

# Teach For America and Building Excellent Schools

TEACHFORAMERICA

Partners in charter school creation

**To date, 18 Teach For America alumni have participated in the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship or lead a Fellow-Founded 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 operations.

**More than half of the leaders in the 2008 cohort are Teach For America alumni.**

## WHAT DO WE OFFER?

### Building Excellent Schools Fellowship

**Get the Training:** Through 100 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. Schools founded by Building Excellent Schools Fellows 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 Building Excellent Schools 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 administration. More than 50 percent of the 2008 cohort are Teach For America alumni and 85 percent are people of color.

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

#### Building Excellent Schools Fellows have a(n):

Absolute belief that academic achievement drives everything:

- » Leadership
- » School Design
- » School Culture
- » Decisions
- » Governance

#### Track Record of Exceptional Impact:

- » in your professional pursuits – business, law and/or education
- » in your community

#### Building Excellent Schools Fellows are:

High-Capacity:

- » Strong Communicators
- » Strategic Thinkers
- » Highly Flexible and Urgent

Relentless Achievers

- » Get the job done no matter what

Humble

- » Always willing to learn

Demanding of Themselves and Others

- » Good is not good enough, only great will suffice

## HOW DO YOU APPLY?

We suggest completing our Introductory Fellowship Questionnaire prior to applying to the Fellowship. We also recommend speaking with a recruiter who can help you through the process - [recruiting@buildingexcellentschools.org](mailto:recruiting@buildingexcellentschools.org). Applications and Questionnaire can be found and completed online at [www.buildingexcellentschools.org](http://www.buildingexcellentschools.org).

### Application Deadlines

- » **Priority deadline:** December 15, 2008
- » **Winter deadline:** February 23, 2009
- » **Spring deadline:** May 11, 2009

## LOOKING FOR THE NEXT STEPS?

If you are not quite 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 Fellow-Founded Schools across the United States.

To submit your name in consideration for an instructional leadership role, please email your resume and short cover letter including your geographic preferences to Erin K. Elliott, Manager of Community Growth, at [eelliott@buildingexcellentschools.org](mailto:eelliott@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, St. Louis '04, Building Excellent Schools Fellow '08-'09

