



Parent Academy Application

Background Information

The Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction (CELI) is excited to offer schools and communities the opportunity to implement the newly revised Parent Academy program. Originally developed by the Barksdale Reading Institute as a free opportunity for parents, grandparents, caregivers, and others supporting four-year-olds on their path to kindergarten readiness. Parent Academy was transferred to CELI in June 2023 when the Barksdale Reading Institute decided to sunset. After program revisions, CELI completed a pilot of the revised Parent Academy during 2024-2025. During the 2025-2026 school year, Parent Academy was successfully implemented across the state in 7 different communities.

Beginning April 1st, 2026 CELI will accept applications from schools and communities interested in implementing Parent Academy during the 2026-2027 school year.

About Parent Academy

Parent Academy aims to improve outcomes for children and families in Mississippi communities by ensuring parents and caregivers understand what kindergarten readiness is, why it matters, what it looks like, and how to tell when their child is ready. Parent Academy equips parents and caregivers with tools, knowledge, and simple hands-on activities that support a child's development of essential readiness skills. The target audience includes any stakeholder in a four-year old's educational journey. Parent Academy consists of **six in-person sessions** covering **eight modules**, each with practical activities and suggested materials for home use. Sessions are designed to be delivered monthly in the evening and last approximately 1.5 hours.

CELI Commitment

- Provide virtual facilitator training for selected facilitators.
- Provide ongoing support and coaching, as needed.
- Provide digital access to all slides, handouts, and facilitator materials to **CELI-trained** facilitators for one academic year.
- Offer guidance and consultation to support high-quality implementation.
- Monitor progress and gather feedback to support continuous program improvement.

Community Commitment

This list outlines key expectations and may not be an exhaustive list.

- All facilitators will attend one of the virtual facilitator training options prior to implementation. (See next page)
- Complete all six in-person Parent Academy sessions by the conclusion of the 2026-2027 school year.
 - *Example meeting schedule:* October, November, January, February, March, April
- Submit a completed Master Planner to the CELI team **at least two weeks** prior to implementation.
- Implement the Parent Academy program with fidelity.
- Collect and submit all required documentation to CELI (session sign-ins, pre/post surveys, exit tickets).
- Welcome CELI staff to attend and observe sessions.
- Maintain regular communication with CELI.
- Participate in program evaluation (e.g., potential family focus groups, facilitator interviews/surveys).
- Understand the site/school/community is responsible for all costs associated with Parent Academy (e.g., printing of handouts, materials, meals, childcare, possible incentives).

Note: Selected communities will be required to submitted a completed MOU before digital access to slides, handouts and materials is granted.

Application

Complete the information below and send the entire document to Kayla Denton (kndenton@olemiss.edu) by 5 pm on Friday, October 2nd, 2026 if you would like to be considered to serve as a Parent Academy Site during 2026-2027.

Kindergarten Readiness (2025-2026 Data)

	FALL BOY	SPRING EOY
Average Scale Score		
% at or above Benchmark		

How will Parent Academy meet the needs of your community?

List the potential implementation sites with projected number of parent participants.

Who will serve as your Parent Academy facilitator(s)?

Name	Title	Email Address

Describe any prior experience your site/school/community has had with implementing Parent Academy or other family engagement programs.

The Parent Academy facilitators for our site will attend Facilitator Training on (select one):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, May 7 th from 9:00am – 11:00 am | <input type="checkbox"/> Friday, July 10 th from 9:00am – 11:00am |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday May 27 th from 1:00pm – 3:00pm | <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday, August 4 th from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monday, June 22 nd from 2:00pm - 4:00pm | <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday, August 26 th from 10:00am – 12:00pm |

Primary Contact for this interest form:

- Name:
- Title:
- Organization/School:
- Email:
- Phone:

By signing below, we agree to participate in the required components and would like to be considered for selection.

Signature, Parent Academy Primary Contact/Facilitator

**CELI Staff will communicate via email with the primary contact regarding selection and next steps.*