



NHSAA

Granite State Leadership Academy (GSLA) Program Overview

The New Hampshire School Administrators Association, founded in 1941, is committed to fostering and supporting outstanding educational leadership in New Hampshire at all levels. The NHSAA established the Granite State Leadership Academy as a way to encourage and build highly skilled leadership capacity throughout the state.

New Hampshire needs and deserves to have leaders who

- have a powerful vision.
- aim for and achieve extraordinary results.
- demonstrate exceptional skill.
- possess steadfast will.
- champion the needs of all NH children.

We believe that the Granite State Leadership Academy will be the foundation upon which a new generation of New Hampshire educational leaders will be built.

GSLA Overview

The Granite State Leadership Academy is designed to provide a rich and collegial cohort opportunity for all educators aspiring to become educational leaders in New Hampshire. This highly selective multi-year program focuses on developing transformative leaders at all levels who will inspire sustainable efforts to lift student achievement for all children and enable public schools to thrive and succeed.

The GSLA will explore and develop the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to succeed as an educational leader, regardless of formal role. Program faculty members are highly successful NH leaders who have served at the classroom, building, and systems levels and will provide multiple perspectives on effective leadership. Emphasis will be placed on the value of coaching and mentoring as an essential link between academic and practical preparation.



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The GSLA curriculum will focus on educational leadership within a competency-based context over three years, helping educational leaders

- develop strategic and systemic processes for sustained school improvement.
- empower instructional leadership teams.
- build and sustain a collaborative learning culture and a shared decision-making structure in their schools.
- coach teachers and leaders about how to use student data and developmental theory to enrich classroom instruction.
- foster effective communication with colleagues, families, and citizens.

The GSLA will gain increased awareness of the importance of building and nurturing relationships and effective communication with school board members, elected and appointed officials, parents, the media, and the community at large. Granite State Leadership Academy fellows will challenge, expand, and refine their existing leadership skills while acquiring new leadership knowledge and skills. Additionally, participants are afforded the opportunity to learn about the search and interview process, conducting contract negotiations, and entry planning. Session facilitators will also present strategies designed to help GSLA Fellows cultivate balance in managing their professional and personal lives.

Granite State Leadership Academy Fellows will recognize the complexities and responsibilities of “equal responsibility” as required under federal and New Hampshire state law that governs student services, including, but not limited to special education and Section 504. Fellows will also identify potential pitfalls and areas of liability and recognize best practices that support students' educational growth targets. Granite State Leadership Academy Fellows will identify strategies used by effective school districts and leaders to narrow the achievement gap between students with educational disabilities and their peers without educational disabilities.

In addition, GSLA Fellows will be able to identify the qualities of an effective school environment that supports each child's sense of belonging and academic and social development from preschool through high school.



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Participants will engage in relevant reading, small group discussions / collaborations, voice of experience engagements with seated, recently appointed, and retired distinguished educational leaders at all levels. Each participant will engage in a Possibility of Practice (PoP) during their GSLA experience. The PoP should be an experience that the attendee is passionate about, that also positively connects to and impacts their work in their school or district. Other GSLA experiences may include simulations, mock interviews, and analyses of case studies. Each Academy Fellow will identify and interact with a mentor / coach and keep a reflective journal. Along with the PoP and journal, final products may include an entry plan for the first 90 days as a leader and a reflective synopsis that identifies new awareness of the leader's role and the application of what has been learned. Every effort will be made to connect these tasks to SNHU expectations (this is particularly important for participants concurrently enrolled in SNHU and GSLA).

The GLSA journey will focus on nine areas encompassing educational leadership functions, divided into several multi-day sessions.

These sessions, outlined below, will focus on the topics as indicated under each element. Time will be allotted to discuss the coaching process and the organization of the reflective journal. Fellows will share reflections based on session discussions and activities. At the end of these sessions, an evaluation will be completed.

I. Elements Of Effective **Macro-level Leadership**

- **Vision**
 - Understanding and articulating a personal leadership vision, values, story, and strengths as related to the participant's aspirational role.

- **Ethical Leadership**
 - Understanding of personal preferences in leadership and communicating and developing a plan to strengthen weak areas.



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- Identifying characteristics of effective leadership and applying them to personal context.
- **Organization Culture**
 - Understanding the leader's role and responsibility in developing highly effective and sustainable board / administration relationships.
 - Developing an effective leadership team and organizational structure.
 - Identifying strategies to transform the culture of an organization from one of adult entitlement to one emphasizing the whole child who is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.
- **Systems Thinking**
 - Preparing to successfully enter a new leadership position by developing an effective plan of entry that sets the stage for long-term success.
 - Developing a dynamic district plan and performance management system.
- **Science of Leadership Theory**
 - Developing a theory of action that will result in an effective school system.

