



## Executive Director

### The Association

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The Independent Schools Association of Northern New England (ISANNE) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, professional organization that includes membership of over 65 independent day schools, boarding schools, and town academies of varying sizes across Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Originally founded in the late 1960s as a service organization for heads of school, ISANNE has grown to encompass programming and support for all of the unique aspects of independent school life and operations. With a goal of providing national quality programming at a regional cost and promoting effective, innovative school leadership, ISANNE brings together members from a diverse group of schools to share, learn, and advocate for independent schools.

### MISSION

*The Independent Schools Association of Northern New England (ISANNE) unites, supports and promotes its diverse member schools in a changing world.*

### CORE VALUES

*The following statements reflect the underlying foundation upon which ISANNE will conduct all of its work as an association.*

- **Professional Support.** ISANNE's primary objective is to strengthen the future vitality of northern New England independent schools through support and professional development of Heads of Schools and all school leadership.
- **Visionary Development.** ISANNE is committed to offering its member schools access to the best thinking and research regarding the rapidly evolving nature of schools and their programs. These resources are intended to support the strategic curricular, programmatic, financial, campus, and leadership planning and development at member schools.

- **Collective Action.** ISANNE will foster collaboration between independent schools promoting innovative and dynamic solutions to challenges in the ever evolving world of education.
- **Independence.** ISANNE embraces the many types of independent schools that make up its total membership. Member schools are provided the opportunity to network and develop programs aligned with each school's mission and the students they serve. Together, ISANNE and its member schools stand for the values of independent school education in the face of local, state, and national trends toward standardization and regulation of education.

Professional development is the cornerstone of ISANNE's work. Conferences, guest speakers, and informal gatherings occur throughout the year and are either topic-specific or, more often, geared toward one of the Association's twelve affinity groups: Academic Deans, Admission Professionals, Business Officers, Counselors, Deans and Assistant Heads, Development Officers, Heads of School, Head's Assistants, Nurses, Facilities Directors, Town Academies, and the Maine Association of Independent Schools. Approximately 25 events have been scheduled for the 2013-2014 school year. Executive coaching services, by way of a grant from the E.E. Ford Foundation, and a mentoring program for new heads of school have recently been established, and the ISANNE Leadership Education and Development Seminar (ISANNELeads) has been instituted to prepare mid-level administrators for senior leadership and potential future headship positions. In addition, listservs targeting each of the affinity groups provide not only important professional development but also a venue for sharing information and discussing specific issues.

The Association facilitates collaborative purchasing in areas such as insurance, office products, and heating oil, and with over 40 corporate partners, connects schools with businesses and professionals across Northern New England. ISANNE also works formally and informally on a variety of matters with other independent school associations, such as The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS), the Association of Independent School Admission Professionals (AISAP) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the latter of which serves as ISANNE member schools' accrediting organization. Staying abreast of legislative developments that impact the education arena is another important function of the Association, including sharing with members new developments within and between states and, where appropriate, advocating for independent schools with state and local governments.

ISANNE is governed by a board of twelve directors, all of whom are heads of school or senior administrators in member schools. Board members serve no more than two three-year terms, and in an effort to promote more leadership from a wider variety of ISANNE professionals, a recent revision to the bylaws requires that at least three board members be senior independent school administrators who are not heads of school.

## The Opportunity

ISANNE has been led since 2004 by Doug Cummings, who has announced his plans to retire in July 2014. Under Mr. Cummings' leadership, the Association has grown significantly in membership, in scope and number of services offered, and in budget. ISANNE is in excellent condition and well positioned for the next Executive Director to build on the Association's success. Areas for particular attention over the coming years include the following:

- **Professional development**, including evaluating programs for effectiveness, refining and enhancing existing programs, and developing new initiatives to meet current and emerging needs of ISANNE membership, particularly with regard to mentoring new heads and training the next generation of senior administrators.
- **Increased inclusivity and collegiality** between and within ISANNE affinity groups, including providing new opportunities for members to interact across professional, geographical, and generational boundaries and continually cultivating a sense of community among schools, many of which are otherwise in relatively isolated and rural settings.
- **Collaboration and collective action**, including facilitating and encouraging collaboration among member schools with the goal of advancing legislative and government influence, collective purchasing, and the reputation of and appreciation of ISANNE schools among the public.
- **Growth in membership** by developing a comprehensive marketing plan that both keeps current members engaged and brings in new schools by presenting a compelling argument for the value of ISANNE membership.
- **Financial sustainability** of the Association through continual refinement of the business model with particular attention to financial plans, member services, and staffing.

## Responsibilities

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director serves as the Association's leader in creating and carrying out programming across all disciplines while also offering helpful insights into the unique issues surrounding independent school life for heads of school and their collective staffs. The Executive Director will oversee the Director of Professional Development and Communication, who manages conference details and logistics. Specific responsibilities include:

- Working in concert with the Board of Directors to establish strategic plans for ISANNE designed both to maximize member services and to ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of the Association.

