Course 1: World-Class Schooling: Vision and Goals
Required for Induction/Recommended for all Act 45 administrators
60 Act 45 hours (includes time for pre- and post-session assignments)

Unit 1: The Educational Challenge 2 days
This unit explains 1) why fundamental changes in the international economy have resulted in significantly higher educational requirements for all citizens in the advanced economies, and 2) why social development and ethical behavior are just as important as high academic achievement. Participants realistically assess the challenges school must meet to achieve high standards. They also examine the corrosive effect of pervasive low expectations for many poor and minority students. This unit also helps participants accept and embrace the goal of every student graduating from high school college-, career- and community-ready.

Unit 2: Principal as Strategic Thinker 2 days
This unit encourages participants to think strategically about the challenges they face and to develop a clear, powerful strategy for addressing those challenges. They learn to distinguish among tactical, operational and strategic thinking. School leaders apply decision-making processes they need to analyze complex situations, overcome barriers and accomplish objectives. Case studies in the military and business (enterprises that perform well with strategic thinking and operational planning) allow participants to adapt and apply their knowledge to new situations relative to the world of school.

Unit 3: Elements of Standards Aligned Instructional Systems 2 days
This unit challenges participants to develop a sophisticated understanding of the components of a high-quality, standards-aligned instructional system and how those components can be combined to boost student performance. School leaders will learn how to identify assessments genuinely aligned to standards, build curriculum frameworks that array topics logically to enable students to reach standards over time, and select instructional materials that are aligned with standards and the frameworks that support all students in achieving the qualifications associated with future success in college, career and community life.

Unit 4: Promoting the Learning Organization 2 days
This unit examines the enhancement and support of teaching capacity through a focus on the school as a learning organization. Participants apply principles of deeper learning to professional development while looking at: 1) growth models for teachers and professionals, and 2) models of teacher accountability. A scenario-based, team-oriented simulation based around four quarters of the school year create opportunities for school leaders to engage with and learn from one another while working together to achieve a well-developed, shared team goal.

Action Learning: During this Course, participants identify the focus of their Action Learning and begin to develop their Context, Vision and Theory of Action.
Course 2: Sustaining Transformation through Capacity and Commitment
Required for Induction/Recommended for all Act 45 administrators
60 Act 45 hours (includes time for pre- and post-session assignments)

Unit 5: Coaching for High-Quality Teaching 2 days
This unit focuses on the principal’s role in advancing greater instructional effectiveness in implementing the high quality, standards-based aligned instructional system discussed in Unit 3. Participants apply facilitative and direct coaching behaviors to common scenarios school leaders experience as managers of human capital and talent development. NISL promotes coaching as the principle lever for linking the research associated with professional learning with the day-to-day role of principal as instructional leader.

Unit 6: Teams for Instructional Leadership 2 days
This unit introduces the concept of the leadership team (not simply the principal) as the nexus of instructional leadership within the school. It combines this concept with the idea that distributing leadership and allocating responsibility to other teams of teachers and other stakeholders in the school leverages the power of teams to get the work of the school done and to develop the knowledge and skills needed to build high-performing teams. Participants learn how to define the goals for teams, recruit and select their members, and motivate and coach them to success.

Unit 7: Ethical Leadership for Equity 2 days
Participants in this unit examine their roles as ethical leaders in their schools with a focus on equity, defined as providing equal access to the curriculum with appropriate supports to achieve college-, career- and community-ready qualifications. Day-to-day pressures of being a principal, standards-based reforms and new accountability requirements are fundamental conditions of the principal’s job. In many situations, principals are so pressured by operational demands that they lack the time to think deeply about the ethical assumptions and implications underlying their decisions. Participants consider the moral principles of a just, fair and caring and how these principles guide participants’ discussions and decisions about this unit’s case studies and scenarios.

Unit 8: Driving and Sustaining Change 2 days
In this unit, participants further develop their capacity to design and lead an adaptive change process calculated to produce steady improvement in student achievement. School leaders learn to analyze the change process from the perspective of sustaining transformational change in an environment that is continually volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. Participants also learn how to identify root problems and causes, gather intelligence, formulate a plan on the basis of appropriate data, select strategies, and develop sound implementation plans.

Action Learning: In this course, participants refine their Context, Vision and Theory of Action, develop their Strategies and Action Steps, and engage in a Consultancy Protocol to elicit feedback from their EDP colleagues prior to implementing their system change designed to improve student achievement and close the achievement gap.
Course 3: Focusing on Teaching and Learning
Recommended for all Act 45 administrators/Available to non-Act 45 leaders*
60 Act 45 hours (includes time for pre- and post-session assignments)

Unit 9: Foundations of Effective Learning  2 days
Course Three focuses closely on the system of the classroom. This unit anchors Course Three with a
detailed examination of the science of learning and is based on the premise that all school leaders
should be students of learning. After exploring and articulating the ideas in How People Learn, we
examine the proposition that a coherent theory of learning is essential to instructional system
alignment. The unit includes several opportunities for leaders to explore ideas and questions in their
own school contexts. Participants will engage in a consultancy-style protocol to incubate an idea for
taking steps toward achieving instructional system coherence around a consistent theory of learning.

Unit 10: Leadership in the Instructional Core-English Language Arts and History  2 days
This unit is the first of two units that examine ways in which the research around how people learn,
explored in the previous unit, is applied within the core disciplines. In particular, this unit examines the
relationship of language to learning in reading and writing from early childhood through high school and
their vital importance to knowledge building. This unit also focuses on history/social studies, exploring
and applying the ideas that were studied in the previous unit to the discipline of history.

Unit 11: Leadership in the Instructional Core-Science and Mathematics  2 days
This is the second of two units that examine ways in which learning research is applied. Participants will
examine how formative assessment and language interact in science and mathematics to help students
learn. They will explore the importance of preconceptions and prior knowledge in learning. Instructional
leaders will learn how to evaluate practices in science and mathematics classrooms to recognize high-
quality teaching and the attributes of an environment in science and math classrooms that promote
proficient science and math learners.

Unit 12: Final Case Simulation and Presentations  2 days
In this unit, school leaders are asked to explore how their participation in NISL has impacted their
thinking around what it means to have students who are truly College, Career and Life Ready and the
mechanisms and tools for helping students get there: applying strategic thinking to their school context,
crafting and applying a clear vision for making decisions and setting priorities, improving the quality and
alignment of their schools’ instructional systems, high-quality teachers and teaching, and the
organization and management of high-performing schools. Special emphasis is achieving equity through
the design of school system structures and processes. NOTE: This session is for EDP completers of
Courses 1, 2, and 3. Invited guests for Units 9, 10 and 11 are not required or expected to attend.

* Registered Act 45 participants may bring up to two (2) additional non-Act 45 leaders (e.g. curriculum
director, language arts supervisor, math department head, etc.) at no additional expense to the LEA, on
a space-available basis. The LEA may choose to assign Act 48 credit accordingly. Check with your
Regional Program Lead (RPL) for additional information.