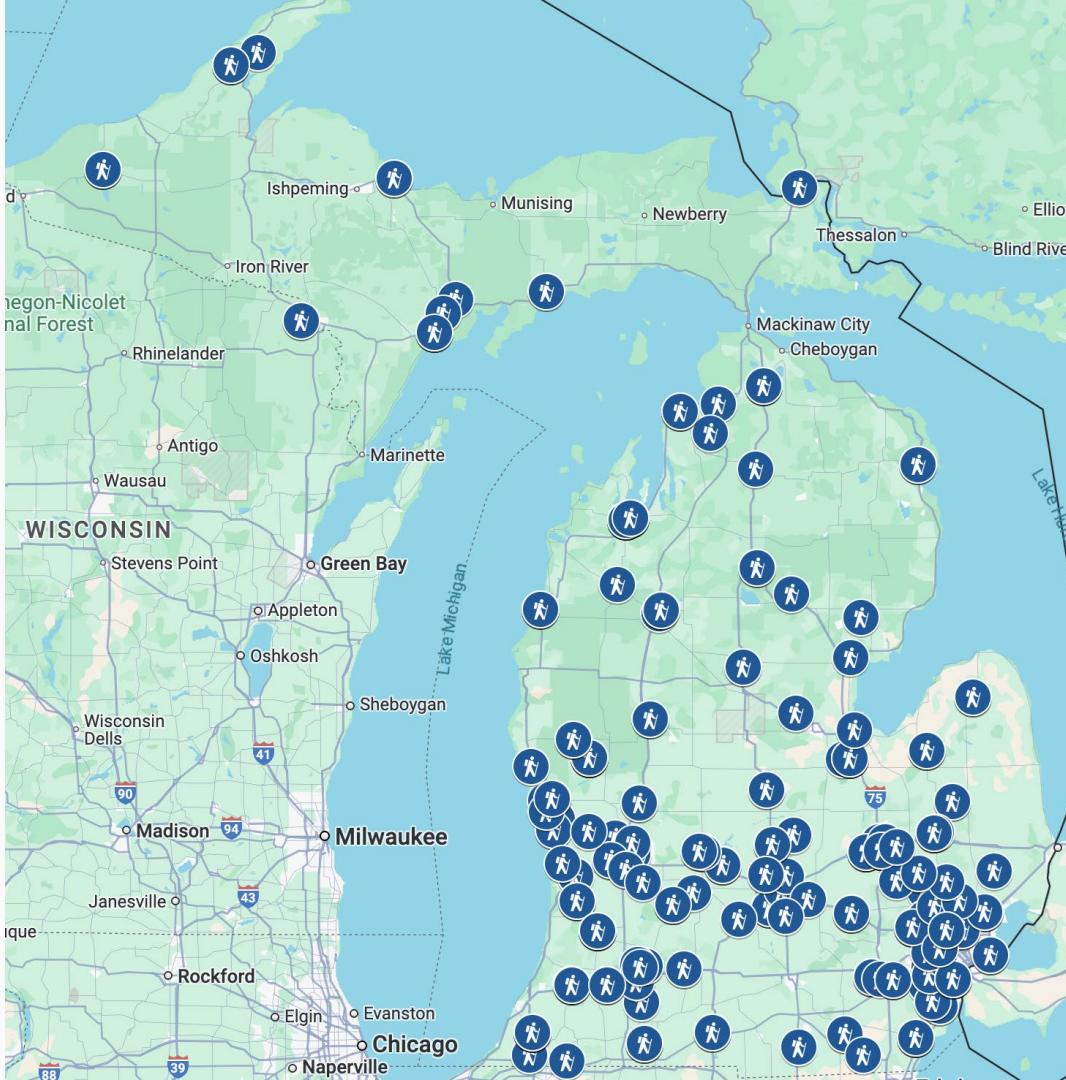
Launched January 2025





Building Capacity by Establishing Trainers





Find your MAASE Paraeductor Trainer!

