

# CITY LEADERS ACADEMY

The City Leaders Academy is now accepting applications for the 2025/2026 program. The City Leaders Academy introduces 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students to the leaders and locations that make Columbus a great opportunity city. This leadership academy is designed to educate and accelerate youth to become model citizens and future leaders of our great city. Our programming for accepted students will focus on leadership development, teamwork, networking opportunities, career development, and life readiness. The ideal candidate for the program should exhibit leadership abilities at home, school and within the community, exhibit great behavior and **really want** to be part of this great program. Selection criteria is as follows:

- Must be a city of Columbus resident (*If you are currently receiving City of Columbus trash and recycling services, you are eligible*).
- Must be entering the 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade in Fall 2025.
- Only one child per household is eligible each year.
- **Must submit final report card from completed grade and maintain a 2.8 grade point average** in school. Students who will enter the 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall must also submit a report card and a letter from a teacher or administrator verifying it equates to a 2.8 GPA.
- A letter from a teacher or administrator acknowledging the youth's academic and leadership abilities should accompany the application. If this is not available, please submit a letter from a community leader; this could be a letter from a civic group or from clergy.
- Once an application is selected for City Leaders Academy, a parent/guardian must approve participation by fully completing all paperwork and agreeing to comply with program guidelines. Paperwork will be disbursed at orientation. Parents are requested to attend the **mandatory orientation with their child**.
- The selection process also includes a one-on-one personal interview between the applicant and program coordinator(s).
- **Students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> must submit two written essays and 9<sup>th</sup> graders must submit those essays in addition to a third essay (see instructions on the attached application).**
- The program year runs September 2025 through May 2026. **Youth cannot miss more than two City Leaders Academy meet-ups throughout the entire year.** If a youth misses more than two meet-ups, they will not be able to graduate from the Academy. **It is extremely important that both parents and youth check your calendars before applying. Youth participation is imperative and we rely on parents to get them to all meet-ups and events.**

## Program Overview

- The City Leaders Academy and related activities are **FREE** for all participants.
- Most meals are provided, however, youth may be asked to pack lunch on some field trip days. We try to accommodate special diet needs as much as possible with the meals served.
- Applications may be scan and e-mail to [AGPassas@columbus.gov](mailto:AGPassas@columbus.gov) or returned by **hard copy** to our offices at The Jerry Hammond Center, 1111 E. Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43205 by **5 p.m.** on **Friday, June 13, 2025**. You may mail your application or leave it with the guard desk. Those selected will be notified by email on or before **Friday, Aug. 15, 2025** with an email invitation to a **Mandatory Orientation with your parent(s)/guardian on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025**. *Only apply if you are able to participate in the mandatory orientation and commit to the monthly meetup.* The drop off location is the Jerry Hammond Building, 1111 E. Broad Street, front entrance unless otherwise notified.
- The school year academy meet-ups take place on the Saturdays listed below from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. As a reminder, youth only can miss a maximum of two days of the school year meet-ups in order to graduate. School year meet-ups are usually at 1111 E. Broad, unless otherwise noted.
- Graduation will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2026. All City Leaders are required to attend graduation. Location TBD.
- On occasion, we do have opportunities to participate in events that are outside of our regular meet-up dates, such as community service projects or special events we are invited to attend. These events are encouraged, but optional.
- If it is necessary to have virtual sessions, City Leaders will receive the Zoom information via email.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Alex Passas at [AGPassas@columbus.gov](mailto:AGPassas@columbus.gov) or 614-323-0886. Thank you for helping us cultivate our next generation of city leaders!

### **Key Dates to Remember:**

*Only apply if you can comply with all these dates:*

- **June 13, 2025:** Application Deadline
- **Aug. 15, 2025:** Parents/Youth Notified of Application Decision
- **Sept. 20, 2025:** Mandatory Parent/Youth In-person Orientation – 10 a.m.
- **Monthly Academy Meet Ups:**
  - **Oct. 18, 2025**
  - **Nov. 15, 2025**
  - **Dec. 13, 2025**
  - **Jan. 10, 2026**
  - **Feb. 21, 2026**
  - **Mar. 21, 2026**
  - **Apr. 18, 2026**
  - **May 16, 2026** (Graduation Ceremony)

\*Dates and Times are subject to change

# CITY LEADERS ACADEMY 2025/2026 APPLICATION

The application deadline is **5:00pm** on **Friday, June 13, 2025**. An incomplete or a late application package will not be considered. City Leaders staff is not involved in the scoring of applications.

All applications must be submitted in hard copy form. Please mail or drop off your applications to:

Alex Passas, City Leaders Academy  
The Jerry Hammond Center  
1111 E. Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43205

Selected youth will be notified on or before **Friday, August 15, 2025** and are expected to attend the mandatory orientation with their parent(s)/guardian on **Saturday, September 20, 2025**.

## Student Essay Questions

All grades, 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, must complete essays 1 and 2. In addition, 9<sup>th</sup> graders must also submit essay 3. **Responses must be at least 250 words in length, and typed in MLA format (12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced).** Please attach essay responses to the completed City Leaders application package.

**Essay #1:** An important focus of City Leaders Academy is to expand a student’s understanding of the contribution they can make to their families, their racial and/or ethnic group, school, worship center and the community in which they live and to prepare for life-long learning. Please tell us how you have already made a substantial impact on any/all of the above with your leadership abilities and who has been your mentor along the way.

**Essay #2:** Consider yourself already a City Leader. Look around your neighborhood, your school, your worship center and your community as a whole and share the one thing you would like to change and the steps you would take to do so (i.e., homelessness, education system, government, school, etc.).

***This 3<sup>rd</sup> question is just for 9<sup>th</sup> graders in addition to the above two questions***

**Essay #3:** You are now entering high school and are now a small fish in a big pond. What plans are you making for your future and how will you go about achieving your goals? Who will help you?

Please respond to essay questions in your **own words**; responses plagiarized or written by someone other than the applicant (i.e. parents or siblings) will be removed from the selection process.

## 2025/2026 Application Information

### Participant Information

<b>Youth Name:</b>			<b>Gender (Check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
<b>Birth Date:</b>	<b>Age:</b>	<b>School in Fall:</b>	<b>GPA:</b>	<b>Entering Grade:</b>

### Parent/Guardian Information

<b>Name of Child’s Parent(s) or Guardian(s):</b>		
<b>Address</b> (Must be a Columbus resident or receive City of Columbus trash and snow removal to qualify): *Star the number of which you prefer to be reached:		<b>City:</b>
<b>Home Phone:</b>		<b>Cell Phone:</b>
<b>Work Phone:</b>		<b>ZIP:</b>
<b>Email</b> (Required-this is our preferred method of contact):		
<b>Child resides primarily with</b> (Check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Father/Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

## Emergency Contacts (other than parents)

Name	Home Phone	Cell Phone	Work Phone	Relationship

## Career Interests

Please indicate any career interests you may have (i.e. Medical field, lawyer, politician, entrepreneur, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Photography Release

The staff, the media, and programming partners with permission from the City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department, may photograph or videotape my child for educational and public relations purposes.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Parents and family members of the City Leaders may attend the sessions however do we have your permission to photograph and videotape you?  **Yes**  **No**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Field Trip, Routine and Activity Release

I give permission for my child to participate in all field trips and activities offered by the City Leaders Program. These trips will include what is listed on the agenda, however, may be subject to change. I also authorize the City of Columbus to do everything necessary to make sure of my child's health and safety in case of an emergency. I agree to not hold the City of Columbus, staff and sponsors of the program responsible for property damage or injury that results from my child's participation in this program.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

**Received:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_