

Leading Now.

What it takes. What it gives.

Based on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) highly successful **Leading with Perseverance** coaching series, this is MMA's first ever "cross-sectional" professional learning opportunity – we are recruiting **municipal cohorts**, ie teams that intentionally bring together an array of key roles (elected and appointed) from all corners of the government, to undergo intensive leadership development as a group, with particular focus on **leading through change** and **leading for equity**.

In DESE's model, teams consisting of superintendents, assistant superintendents, school principals, teachers, and various specialists and supporting staff members rigorously investigate and improve their communication practices, collaborative dynamics, and active forms of stakeholder engagement. They specifically learn to survive and thrive in productive conflict, and welcome meaningful contact and problem-solving with members of the community whom they have previously struggled to understand and work with.

For municipal leaders, this can include the following.

- Avoiding unnecessary siloing of functions or perspectives; cultivating more honest and organic communication, collaboration, and accountability between roles.
- Strengthening good will between municipalities and their constituents; improving how constituent feedback is heard and municipal messaging happens, and building a more positive culture of constituent engagement and service.
- Recruiting and retaining leaders and staff members from underrepresented backgrounds, and building a culture of belonging that is both sincere and rigorous, for the sake of team diversity and inclusion as well as community relations.

Comments from Past Participants in **Leading with Perseverance**

"Transformational"

"Unlike any previous PD"

"An eye-opening experience"

"Definite game-changer"

"The best leadership development I and my team have ever had... and I did a PhD in leadership!"



The structure of the program is tailored to the needs and availability of participants.

- Six half-day (three-hour) sessions, spread out across the year, scheduled with regard for busier municipal seasons, and centrally located in the Commonwealth (participating municipalities are encouraged to host).
- Onboarding conversations with each municipal team to find out what challenges they are facing and hope to work through together in the program.
- A cost-sharing model with MMA; MMA will pay half the cost of the program so that each municipal team will be charged only \$2,500 to \$3,000, for leadership development valued at many times as much.

Scan the QR code at right to access the *Leading Now* application.

Applications are due at 5pm on Friday, July 31. The first three program sessions are tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 25, 2026; Friday, October 16, 2026; and Friday, November 13, 2026. However, dates are subject to change based on the availability of selected teams. If you have questions, please contact Jillian Harvey, Chief Equity Officer of MMA, at jharvey@mma.org.