II. Elements of **Instructional Leadership**

- How to Create a **Vision** for Learning
 - Understanding the leader's role and responsibilities in developing a highly effective and accountable learning organization and instructional system.
- Effective **Instruction and Assessment** in an Era of Increased Accountability
 - Developing dynamic instructional and assessment delivery strategies.
 - Identify strategies to transform teaching and learning.



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- Creating strategies for effectively aligning a district's competencies, standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.
- Identify research-driven strategies for improving educational results and functional outcomes for all students.
- Identifying qualities of effective instructional and assessment practices that optimize students' learning across all areas of the curriculum.
- **Competency-Based Education (CBE), Early Intervention, and Career Credentials**
 - Assessing and advancing the characteristics of Competency-Based Education (CBE) models (explicitly stated and measured competency areas, meaningful and authentic assessments, students advancing upon mastery, timely intervention and enrichment strategies, and a focus on skills and dispositions).
 - Identifying early interventions and enrichment opportunities to support engaging and personalized learning for all students.
 - Fostering important connections to the business industry for student education and credential opportunities.
- **Use of Technology in 21st Century Instructional Practices**
 - Utilizing technology and partner organizations to strategically and safely bring both trusted and emerging technologies into the classrooms.
 - Ensuring our districts, schools, teachers, and students are using technology effectively and ethically.

III. Elements of Effective **Personnel Management**

- **Collective Bargaining Strategies**
 - Understanding the leader's role and responsibilities in negotiating and overseeing collective bargaining agreements.
- **Recruiting, Hiring, and Retention**



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- Understanding the importance of creating and sustaining positive relationships.
- Identifying strategies for recruitment and retention of high-quality personnel.
- Identifying best hiring practices and avoiding unfair labor practice violations.
- **Supervision, Evaluation, and Professional Growth**
 - Identifying best practices in supervision, evaluation, and professional growth.
 - Creating dynamic and sustainable performance management systems.
- **Professional Development and Learning Opportunities**
 - Promoting a culture of continuous learning for professionals at all levels in the organization.
- **NH Certification**
 - Gaining awareness of certification pathways and opportunities to support and recruit highly qualified and impactful personnel.

IV. Elements of Effective **Fiscal Leadership**

- **Budget** Development, Implementation, and Mentoring
 - Understanding the leader's role and responsibilities in fiscal stewardship and developing and implementing a budget.
 - Identifying strategies to increase revenue streams.
 - Aligning the district's budget and budgeting processes to support student achievement and the district's strategic plan
- **Purchasing, Controls, Reporting, and Auditing**
 - Exploring checks and balances and fiscal transparency.
 - Understanding RFPs, bidding, and contracts.
 - Understanding the integral partnership between school / district leaders, business officials, boards, fiscal committees, and communities (all in service of student learning).
- **Stewardship of Public Resources**
 - Understanding the leader's role and responsibilities in fostering an environment of effective, innovative, and transparent stewardship over public funds.



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- Developing a dynamic system to best leverage / acquire resources.
- Working with the district's legal counsel to support compliance with personnel, fiscal, and student service requirements.
- **Fiscal Communication**
 - Understanding and utilizing various technologies and social media platforms to effectively communicate the budget with leadership teams, boards, and communities.

V. Elements of Effective **Student Services** Leadership

- **Developmental Theory**
 - Identifying opportunities, strengths, and barriers to equal access for all students' learning within the least restrictive environment.
 - Identifying early interventions and enrichment opportunities to support engaging and personalized learning for all students.
- **Brain-Based Research**
 - Identifying scientifically-based research driving strategies for improving educational results and functional outcomes for all students
- **Personalized Learning**
 - Identifying qualities of effective teaching practices that optimize students' learning across all areas of the curriculum
- **IDEA, Section 504, and ESOL**
 - Identifying legal and procedural areas of leadership and liability as identified under special education and Section 504.
 - Working with the district's attorneys to support compliance with personnel, fiscal, and student service requirements.

VI. Elements of Effective **Communications & Community Relations**

- Discovering the **Context** and **Politics** Where You Work & Live
 - Understanding policy and procedure development.
 - Identifying leadership traits and how to adapt to changing situations.



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- Understanding the leader's role and responsibilities in developing highly effective and sustainable board / administration relationships.
- Establishing key contacts in the community.
- Working effectively with local and state-level associations and groups.
- Creating effective relationships with locally elected officials.
- **Understanding Demographics & Economic Challenges**
 - Knowing your local community's history, values, traditions, and beliefs.
 - Understanding the local economic and business profile.
- **Effective Communications and Pro-Active Media Relations**
 - Understanding crisis communications.
 - Creating communication plans for classrooms, buildings, and districts.
 - Effectively telling the story of your school's / district's success and achievements.

