

# AISGW LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Advancing Women's Impact in Independent Schools

## SYLLABUS

### Program Overview

The *Leadership Initiative for Women* is a new AISGW offering to promote the advancement of women in independent school leadership roles. Participants will engage with experienced educational leaders to explore pathways to expand their leadership potential and impact in independent schools. The program will facilitate their leadership development through sponsorship and mentorship from independent school leaders in the greater Washington, DC area.

The nine meetings described below will form the framework of the program. A group of faculty advisors will serve as experts and contacts to guide cohort members as they progress. Participants will be responsible for full participation and attendance at each session, completing reading, research and reflection between sessions as assigned, and engaging in independent work related to school leadership.

### THE FACULTY

The Faculty Advisory Group of the *AISGW Leadership Initiative for Women* includes the following school leaders:

- *Kathleen O'Neill Jamieson, Retired Head of School, National Cathedral School, Director and Lead Faculty Advisor [Chair]*
- Kirsten Adams, Head of School, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School
- Angela Garcia, Head of School, Friends Community School
- John Kowalik, Head of School, Potomac School
- Donna Lindner, Head of School, Lowell School
- Lori Strauss, Head of School, The Field School
- Marjo Talbott, Head of School, Maret School

Throughout the course of the program, the faculty advisors will be joined by local and national experts on independent schools and executive leadership.

## **TOPICS AND SCHEDULE**

The cohort will meet as a group for nine sessions both in-person and virtually from October through May. Unless otherwise specified, all sessions will run on Wednesdays from 4:00-5:30. In addition to these scheduled meetings, cohort members will meet with their mentors and engage in parallel leadership projects and independent work through the duration of the program.

### **ZOOM Kick-Off: Welcome to the Leadership Initiative for Women!** **October 27, 2021, 4:00-5:00**

This initial call will bring together the first cohort of the *AISGW Leadership Initiative for Women* for introductions and initial guidance from the faculty advisory group. Cohort members will be introduced to independent work that will take place during the fall portion of the program.

### **Session I: Leaders on Leadership: Stories from the Field** **January 12, 2022**

A panel of experienced independent school leaders will discuss pathways to leadership and their perspectives on the career trajectories of women in schools and educational organizations. The session will include a self-assessment that considers experience, skills and goals.

### **Session II: Charting Your Path** **January 26, 2022**

Participants will share brief professional profiles and personal goals. A Certified Executive Coach has been invited to offer a workshop-style session on personal professional development planning and goal-setting. Cohort members will begin work on a leadership plan that identifies a personal statement of educational philosophy and concrete action steps for moving forward on her leadership trajectory.

### **Session III: The Transition to Leadership: Tools for the Early Years** **February 9, 2022**

Fellow independent school administrators will share their experiences on moving into leadership roles in complex school communities. Discussion will include the expanded responsibilities of vision-setting, supervision, delegation, and evaluation. Among other things, cohort members will identify transferable skills and learn about a school leader's role in social justice and communication. A case study will be introduced on the topic of teamwork.

### **Session IV: Teamwork** **March 2, 2022**

It doesn't have to be lonely at the top! Advisory Group members and guest experts will share their experience and provide guidance for leading diverse teams and managing

multiple constituencies. Members will assess the teamwork issues of case study challenges (eg. strategic plan implementation, DEI work, campaign launch, schedule changes) with the goal of understanding team dynamics. The group will draft ground rules for successful teamwork.

**Session V: Critical Competencies: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion and Crisis Management**

**April 6, 2022**

Add value to your current and future positions with ongoing training and responsibility in key areas related to the well-being of your school community and the relevance of the institution. Professionals in the related fields will provide resources and perspective for individual professional growth with an opportunity for Q&A. Cohort members will reflect on and integrate these competencies into their personal leadership plan.

**Session VI: Finance and Fundraising: A Primer on the Business Side of Independent Schools**

**April 27, 2022**

Leaders in their fields will offer guidance on key elements of finance and fundraising from the perspective that financial security and growth can be attained using many of the same skills deployed for a successful educational program. The discussion will include identification of current work and potential opportunities on the business side. Leaders will also share samples/models (accreditation standards, campaign plan, institutional budgets, etc.) and resources for professional development.

**Session VII: Your Personal Leadership Profile**

**May 11, 2022**

Nothing is more important than knowing your story and telling it effectively. Experienced executive search professionals will share best practices to communicate your expertise and leadership qualities. Together with the advisory faculty, they will advise on developing your portfolio and building a successful professional network. Cohort members will learn how to leverage social media, publication, and speaking engagements all in light of current research on leadership advancement.

**Session VIII: Concluding Roundtable and Reception**

**May 25, 2022, 4:00-6:30 p.m**

Faculty and participants will gather for final reflections on the *AISGW Leadership Initiative for Women* experience. This session will allow for a dynamic exhibit of individual leadership plans and the opportunity to give and get feedback. Advisory faculty and cohort members will leave with a shared commitment to each other's goals and to supporting the advancement of their colleagues. The session will end with a celebratory reception.