

## About Whole Leadership

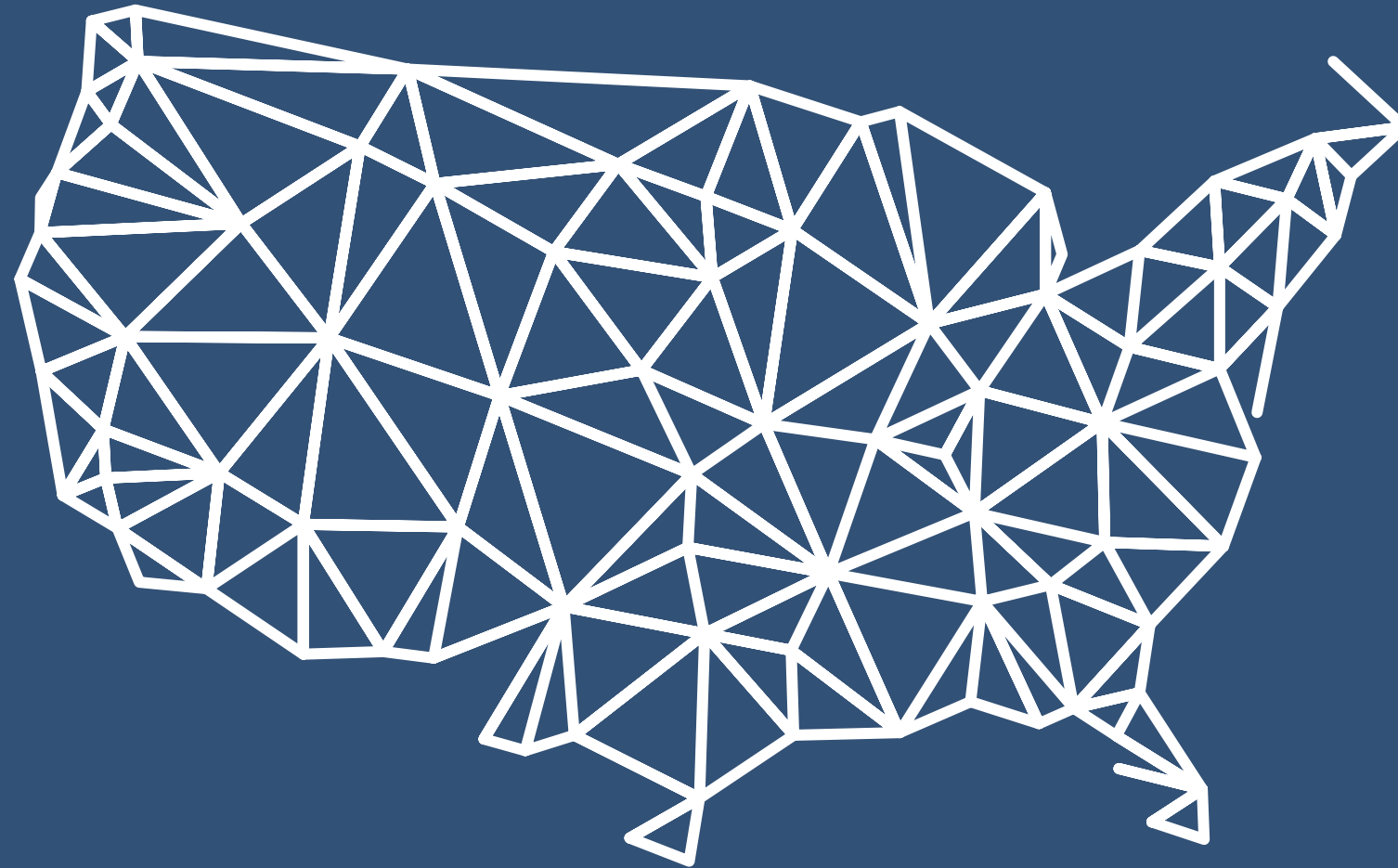
A balanced perspective is necessary when performing leadership functions in early childhood programs. Whole Leadership represents the interdependent relationship that exists among three leadership domains.

## Whole Leadership Domains

**LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS** - Creating a culture of caring, equity, and improvement in early childhood programs. Leadership Essentials include foundational competencies and behaviors necessary for relationship building and motivating people to achieve shared goals. Reflective and intentional practice are the hallmarks of Leadership Essentials.

**PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP** - Facilitating a community of learning that builds on the strengths of children, families, and staff. Pedagogical Leadership includes ensuring fidelity to research-based curricula, assessing children's development and learning, using data for evaluation, optimizing learning environments, and empowering families.

**ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP** - Coordinating work and mobilizing people to ensure the organization remains stable and continues to thrive. Administrative leadership includes systems thinking and development that supports the operational aspects of day-to-day programming, guiding future program direction, advocacy, and collaboration with organizations to maximize collective impact.



# Building Early Childhood Leadership Capacity

## LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

### Competency Areas:

- Advance communication skills
- Apply a culturally responsive anti-bias lens to all facets of the organization
- Demonstrate professionalism
- Develop personal and professional self-awareness
- Embed continuous quality improvement (CQI) practices
- Employ a strengths-based approach to develop people
- Facilitate shared leadership and decision-making
- Implement efficient and effective project management skills

## PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP

### Competency Areas:

- Apply knowledge of child development and research
- Coach/mentor to scaffold teaching and learning
- Engage in developmentally appropriate practice
- Foster family leadership and advocacy
- Implement principles of trauma-informed teaching
- Incorporate knowledge of adult learning
- Understand and implement reflective supervision
- Use data to identify quality improvement goals

## ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

### Competency Areas:

- Build positive organizational climate
- Demonstrate legal knowledge and financial acumen
- Develop and refine advocacy skills
- Establish public relations and marketing expertise
- Foster entrepreneurship and innovation
- Promote community engagement
- Understand systems theory and apply to organizational development
- Use data to inform strategic planning



## LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

### Aim4Excellence Modules:

- **Module 1: Leading the Way**  
Learn the many attributes of leadership styles that support high-quality early care and education programming.
- **Module 3: Promoting Peak Performance**  
Explore a comprehensive model for supervising staff, promoting ongoing professional development, and creating a strengths-based team.
- **Module 9: Evaluating Program Quality**  
Investigate how to implement continuous quality improvement, the leadership practice of assessing program needs, by utilizing staff collaboration to define desired outcomes, develop an action plan, and evaluate outcomes to improve program quality.

## PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP

### Aim4Excellence Modules:

- **Module 6: Designing Indoor and Outdoor Environments**  
Discover how to adapt spaces and materials for universal design to reflect and express the rich cultural and linguistic context of families served by the early care and education program.
- **Module 7: Supporting Children's Development and Learning**  
Examine research-based approaches to ensure an effective, high-quality program to advance children's development and learning, including the processes needed to strengthen professional competencies for teaching and caregiving.
- **Module 8: Facilitating Responsive Family Engagement**  
Activate strategies and leadership influence to promote family engagement with connections between families, the early childhood program, and community resources to support a philosophy of relationship-based care.

## ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

### Aim4Excellence Modules:

- **Module 2: Recruiting, Selecting, and Orienting Staff**  
Discover the tools and strategies to attract and retain qualified staff, one of the most challenging aspects of administering an early care and education program.
- **Module 4: Managing Program Operations**  
Explore how to design best practice management systems by applying systems thinking and risk management assessment to support early childhood program operations.
- **Module 5: Building a Sound Business Strategy**  
Examine decision-making strategies supporting an early care and education program's organizational structure, finances, and care for existing and prospective customers.

## How States Are Using Aim4Excellence

Recognized by 25+ state professional development systems, Aim4Excellence collaborates by:

- Providing workforce development to include college credit options through National Louis University and partnering institutions.
- Aligning with state professional development credentials and required criteria for program administrators.
- Serving as approved criteria for quality rating system initiatives to include developed incentive programs.
- Providing facilitated Aim4Excellence cohorts to rebuild or reinvigorate leadership capacity.
- Partnering with professional development organizations, community foundations, early childhood centers, and other funding agencies by training individuals to facilitate Aim4Excellence cohorts.
- Meeting administrative criteria for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) program accreditation.

## About Aim4Excellence

Aim4Excellence is an online national director credential for early childhood administrators focusing on the essential knowledge and skills leaders need to deliver high-quality programming for young children. More than 2,000 leaders across the country have earned this credential. Aim4Excellence modules can be taken for college credit or professional development hours.

Participants can complete all nine self-paced modules to earn the Aim4Excellence National Director Credential or select only one or a few to build competence in a specific management area. Participants can connect to Aim4Excellence anytime from anywhere they have Internet access. No special software or textbooks are required. Everything needed is included in the module registration fee.