

# SCHOOL LEADER INSTITUTE: ADDRESSING HYPER-PARTISANSHIP WITH DELIBERATION & AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

As schools move even closer to the epicenter of cultural and political debates regarding race, equity, curriculum, and institutional responses to COVID-19, school leaders are being called upon to respond quickly to pressing questions raised by their broader school communities. The School Leader Institute is intended to help educators across the country create a strategic vision that supports an inclusive school climate, fosters open and authentic dialogue and deliberation among diverse student bodies, and addresses the demands of parents, board members, and other stakeholders.

Over the course of three days, participants will hear from school leaders who have successfully navigated difficult scenarios, deliberate about pressing issues facing schools, develop a strategic vision for respectful discourse at school, and hone tools and approaches to implement that vision. The Institute will provide a space in which educators can proactively identify their civic, democratic, and educational equity goals so they are prepared to lead the charge in their schools and districts and support students, teachers, and parents in these conversations.

**The Institute will virtually bring together educators from across the country to explore questions such as:**

- How does the current political context and cultural climate impact my school? How can my school respond to it?
- How can our teachers overcome challenges posed by partisanship, polarization, and “fake” news?
- What types of guidance and support do our diverse faculty teams need to engage students with challenging social and political issues?
- Where are the spaces for civil discourse among diverse students within my school? How can they be expanded or strengthened to take up the complex challenges of the day, from racial justice to sustainability, with an eye to how multiple perspectives help the conversation?
- Which stakeholders are relevant and worth engaging as my school reestablishes its values, norms, and unique culture?

## *Institute Overview*

**Dates:** Tuesday, July 26 – Thursday, July 28, 2022. All sessions will run from 1:00pm - 4:00pm (EST) / 10:00am - 1:00pm (PST) on Zoom.

### **Day 1: Fostering Civil Discourse and Deliberation**

Through roundtable discussions and a panel with a diverse set of school leaders, participants will consider the contexts in which their schools exist and the challenges and opportunities for civil discourse and deliberation. Participants will consider questions such as:

- Will our school establish community-wide norms for political discussion?
- How do deliberative democracy and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work together?
- When we talk about democratic dispositions, what do we mean? How can civic ideals be infused into ongoing, skill-based DEI work?

### **Day 2: Navigating Challenging Scenarios**

Participants will deliberate on a series of case studies drawn from real-world challenges facing communities, schools, and classrooms. Through the deliberation, participants will clarify the goals and values of their schools. Case studies will explore questions such as:

- What should be the limits of student free speech at school? What should schools do when political speech conflicts with the goal of maintaining a safe space?
- What does it mean to build an inclusive space? How should school leaders respond when efforts at inclusivity make some feel excluded?
- How should school leaders balance community stakeholders’ different opinions about anti-racist curriculum and DEI policies and practices?

### **Day 3: Planning for Change**

Educators will participate in a series of workshops to develop strategic visions and plans for the upcoming school year. Workshops will include:

- **Educating for Democratic Discourse in an Era of Hyperpartisanship:** How do we help educators across all disciplines incorporate civic discourse and deliberative democracy skills in their teaching?
- **Bridging DEI Work with Civic Education Work:** How can citizenship education and DEI initiatives work hand-in-hand to promote engaged, thoughtful citizenship?
- **Reflecting and Planning for Action:** How can you bring this work back to your school?



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## *Application Details*

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### **Who should attend?**

The Institute is designed for administrators, including division heads, DEI directors, community engagement directors, academic program coordinators, deans of students, deans of faculty, social studies supervisors, and other educators who oversee strategic planning and implementation. You must commit to attending all three days of the Institute (July 26 – July 28, 2022).

### **What is the cost for the Institute?**

The fee to attend is \$675 per educator.

### **What is the application deadline?**

Applicants will be accepted on a rolling basis. The final application deadline is June 15, 2022. Successful candidates will be notified by June 30, 2022.

### **How do I apply?**

The application can be found [here](#).

## *About Us*

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### **Close Up Foundation**

Established in 1971, Close Up is a nonprofit, nonpartisan civic education organization dedicated to helping students develop the knowledge and skills they need to become informed, active, and engaged citizens. Close Up's resources, programs, and professional development offer a balanced and multi-partisan approach to facilitating controversial issue discussions. Each year, Close Up helps thousands of students and teachers across the nation engage in civil discourse and take informed action in their communities.

### **National Network of Schools in Partnership (NNSP)**

NNSP brings together public, private, and charter schools to focus on community engagement and impact by connecting what they study in the classroom to what is happening in the real world. NNSP believes collaboration and partnerships are central to a strategy for improving equity in educational opportunities. NNSP thrives on the diversity of its members, which include organizations such as: public, charter and private schools; educational access and enrichment programs; and policy and education reform groups.