



Charter school authorizers must continually balance their mission to create great new public schools with their mandate to protect the public and student interest.

**THIS BALANCING ACT REQUIRES LEADERSHIP.**

**Who is the Ideal Candidate for the NACSA Leaders Program?**

To be eligible to apply for the Leaders Program, you must:

- Currently work in an authorizing office.
- Be able to attend the kick-off call and all five Leaders Program sessions.

We look for individuals who possess commitment to the work of authorizing, and who demonstrate both a track record of taking initiative as a leader and a desire to build upon that experience. While we do not require applicants to hold a particular position, strong candidates generally have significant people and/or project management responsibilities and influence in decision-making in their offices.

**What is the difference between the priority and final deadlines?**

The priority deadline for the 2018 Cohort is Wednesday, December 13, 2017. The final deadline is Monday, January 8, 2018. Applications submitted by the priority deadline will be reviewed on an expedited timeline, and priority applicants may learn of their admission status earlier. Both priority and final deadline applications will be reviewed on the same criteria.

**How much does it cost to participate in the Leaders Program?**

The cost for the Leaders Program, including transportation and lodging for in-person sessions, is covered by NACSA.

**What is the time and travel commitment?**

Leaders are required to attend one virtual kick-off call and five in-person sessions. The first four in-person sessions are hosted in the Chicago area, and the final session will take place in conjunction with NACSA’s 2018 Annual Leadership Conference in Orlando.

Session	Session Schedule	Arrival
April 11-13	Wednesday afternoon - Friday afternoon	Wednesday morning
May 17-18	Thursday morning - Friday afternoon	Wednesday evening
June 21-22	Thursday morning - Friday afternoon	Wednesday evening
August 23-24	Thursday morning - Friday afternoon	Wednesday evening
October 21-22	Sunday afternoon - Monday evening	Sunday morning

**What are the expectations for work outside of the in-person sessions? How much homework will I have?**

Leaders will have assigned pre-work and readings prior to the first session and between all subsequent sessions. Ongoing readings and reflections will focus upon leadership style and related topics, as well as specific authorizing content. All participants are expected to complete a Capstone Project that they will work on throughout the program. While the time it takes to complete pre-work will vary by participant and by session, participants can expect to spend approximately 8-10 hours on pre-work prior to each session.

## **How many people are in each cohort and what is the cohort makeup like?**

Because we make selection decisions first and foremost based on the strength of the applicant, the number of participants varies from year to year. In past cohorts, we have had 10 to 12 participants. We limit the size of each cohort to a maximum of 12 participants to accommodate the highly-interactive delivery format. Past cohorts have been comprised of individuals representing all types of authorizing environments (districts, ICBs, universities, etc.) and serving in a variety of capacities (Executive Directors, Deputy Directors, Managers of Accountability, etc.). We find that this diversity provides for a more engaging and rich learning environment.

## **What topics are covered in the sessions?**

In general, topics covered in the sessions fall within four areas of leadership development: 1) Self-Leadership, 2) People Leadership, 3) Organizational Leadership and 4) Practice, or Authorizing, Leadership. You can expect each in-person session to touch on each of these areas. In the past, we have covered topics such as strategic planning, organizational culture, accountability and autonomy, and relationship building, but we also determine topics based on what the specific cohort feels it needs.

## **What does the coaching component of the Program look like?**

The Leaders Program will include coaching support to offer real-time feedback as participants seek to apply what they have learned through the Program to their work and personal growth goals, and to ensure that learning is sustained. The coaching relationship will begin at the first in-person session and will continue through the last in-person session. Each participant in the Program is paired with a coach from the authorizing sector who has extensive leadership experience.

## **I'd like to talk with someone who has participated in the Program. Can you connect me?**

We would be happy to set up further conversations with Program alums. Please contact Shannon Bauer at [shannonb@qualitycharters.org](mailto:shannonb@qualitycharters.org).

## **What does the group do for fun?**

NACSA knows that learning is aided by the relationships we form, and the Leaders Program is no exception. Participants get to know one another well through the hands-on environment and through social outings. Past cohorts have attended sporting events, gone on architectural boat tours along the scenic Chicago River, and participated in bowling matches.

## **What happens after the Program ends?**

Depending on how much you would like to be involved and the types of activities that are of interest to you, there are a number of ways to remain engaged with your fellow cohort members and Program alumni to continue learning and sharing best practices. Previous Leaders Program participants have presented at Leaders Program sessions or at the NACSA Leadership Conference, served as Leaders Program coaches and NACSA Community Co-Chairs, and authored blogs or contributed to social media campaigns, testimonials and newsletter articles on relevant topics.

## **Where can I get more information about the Program?**

For more information, please contact Shannon Bauer at [shannonb@qualitycharters.org](mailto:shannonb@qualitycharters.org).