

## **Learning Facilitator FAQs**

### **What is the Learning Facilitator Program?**

The Learning Facilitator Program is a high touch, fast-track training program for paraprofessional level educators. The program was developed in partnership with the Maine Department of Education and is designed to be responsive to the critical staff shortages in schools during the pandemic. The program is completed in two phases in one academic year. The first phase of the program is a one-week boot camp. The second phase of the program consists of a combination of online work, professional learning community meetings, and teaching apprenticeship.

### **What is the cost of the Learning Facilitator Program?**

The program is funded by the Maine DOE. The cost to participants is free.

### **When participants are done with the program, what credential will they have?**

Participants will earn a Learning Facilitator Micro-Credential awarded by Eastern Maine Community College and authorized by the Maine Community College System and will earn up to 9 credits of college coursework in Education. The micro-credential consists of a series of 10 stackable digital badges that demonstrate the earner's competency in core content areas. Participants who complete the full Learning Facilitator Micro-Credential program are eligible to receive Ed Tech III level certification through the Maine Department of Education.

### **What are digital badges and micro-credentials?**

A digital micro-credential is a new type of credential that provides an avenue for learners to complete pathways of learning through nontraditional routes.

When applied in the field of education, micro-credentials are a form of micro-certification earned by proving competence in one specific skill at a time, via a portfolio of evidence, created through the intersection of online learning and classroom practice. They are competency based, personalized and self-directed, job embedded, and allow an earner to demonstrate new or existing expertise in a content area. They focus on the concept of learning by doing and help to document learning in a way that is highly visible.

### **What are participants in the Learning Facilitator Program qualified to do?**

Participants are eligible to become paid school staff after completing phase one of the program, the introductory boot camp. Upon completion of this week-long 3-credit course, participants have the foundational skills necessary to fill short- and long-term sub roles, as well as all paraprofessional positions. They can support instruction and provide guidance to learners in the classroom under the supervision of a mentor teacher or teaching team. Mentor teachers or teaching teams may be working remotely or in-person.

### **What do participants learn in the boot camp?**

Participants learn the foundational elements of managing a classroom, providing instructional support, implementing positive guidance techniques, and working as a member of a teaching

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team. They complete fingerprinting requirements, mandated reporter training, suicide awareness and prevention training, and COVID readiness training.

### **What type of support is provided to participants after the boot camp?**

After the boot camp, participants become part of a learning community based on the age group they are working with. The learning community meets two times per month for the duration of the school year. During this time, they complete deeper training and earn digital badges in 6 core areas: Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Effective Observation, Positive Guidance, Instructional Strategies, Inclusive Practices, and Co-Teaching. They also participate in a teaching apprenticeship where they document 315 hours of classroom time. During the apprenticeship, they are supervised by mentor teachers or teaching teams and EMCC/MCCS faculty for the duration of the school year. They will be observed at least twice (either virtually or in-person) by faculty and formally evaluated twice by their mentor teachers. They will also produce a portfolio of evidence to validate their learning.

### **What are the benefits of hiring a Learning Facilitator Program participant?**

The first benefit is to meet staffing needs. The participants are trained to step into positions to assist schools in providing quality support and instruction for students during the pandemic. They are not just available to keep children safe; they are prepared to assist teachers to meet student needs during this time. The second benefit of becoming a partner school is that you will receive a stipend to support the program as well as technology to support the virtual observations of the students by our faculty.

### **How does this micro-credential crosswalk to certification requirements for Education Technicians?**

Participants who complete the full Learning Facilitator Micro-Credential pathway are eligible to receive Ed Tech III level certification through the Maine Department of Education.

### **As a school partner, am I able to enroll existing paraprofessional educators in the program?**

Yes. We welcome the opportunity to work with learners who are new to the field of education, and those who are already working in the field and would like to further develop their existing skill set.