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## Rhode Island's Elected Officials Prepare for Public Office

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### *Over 120 local officials attend virtual Newly Elected Leaders Orientation*

Smithfield, R.I. – In collaboration with the Hassenfeld Institute for Public Leadership at Bryant University, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns (League) and the Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC) hosted the Newly Elected Leaders Orientation on January 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The [virtual conference](#) provided over 120 municipal and school leaders the opportunity to learn essential skills, exchange ideas with peers and explore the unique challenges within public service. Attendees were from every corner of the state, representing municipal and school officials from all 39 cities and towns.

“In the midst of the global pandemic, the role of the Newly Elected Leaders Orientation is more timely than ever,” said **Gary Sasse, Founding Director of the Hassenfeld Institute**. “This year’s event, while digital, emphasizes crisis management to better prepare local leaders for the unique challenges of their upcoming term.”

“From the day they are sworn in, school committee members have decisions to make that have far reaching effects on students, teachers and municipal budgets. It is critically important that they have practical training on the most pressing issues and laws impacting them,” said **Timothy C. Duffy, Executive Director of the R.I. Association of School Committees**.

“Our public leaders are facing unique, pressing challenges this year due to COVID-19,” said **Brian Daniels, Executive Director of the R.I. League of Cities and Towns**. “This orientation provides new officials with legal and ethical training, and opportunities to analyze and solve local challenges with their peers. We are proud to partner with RIASC and the Hassenfeld Institute to prepare officials in local government with the skills needed to lead effectively on behalf of Rhode Island’s taxpayers.”

The [program](#) explored practical issues faced by municipal leaders, including financial oversight, roles and responsibilities, leadership, and conflicts of interest. The conference was led by top faculty from Bryant University and experienced public leaders with subject area expertise, such as the R.I. Office of Attorney General, R.I. Department of Revenue, and R.I. Ethics Commission.

This is the fifth biennial conference that the League and the RIASC have partnered with the Hassenfeld Institute to provide this training to new Rhode Island local officials.

**About the [Hassenfeld Institute](#):** The Hassenfeld Institute for Public Leadership provides public officials and others involved in the development, management, and execution of public policy

with the tools, skills, and knowledge necessary to make informed decisions and manage responsive organizations in order to lead effectively.

**About the [Rhode Island Association of School Committees \(RIASC\)](#):** RIASC is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing the effectiveness of RI School Committee members in meeting their role and responsibilities in promoting student achievement in safe and challenging learning environments, while playing a leading role in shaping and advocating public education policy at the local, state and national levels.

**About the [Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns](#):** Founded in 1968, the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns is a municipal membership organization that serves as the unified voice of local government in Rhode Island.

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