

J. LEAH McLEOD

Education Management Consultant

Leah is a senior consultant at ASPIRE Solutions Group (ASG), a management, board governance and grants development consulting firm. She is responsible for the leadership of ASPIRE Solutions Group and brings a wealth of experience in performance improvement, governance and K-12 education. She is also responsible for a wide range of projects such as start-up charter school development, performance improvement assessments, charter school renewal petitions, and an Executive Leadership Institute for nonprofit boards.

Leah works directly with her clients to implement ASG's *Six Principles of Excellence* for Performance Improvement (see chart below). These principles seek to establish a process for continuous improvement in charter school

performance management and developing a new generation of students capable of meeting the complex societal and business challenges of the 21st Century.



Leah used her extensive business and management background to chair the Founding Board of a public K-8 charter school in metro Atlanta. She managed all aspects of the charter petition development and implementation processes. The school was successfully opened with nearly 400 students. She remained as chair of the Governance Board through the school's first year of operations.

Prior to founding ASPIRE Solutions Group, she consulted as an HR Management specialist for Georgia State University's School of Social Work. She also served as Director of Operations at a community, economic and workforce development consulting firm.

Leah received her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Oglethorpe University and earned her master's degree in Business Administration from Emory University's Goizueta Business School.

Leah presented at both the Georgia and National Charter Schools Association conferences on *"How Top Talent Drives Success at Charter Schools."* She has also presented at the Atlanta Public Schools Charter Applicant Workshop on *"Planning and Operating Your Charter School."* She has been a Peer Reviewer for the Charter Schools Program (CSP) Implementation Grant Competition for both the U.S. and Georgia Departments of Education.

Leah was a trainee in the Georgia Leadership Education in Neuro-Development and Related Disabilities (LEND) program, an inter-disciplinary training program for future professionals, disability advocates, and family members. It operates out of the Center for Leadership in Disability at Georgia State University, in collaboration with the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine and the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Leah presented, via poster and guidebooks, on using Participatory Action Research (PAR) projects for developing Maternal Child Health (MCH) Bureau's leadership competencies at the Association of University Centers for Disabilities (AUCD) Conference. During the second year of the program, she developed a leadership framework for trainees to utilize and understand personal leadership—how to positively influence people and situations to create value and growth. The goal was for trainees to cultivate their personal leadership styles, demonstrate the relevance of MCH leadership competencies in advancing MCH goals, practice high-impact, authentic leadership in MCH professions and, personally thrive.