VI. Elements of **Facilities** Management & Care

- Long-Term **Facility Planning**
 - Identifying long-term plans for facilities
- Enrollment Projections
 - Understanding the importance of enrollment projections and trying to facilitate needs
- Capital Improvement Plans
 - Understand the need to work with local communities to build effective capital improvement plans
- Maintaining Facilities and Grounds
 - Identifying key issues and concerns with facilities and grounds
- Fostering Stewardship of Public Resources
 - Understanding the roles and responsibilities of effective stewardship of public resources



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IX. Preparing for Your First Leadership Position

These sessions are structured to help Academy Fellows identify and prepare for interviews, refine a resume, and compose a contract. School board members and search firm representatives will describe how they evaluate candidates to fill leadership vacancies. Fellows will attend several sessions of the New Hampshire Association of School Administrators (NHSAA) Annual Conference to gain insight into the issues currently being addressed by New Hampshire leaders.

Time will be allotted to discuss assigned readings and interactions with coaches. Fellows will share reflections based on session discussions and activities, finalize a vision template, submission of the entry plan framework, and complete and submit a two-page reflective synopsis. The synopsis will describe what was learned about current issues in leadership based on participation in the Academy and attendance at the NHSAA Annual Conference.

- Identifying Vacancies, the Search, and the Application Process
 - Developing interviewing techniques
 - Understanding the role of the search consultant and the school board in the hiring process
 - Preparing to participate in a leadership search process
- Preparing Your Resume, Interviewing, and Contract Negotiations
 - Analyze what is needed and develop a resume for a systems-level position
 - Preparing for the search and interview process
 - Points to consider when collaborating on your first systems-level contract
- Current Issues the Leader Must Confront
 - Identifying current issues facing the educational leader
- Striving for Harmony in Your Personal and Professional Life
 - Supporting your family in the context of your Leadership Role
 - Ensuring your self-care/wellness



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- Identifying and Using Support
 - Accessing support networks - professional and personal - to better ensure a successful leadership career
 - Completing an effective plan of entry that sets the stage for long-term success
- Building Effective Governance Relationships at ALL Levels
 - Understanding how to build effective governance relationships at all levels

Completing the Leadership Academy program will increase leadership capacity and enhance the ability to use reflection as a powerful leadership skill. Each Academy Fellow evaluates seminar discussions, activities, and lectures and completes and submits a reflective journal synopsis based on their total program experience.



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Application Process

The application process will begin with a letter of nomination from a current or retired NH educator, which must be submitted to the Associate Director of NHSAA by May 2, 2025. (jerry@nhsaa.org) Applicants for consideration must meet the following criteria:

1. Ability and willingness to commit to a multi-year program
2. Outstanding leadership potential
3. Commitment to move into a building or systems-level role within the program timeframe
4. Commitment from the candidate's superintendent to provide funding for the program

Application packets must include a resume, a letter of reference, and an indication of district financial support from your current Superintendent.

Deliverables

This program is intended to be rigorous and challenging and requires a commitment from the individual participant and the sponsoring school district. We have endeavored to eliminate the significant out-of-pocket expenses, such as tuition, materials, accommodations, etc., that tend to preclude districts from participating.

However, the sponsoring district still needs to commit to ensuring that their Academy candidate may attend the instructional sessions and conferences and will assist candidates with travel funds as appropriate and possible.

The components of the Granite State Leadership Academy will cover three years.

Year One Cohort - One 2-day Fall Retreat, during which the participants examine the first eight (8) components of the curriculum and attend 5-7 professional learning days.



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Year Two Cohort - One 2-day Spring Retreat, 5 - 7 professional learning days, and three additional professional learning days devoted to student services.

Year Three Cohort - One 2-day Spring Retreat, 5 - 7 professional learning days. Each Fellow will be assigned a mentor if he/she has been appointed to a new leadership position.

Cost

Each participant's overall 3-year program cost may be paid for through Title II re-allocation, Title I, Title II-A grant funds, or district funds. The instructional program costs that can be included in the grant funding include,

- Season Ticket each year to all NHSAA professional learning opportunities which focus on the seven areas of leadership
- All instructional program costs - i.e., books and materials
- All accommodations as necessary - i.e., hotel, meals, etc.

Travel to and from instructional sites or NHSAA events will be the responsibility of the individual/district, and the district will cover absences (if necessary)

All application materials must be scanned as one PDF file and emailed to Jerry Frew at jerry@nhsaa.org.



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