**365
Trainers**

Level 1: Paraeducator Bootcamp



5 hours of on-demand modules via Edupaths

- 15 minute increments
- Modules are opened up 6 weeks prior to in person training

6 hours (1 day) in person training

- Train the Trainer events begin January 2025

11 Hours Total

Topics

- *MTSS & Special Education Basics*
- *What is an IEP?*
- *Roles & Responsibilities*
- *Academic Supports*
- *Behavioral Supports*

Participants will also receive:

- Bootcamp Manual
- Face to Face Training Manual
- Badging (Digital and Physical)
- One Year CEC Membership

05 Behavioral Supports



Behavior Is Communication

Let's explore an important concept in our work as paraeducators: behavior is communication. This is a foundational idea that shapes how we understand and respond to the students we support.

To start, it's essential to recognize that **behavior is a form of communication**. Often, when we observe certain behaviors, especially challenging ones, it's easy to focus on the behavior itself. However, we must look beneath the surface to understand what the student is trying to communicate through their actions.

Behavior IS Communication:

Behavior is often a way for students to express unmet needs or challenges. **As a Paraeducator, it is important to look beyond the behavior** to understand the underlying issues like frustration, confusion, or anxiety.



Principles Of Challenging Behavior (Adaptive)

Students Would Follow Routines & Instructions If They Could

- A common explanation for student behavior is that they are being manipulative and deliberately planning out their actions and organizing their responses with forethought and impulse control. Truth is, most behavior that results in not following expectations is either a symptom of a dysregulated nervous system resulting in a reduction in working memory or underdeveloped executive functioning skills due to maturation or trauma.

Behavior Is Learned And Is Malleable.

- In most cases, behaviors have taken years to develop and it may take some time to see a significant change, even when strategies are being implemented as designed. But ultimately, this is good news!! Knowing behaviors CAN change over time and having this principle keeps staff motivated to implement strategies even when the student is not always responding to their interventions.

Behavior Is A Symptom Of An Underdeveloped Skill

- As outlined in the first principle, behaviors are often a symptom of an underdeveloped social, executive function, or regulation skill. So when we see behavior, we should get deeply curious about what is going on to help identify the underdeveloped skills and how we might teach them.



Ethical Practice



Paraeducators Are Representatives Of The School

All school employees, including paraeducators, are representatives of the school.
Every school employee must:

- **Limit discussions regarding school issues and confidential matters** to authorized personnel and **avoid discussions of school issues and confidential matters** to anyone outside of the educational team.
- **Avoid discrimination** based on a **student's disability, race, sex, language, cultural background, or religion.**
- **Follow communication guidelines** when interacting with parents and **maintain professional boundaries.**
- **Treat all students, families, and staff members** with **dignity, respect their privacy, and recognize their individuality.**



FERPA

- **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.
- **FERPA** gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."





Let's Apply our Learning to these Three Scenarios

Student Confides In You

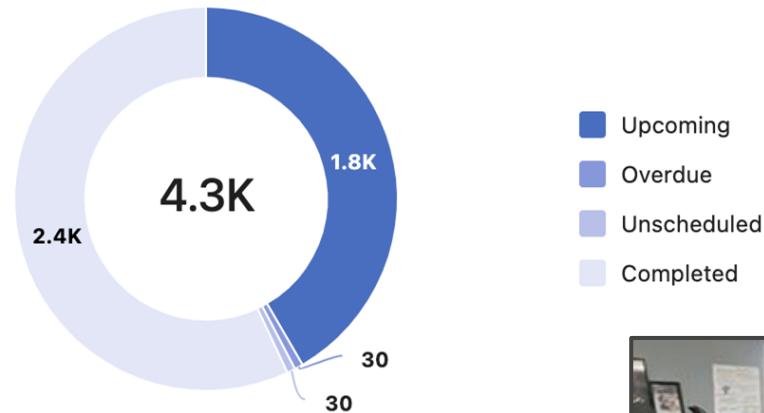
Parent Approaches You

Do You Write The IEP?

Activity #3



of Paraeducators trained by Event Status



Over 5 Months of Initial Implementation



CTE Programs - Pipeline for Paraeducators

Early Entry to Career Pathways

By using the MAASE Paraeducator Bootcamp curriculum, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs introduce high school students to the field of special education.

