



## **NC State Educational Leadership Academy**

*Developing Excellent Leaders, Effective Schools, and Enriched Communities*

**Master of School Administration Application Checklist**

DUE DATE: **November 10, 2025**

**Admission Criteria**

- Four years teaching experience in PK-12 public or private school is required.
- Undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better strongly preferred (2.5 GPA minimum)
- Clear NC Teaching License and NC Residency

**NC State Graduate School Application Procedures**

All application materials should be submitted via the NC State Graduate School's online application.

1. Go to NC State's Graduate School's Online Application web page:  
<https://applygrad.ncsu.edu/apply/>
2. On the right side of the page, click on the Create Account tab to register for a new account.
3. "Application Instructions" are provided within the electronic application, please read carefully. There is a nonrefundable \$85 application fee. *Your application can be more rapidly processed if you use a credit card.*
4. When completing the online application form from the dropdown menu, select the program:  
**Master of School Administration - Distance Summer 1 2026** (for May 2026 start date).
5. Make sure you select that you have **NC Residency** and complete the required form in the application system. **(This step is very important!)**

To complete your NC State Graduate School application, you will need the following items:

- **Transcripts** from each college attended (except NC State). Upload unofficial transcripts.
- Three **letters of reference**. One letter **must be** from your current supervisor. The system will send an email to your references asking them to electronically submit their reference.
- **OPTIONAL** - Official score report from either the Miller's Analogy Test (**MAT**) or the Graduate Record Examination (**GRE**) (taken within the past 5 years).
- Your professional **resume**: Please be detailed and include information on your teaching assignments (grades and subject), current work assignment (location) and include current supervisor name and contact information (address, phone, and email).
- **Purpose or Biographical Statement**. *Describe your career goals, work experience, and academic/professional honors. Include the key learning objectives you hope to achieve in your studies at NC State, your achievements, talents, background, experiences, and traits that will contribute to the land grant mission of NC State to serve all types of learners in all communities.*
- **A Teaching Philosophical Statement or Educational Platform**: *Describe your educational philosophy. Please include your view of the purpose of schooling, the key ingredients of an excellent education for all students, and how educational leaders should be viewed by students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders. Your teaching philosophy should reflect your personal*

*values and beliefs about teaching. It is a self-reflective statement that describes what you believe and provides concrete examples of what you do in the classroom to support those beliefs. You should picture your students walking out of your classroom on the last day of the school year: In what ways are those students different from the ones who entered your classroom on the first day of school?*

***If you have any problems with the electronic NC State Graduate School application process, please contact:***

**NC State Graduate School**  
919-515-2872 – general information  
919-515-2871 – graduate records  
919-515-2873 – fax  
[graduate-school@ncsu.edu](mailto:graduate-school@ncsu.edu) (general inquiries)  
[graduate\\_applications@ncsu.edu](mailto:graduate_applications@ncsu.edu) (admissions & application questions)

Your application can be more rapidly processed if you can pay the application fee using a credit card. If not paid on-line with a credit card, the application fee should be mailed directly to the Graduate School.

**NC State Graduate School**  
1020 Main Campus Drive, Room 2300A  
Campus Box 7102  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, NC 27695-7102

### **MSA Program Application Surveys**

Once your NC State Graduate School application has been completely submitted, please complete the NC State Principal Preparation/MSA Information Survey (will take approximately 10 minutes) and the Background Information Form/Survey (will take about 15 minutes).

**Required** Information Survey at: <https://forms.gle/DsCU6dnxNqqLQQYy9>

**Required** Background Information Form/Survey at: <https://forms.gle/YGCy9bSgi6sG9dXY6>

For questions or additional information about the program content or coursework:

Dr. Lesley Wirt, [lesley\\_wirt@ncsu.edu](mailto:lesley_wirt@ncsu.edu), 919-513-8521

*Training innovative principals for high-need schools*

***Excellent Leaders. Effective Schools. Enriched Communities©***

# MSA Principal Fellow Selection Process

## We know that great schools have great leaders.

Leadership succession planning or investing in leadership “bench strength” is a standard practice in successful corporations and in high performing educational systems. NC State MSA program targets resources to prepare the very best leaders for NC’s schools and improve student outcomes.

To prepare highly effective leaders for NC’s schools, NC State uses a multi-step selection process that includes experiential events in which candidates must demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and dispositions. Through these carefully sequenced interactions, NC State selects the very best people – those who demonstrate characteristics of principals that research has identified as linked to higher levels of student performance and correlated with deeper school change.

NC State selects Principal Fellows who ...

- have high expectations and share the belief that *all* children can achieve at high academic levels;
- have a sense of urgency and personal accountability for achieving results for students;
- have a deep commitment to equity and community engagement;
- possess a deep knowledge of curriculum and instruction and monitor teacher effectiveness;
- and have strong resiliency skills to persevere when confronted with setbacks

## Multi-Step Selection Process

1. Applicants complete an enhanced NCSU Graduate School application and must pass a background screening and reference check by **November 10, 2025**. Letters of recommendation for this stage of the process should come from the **candidate’s immediate supervisor(s)** and others who have worked closely with the candidate.

2. After a careful review of applications, the NC State MSA Leadership Team and Educational Leadership Faculty select finalists to participate in Candidate Assessment Day (**December 6, 2025**). Finalists engage in authentic scenario-based activities. Evaluation teams are composed of current teachers, principals, K-12 students, and district personnel.

3. During Candidate Assessment Day, finalists:

- ✓ Role play scenario with a high school student;
- ✓ Role play scenario with a K-12 teacher;
- ✓ Complete multiple timed activities;
- ✓ Participate in a 10-minute individual interview.

4. At the end of the day, the Assessment Team debriefs with the MSA Leadership Team about the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate.

5. The MSA Leadership Team then completes a comprehensive review of all the materials, consults with district leaders, and makes final admission decisions.

Offers of admission will be made approximately eight weeks after Candidate Assessment Day.

[go.ncsu.edu/principalprep](http://go.ncsu.edu/principalprep)