

Teach For America and Building Excellent Schools

TEACHFORAMERICA

Partners in charter school creation

To date, 25 Teach For America alumni have participated in the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship or lead a BES School.

As Teach For America alumni, you already possess the most important qualities found in effective urban school leaders—the relentless focus on results, the high expectations for all students, and the deep commitment to significant academic gains. The Building Excellent Schools Fellowship will build on what you already know in order to create a charter school of uncompromising academic excellence. Through a continuing partnership, Teach For America and Building Excellent Schools offer unique opportunities for alumni interested in charter school creation and leadership.



WHO ARE WE?

Building Excellent Schools is a national non-profit organization committed to dramatically improving the academic achievement of underserved students in urban areas. Through the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, we offer selected leaders a yearlong, full-time comprehensive training program in urban charter school creation and leadership. After the Fellowship, Building Excellent Schools Fellows receive additional support and coaching as they guide their schools successfully through start-up and early operation.

More than 40 percent of BES Fellows are Teach For America alumni.

WHAT DO WE OFFER?

Building Excellent Schools Fellowship

Get the Training: Through 85 training days, an extended leadership residency in a high-performing urban charter school, 20 to 30 school visits and structured work in your home territory, we teach you the essential practices to ensure your students succeed. The culmination of the Fellowship year is the submission of a well-written, thoroughly researched charter application that reflects the best practices in urban school design. BES Schools are free-standing, locally controlled, and independent of any management organization.

Take the Lead: You become the lead founder of a charter school in your proposed territory. You choose the community; you develop the board; you engage stakeholder support; you make critical design decisions when writing the application. Most importantly, you build an independently managed school that you will lead once it opens.

Get the Support: As a BES Fellow, your full-time job is to design, build, and lead your charter school. Building Excellent Schools invests more than \$500,000 in your success; \$250,000 of which covers your \$80,000 stipend and training in school leadership in school design, school culture, governance and operations. After your charter is approved, you are eligible for an additional \$250,000 in start up money. Building Excellent Schools supports your school through its opening and your planning year through Follow-On Support. The goal of Follow-On Support is to provide a combination of proactive and responsive supports that help Fellows conquer the many challenges encountered when opening a successful charter school. The mission remains the same: to ensure that Fellows are able to lead results-focused, mission-driven, high-achieving urban charter schools.

WHAT DO WE LOOK FOR IN OUR SCHOOL FOUNDERS AND LEADERS?

Our Fellows represent a range of professional experience including education, business, law, and public policy.

Our selection criteria aligns with the characteristics of the highest performing school leaders.

Building Excellent Schools Fellows have:

Absolute belief that academic achievement drives everything:

- » Leadership
- » School design
- » School culture
- » Governance

A track record of exceptional impact:

- » In their professional pursuits – business, law and/or education
- » In their communities

Building Excellent Schools Fellows are:

- » High-Capacity: Strong communicators, strategic thinkers, highly flexible and urgent
- » Relentless achievers: They get the job done, no matter what less Achievers
- » Humble: Always willing to learn
- » Demanding of themselves and others: Good is not good enough; only great will suffice

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

The BES Fellowship Application can be found and completed online at www.buildingexcellentschools.org.

Application Deadlines

- » **Priority deadline:** November 15, 2009
- » **Winter deadline:** February 15, 2010
- » **Spring deadline:** May 15, 2010

For support with your application, please contact your local Director of Alumni Affairs. To find your DAA, visit www.teachforamerica.org/alumni/ali/contact, or contact Jeana Marinelli on the national school leadership team at jeana.marinelli@teachforamerica.org.

LOOKING FOR OTHER PATHWAYS?

If you are not ready to design and build your own school, but are interested in pursuing instructional leadership positions in high performing, urban charter schools, Building Excellent Schools and Teach For America are working in strategic partnership to place aspiring alumni school leaders in BES Schools. To submit your name in consideration for an instructional leadership role, please email your resume and short cover letter including your geographic preferences to recruiting@buildingexcellentschools.org. All hiring decisions will be at the discretion of the schools' Executive Directors.



When I learned that Building Excellent Schools was expanding to St. Louis, I knew that I had to apply. I simply couldn't allow such an incredible opportunity and tremendous responsibility evade me. I was absolutely ecstatic to be accepted into the 2008 cohort.

—Deva Rashed-Boone, STL '04, Program Director '07-'08, Building Excellent Schools Fellow '08-'09

