The Minnesota Principals Academy has successfully served over 400 principals across the state of Minnesota since its establishment at the University of Minnesota in 2006. As a result of legislative funding through 2019, we are able to offer this excellent professional development at a reduced cost in a regional location in greater Minnesota. We are excited to announce that the application process for hosting the next regional cohort of the Minnesota Principals Academy has opened. Current cohorts are running in Thief River Falls and the Twin Cities. Two new cohorts are slated to begin in the fall of 2017; one will be in the Twin Cities and one in a regional center that serves principals in greater Minnesota. It is the intention of the University, in collaboration with MESPA, MASSP, and MASA to select a location that serves a group of principals who are eager to engage in this 18 month professional development program, who have the support of their districts, and who have a commitment to collaboration in their region. This document outlines the steps and supports available for the application process. Please note there is not an application form, applications should be a narrative containing the requested information outlined below and any additional support documents.

Application Steps, Details, and Deadline

Step 1: Establish a Guiding Coalition
Regional cohort applicants must have 25-30 committed participants to be considered for selection. We suggest a regional leader engage the region’s superintendents first to see if they support the financial commitment ($1750/year) and time commitment (28 total days over two years) of their administrators participating in the Academy. Materials outlining the Academy’s purpose, curriculum, example cohort schedules, testimonials from past participants, and achieved Action Learning Projects can be found at [http://www.cehd.umn.edu/OLPD/PA/default.htm](http://www.cehd.umn.edu/OLPD/PA/default.htm) along with some basic ‘fast facts’ at the end of this document. In addition, program director, Dr. Katie Pekel, Principal in Residence at the University of Minnesota is happy to come to any regional meeting to share more information about the Academy and answer any questions superintendents or participants may have and to put superintendents in contact with colleagues who have had their principals participate in the program.

Step 2: Secure Potential Participants
Once regional support is evident, securing potential participants to reach the 25-30 cohort size will be necessary. We suggest using MESPA and MASSP division communication and meetings to share the potential of a cohort in the region. Dr. Pekel would encourage interested principals to attend any regional information meetings, and is also happy to put prospective participants in contact with current or past participants. Once there is a general understanding of the program,
it will be important to gain commitments from prospective participants. Submitting potential participant names, positions, and districts will be helpful to an application. While the funding from the legislature is intended first for principals and assistant principals, we do encourage other school administrators to apply if the region agrees. This could include superintendents, directors of special services or special education, curriculum, human resources, professional development, or other administrators directly engaged in leading the district for improved student outcomes.

**Step 4: Secure a Host Site**
Traditionally regions have excellent resources for hosting professional development programs such as the Principals Academy. This could include a school site, district office, co-op, or any location that can comfortably host 30 participants and allow for catered breakfast and lunch to be brought in to the site. We prefer space that allows for flexible grouping in tables, has reliable technology including overhead projector, sound and internet access, and is centrally located or convenient for most regional participants to get to. If the region can work out a way for the space to be used at no cost, that is preferable.

**Step 5: Write an Application and Submit by Friday, December 16, 2016**
A narrative application should be written and submitted to Dr. Pekel at kpekel@umn.edu at the University of Minnesota addressing each of the points below. Selection of the Greater Minnesota Regional Cohort will be made by Wednesday, January 11, 2017 in consultation with MESPA, MASSP, and MASA.

**Application Components**

- **Location Rationale** – This should include the specific location of the proposed cohort and rationale as to why this is a good next regional hub for the Academy. Evidence could include the commitment of the region to collaboration in the past, relationships among the districts, cooperation with other supporting agencies like a co-op or Regional Center of Excellence. A specific site for the Academy to meet should be included as well as the potential terms for use of the site.

- **District/Participant Commitment** – Specific commitments from the region’s superintendents will greatly enhance an application. We suggest incorporating the district and participant commitment into one letter from each district outlining the superintendent’s commitment and the names of the prospective participants. If there were to be more than 30 individuals interested in participation, we will use individual applications as we do in the Twin Cities cohort, or rely on the regional leaders to help devise a plan to best meet the region’s needs.

- **Specific Region Needs/Assets** – We realize that in bringing the Academy to any location we are coming to a place that has many of their own assets and potentially perceived needs. Please tell us about some of the good work that has been happening in your region, what the region may see as potential needs in principal professional development, and most importantly, why the Minnesota Principals Academy seems to be a good fit for your region at this time.
Minnesota Principals Academy 'Fast Facts'

The MPA is the University of Minnesota’s executive development program for school leaders that focuses on creating schools where all students graduate ready for college or careers. The program lasts approximately two academic years, uses proven curriculum from the National Institute of School Leadership as its foundation, and is tailored to meet the needs of Minnesota leaders through the direct involvement of U of M faculty.

**Cost and Funding**  Participant cost is $1750 per academic year. The actual cost of the program is $7000/participant. Currently half of that cost is covered for public school leaders through legislative funding appropriated to the MDE. This legislative funding is expected through 2019.

**Schedule**  The cohorts meet about every 6-8 weeks for two-day sessions during the week over the course of 18-24 months. There are on average 6 days of meetings in the summer. Examples of current schedules can be viewed [here](#).

**Content**  The two-day units cover a comprehensive look at the improvements of schools through a standards-based instructional system. While the unit topics and detailed curriculum overview can be found [here](#), highlights of the program include: international benchmarking; strategic thinking; a standards based instructional system framework; the content areas of mathematics, science, literacy, and history; ELL; special education; equity; data and assessment; teacher evaluation and coaching; professional development and team building, change; and program evaluation.

**Expected Outcomes**  In addition to the collaborative learning that takes place in the Academy, each participant completes an **Action Learning Project** where they analyze a problem of practice in their context, develop a strategy for improvement, and evaluate that improvement strategy for its intended objective in order to make continued improvement.

**Facilitators (Instructors)**  The program is run by the U of M’s **Principal in Residence** and sessions are facilitated by the Principal in Residence and practicing or recently retired school and district leaders in Minnesota who have gone through the program and are certified as NISL/U of M facilitators.

**Waived PhD Credit Opportunity**  Participants who successfully complete the Principals Academy, and gain successful admission to the Educational Policy and Leadership PhD program at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities are eligible to waive 12 of the elective PhD credits. It is important to note that these are **waived**, not earned credits. Therefore, currently, they may not be applied at a different institution.