Workforce Pipeline Strategy

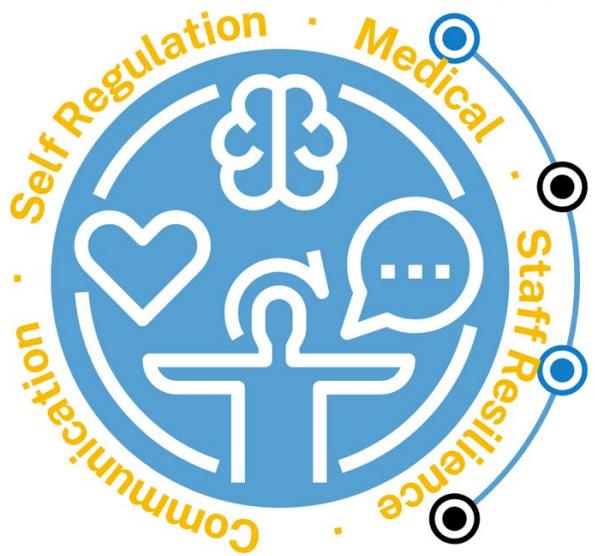
This program is a proactive solution to Michigan's paraeducator shortage—engaging students early, equipping them with foundational skills, and creating a pipeline into the profession.

OPTIMISE-Recommended

OPTIMISE highlighted CTE involvement as critical to sustaining long-term solutions and diversifying the paraeducator talent pool across the state.

A photograph of a paved road with a double yellow line, stretching from the foreground into a vast, cloudy sky. The clouds are white and fluffy, set against a bright blue sky. In the distance, there are low hills or mountains. The perspective of the road creates a sense of depth and looking towards the horizon.

**What's on the
horizon for
paraeducator
programs?**



Early Childhood

5 hours on demand modules
6 hours in person
(3-5 years old)

Transition & Job Coaching

5 hours on demand modules
6 hours in person
(18-26 years old)

Transportation

5 hours on demand modules
6 hours in person
(Students while on the bus)

Paraeducator Bootcamp Level 2

5 hours on demand modules
6 hours in person
K-12 Inclusive Setting

How can you get involved?

Find your trainer

or

If you have more than 40-50 paraeducators in your district, consider having your own trainer.

*We have a training event on 2/19/26 at
MEA Headquarters in Lansing*



Back to Events



MAASE First Annual Paraeducator Trainer Conference



Professional Learning Events



Thursday, February 19, 2026



9:00 AM - 3:30 PM (EST)



MEA Headquarters

1216 Kendale Boulevard

East Lansing, MI 48823-2008

United States

Register Now

**\$215 Early Bird
Registration**

Who Should Attend:

- Current MAASE Paraeducator Trainers
- Educators and professionals interested in becoming certified trainers

What to Expect:

Attendees will learn how to lead trainings in their selected topic area for paraeducators in their region. There are now five distinct training courses available. Trainers must choose one to be trained in during this event:

1 Early Childhood

Learn to train paraeducators supporting young learners in inclusive early childhood environments.

2 Transportation

Gain the tools to prepare paraeducators for safe, supportive, and effective student transportation.

3 Transition-Aged Students

Prepare paraeducators to support students moving toward adulthood, including employment, independence, and postsecondary goals.

4 Paraeducator Bootcamp Level 1

Learn how to equip paraeducators with essential skills in academics, behavior support, and special education fundamentals. Paraeducator Bootcamp provides practical tools to strengthen classroom instruction, support student success, and foster effective collaboration with teachers in inclusive settings.

5 Paraeducator Bootcamp Level 2 (Current Trainers only)

A deeper-level training course designed for trainers to support paraeducators who have completed the initial Bootcamp.



Create a trainer in your district:

- For current staff
- New Hires
- Hires throughout the year
- Fit your district calendar



Launching Fall 2026: RBT/BT Pathway



How might you use this program within your district?

- Train your own trainers?
- Locate a neighboring district or ISD trainer?
- What other training might your paras need?



Special Education Administrator Coaching and Mentoring (27h)



Launched Fall 2025



Special Education Administrator Coaching

What Is It?

- The MAASE Administrator Mentoring & Coaching Program provides individualized support from experienced special education leaders who understand the unique demands of the role.

Who Is It For?