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- Keeping the board abreast of important programmatic and financial information within the organization both through regular meetings and on an as-needed basis.
- Promoting ISANNE services to current and prospective member schools, including facilitating the application process and visiting member schools regularly to build and maintain relationships and to stay current with regard to member needs.
- Developing and executing mentoring programs for all leadership professionals, including directing the ISANNELeads program and arranging executive coaching services for school leaders.
- Providing support to member schools' boards of trustees in such areas as training, orientation, and succession planning.
- In collaboration with the Director of Professional Development and Communication and respective planning committees, ensuring the success of all professional development programs and conferences, including attending all events and soliciting financial support.
- Managing relationships with corporate partners to maximize their assistance to ISANNE members with regard to financial support, professional development assistance, and collaborative buying plans.
- Serving as the primary public ambassador for ISANNE, including cultivating partnerships with and representing the Association among other national, state, and regional organizations, and acting as an advocate for member schools among local and state governments.
- Ensuring that the administrative systems of the Association are efficient and effective and perform optimally in support of its services.

The formal, detailed job description is available on request.

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### Candidate Qualities

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#### Leadership

- A confident and collaborative person who leads by influence and persuasion rather than by mandate.
- One whose intellect, knowledge of independent school issues, commitment to ISANNE and its members, and genuine concern for the continued success of independent schools in Northern New England inspire others and motivate them to work on behalf of the Association.

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- A visionary who understands the “big picture” of education and can identify future needs, develop strategies, establish priorities, and proactively address complex issues.
- A person of action who engenders a sense of creativity, innovation, and willingness to take prudent risks with new initiatives.
- A mentor who is excited about the responsibility for developing the next generation of school leadership.

Experience

There is a preference among the Search Committee that the next Executive Director have experience in an independent school. At the same time, the Committee wishes to consider candidates from a wide variety of fields, and it places the highest premium on background living in Northern New England and working as a senior administrator or similar leader in the field of education. General sets of desired experience include:

- At least ten years as a senior executive in an independent school or in similar leadership positions in another education-related entity -- such as a university, an association, or a government agency -- that have allowed one to develop familiarity with independent schools.
- A history of playing a key leadership role in the overall operations of an organization, including strategic planning, budgeting and fiscal oversight, hiring and training of staff, managing administrative systems, and working successfully with a board of trustees or similar body, as either a professional or a volunteer.
- A career that demonstrates an aptitude for mentorship and formally or informally contributing to the professional development of others.
- A successful track record of speaking publicly, generating supporters, and creating alliances with key groups and individuals.
- Experience establishing, evaluating, and refining programs and initiatives that are consistent with an organization’s mission.

Skills and Knowledge

- Broad and deep knowledge of the operations, cultures, needs, and concerns of independent schools of all types, sizes, and grade ranges, and a general understanding of the landscape of independent education on both a national and regional scale.

- Excellent communication skills, both speaking to large and small groups and in writing.
- Awareness of legislative and legal issues that impact independent schools, particularly in Northern New England.
- Capable of assimilating important industry data and disseminating it to members while bringing clarity to complex issues.
- The ability to act as an advocate on behalf of independent schools.
- Skilled in balancing the building of consensus and ownership with the vision and drive necessary to move an organization forward.
- An aptitude for marketing and communications that allows one to “make the case” for ISANNE membership and to sustain effective relationships with current and prospective members and partner organizations.
- Skilled in networking, building partnerships with other organizations and individuals, and forging cooperative efforts between and among members and other organizations.
- Familiarity with current developments in technology, an understanding of the ways in which they can support independent schools and broaden the reach of ISANNE, and the ability to use such advancements effectively on both an administrative and a programmatic basis.

#### Personal Attributes

- An honest person of the utmost integrity.
- A forward-thinking, intuitive, and creative strategic thinker who seamlessly blends loyalty to ISANNE’s mission and respect for its values with an exciting and innovative vision for its future.
- A self-starter whose resourcefulness, sense of industry, and organization skills allow him or her to accomplish “more with less.”
- One whose personal bearing, professional background, and wisdom combine to lend him or her credibility with a wide range of constituents, such as heads of schools and senior school administrators, other association executives, corporate partners, and government officials.

- An outgoing person who is energized by people and comfortable in a variety of social settings.
- An individual embraces working in both urban and rural settings.

### **Other Considerations**

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<u>Compensation:</u>	Commensurate with experience and prevailing market trends.
<u>Start date:</u>	July 2014.
<u>Location:</u>	Variable within Northern New England.
<u>Travel:</u>	Moderate to heavy, mostly by automobile.
<u>Education:</u>	Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree(s) strongly preferred.
<u>Website:</u>	<a href="http://www.isanne.org">www.isanne.org</a>
<u>Candidates May Now Be:</u>	A current or former head of an independent school.  A current or former senior administrator – such as an assistant head, development director, admissions director, or chief financial officer – in an independent school.  An executive with an education-related association or other nonprofit organization who possesses the requisite experience sets and skills for the position.  A current or former government official in Northern New England whose career has included extensive interaction with independent schools.

**For more information, contact:**

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