- This opportunity is ideal for: Special Education Administrators seeking professional coaching and reflective leadership support Districts needing mentoring and/or resources for new or transitioning special education administrators



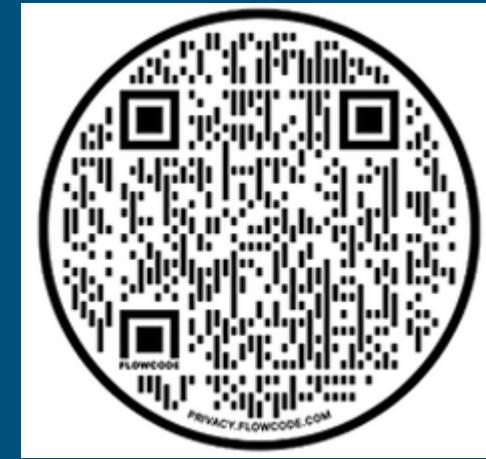
Special Education Administrator Coaching

When and Where?

- Rolling enrollment – contracts can begin at any time
- Hybrid format
 - Virtual coaching meetings & planning
 - In-person opportunities during MAASE events (as applicable)

Program Cost

- \$1,400/year; Includes one-on-one coaching support + access to statewide resources
- Districts may be reimbursed up to \$3,000/administrator/year through Section 27h Mentoring and Induction Grants





Horizons Leadership Academy + SE

Launched January 2025

Replacing the traditional with a new alternative pathway approach!

Candidates Will Receive:

- School Administrator Certificate
 - With Central Office Endorsement
- Special Education Supervisor or Director Approval





Candidates simultaneously earn their Special Education “Supervisor” or “Director” Approval.

+SE

- Completion of HLA 2.0 General Education Curriculum
- 7 additional integrated days of instruction
- Aligned to NELPS, MARSE, and the Standards for the Preparation and Practice of Special Education Administrators
- Supervisor:
 - 146 additional internship hours in these areas
 - Total Program contact Hours of 818
- Director:
 - 146 Internship hours
 - 38 Mentoring hours
 - 350 Work-Based Application & Experience Hours
 - Total Program Contact Hours of 1168

***Up to 100 Hrs PLA/PWA may be applied**

Michigan School Administrator Certification: Special Education

To be a special education administrator in Michigan, a candidate must possess a valid School Administrator **Certificate** and add an **Approval** as either a supervisor or director of special education.

MI School Administrator Certificate

Elementary & Secondary Admin K-12 (ES)

Central Office (CO)

Certificate

Inclusive leader, curriculum, human resources management, athletic organization

Special Education Supervisor

Special Education Director

Endorsement

Enhancement

Approval

Michigan School Administrator Certification: Special Education Prerequisites



Master's Degree or higher

Bachelor's degree with a minimum of 3 years experience working at the Central Office level may also suffice

Full approval in at least one area of Special Education

- Speech Language Pathologist
- Special Education Teacher
- School Psychologist
- School Social Worker
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist

3 Years of Successful Experience in a Special Education Position

Experience must be completed in a school setting, after full approval in one area of special education is achieved. Can be done in a classroom, service, or administrative role.



District Funding Implications

In order for a special education administrator to be claimed, and therefore eligible for partial reimbursement, on the 4096, they must possess a valid special education approval (supervisor or director).

Additional Details

- \$150 (non-refundable application fee)
- Tuition \$12,500 (billable over two fiscal years)
- Completed within two years
- Direct Articulation to WMU, NMU
- Next Cohort - Fall 2025



HORIZON^{+SE}
Leadership Academy



Potential Partnerships between MAASE and MSBO

Launched January 2025

Partnership Opportunities

- **Combined Professional Learning Opportunities**
 - SE Finance, SE Implementation
 - SE Finance for new SE administrators
 - SE Implementation for new Finance administrators
 - Budget planning and oversight
- **New Administrator Academy**
 - Financial primer
- **Short Course Development**
 - SE Finance 101, 201, etc.
 - Proportionate share, Maintenance of Effort, 105c, etc.
- **What might MSBO want or need that we can support?**



Thank you! Special Education can be complicated, but we're here to help...

- Affiliate membership:
 - Stay informed about current guidance and initiatives
 - Receive legislative and advocacy updates
 - Register for professional learning at a discounted member rate
 - Expand your network with special education leaders statewide

Ben Hicks - benhicks@maase.org

