



# BUILDING EXCELLENT SCHOOLS

# FELLOWSHIP

## START A SCHOOL



We live it, we breathe it, we know it—there is a crisis in urban education. Every day students in our nation’s urban centers are losing the opportunity to realize lives of choice and promise because of the failure of adults to educate them well. It is a sobering reality that in the midst of the second decade of a new millennium, demographics still may determine destiny. The crisis is real and it is obvious, but what do we do about it?

At Building Excellent Schools, a national non-profit organization, we see the crisis and choose to act with the pressing urgency the situation demands. We believe that all students are college bound—every one. We believe that dramatic student achievement in urban public schools is possible only within a highly structured, no excuses, results-oriented school culture in which leadership drives, communicates, and supports instructional expectations in every class, every day. At the head of each school is a mission-driven founder willing to do whatever it takes.



*“There is no word to describe the Fellowship other than intense. Every minute of every day matters.”*  
 2009 BES Fellow

## YOU ARE THE SOLUTION: START A SCHOOL AND CLOSE THE GAP

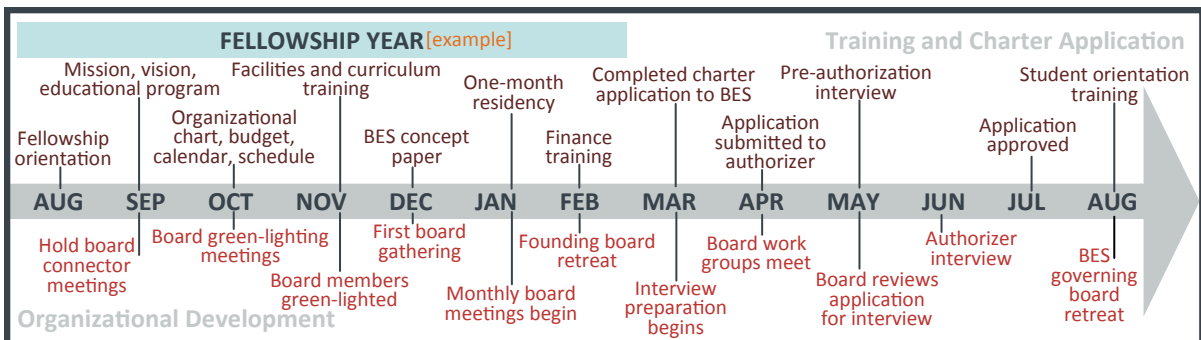
Building Excellent Schools (BES) is an acknowledged leader in the national charter school movement. For almost two decades, we have been committed to eliminating the academic achievement gap among students living in our nation’s urban areas. The Building Excellent Schools Fellowship is a year-long, full-time, comprehensive training program in charter school creation. Fellows are prepared and trained to design, found, and lead highly structured, no excuses urban charter schools of uncompromising excellence that meet the specific needs of under-performing students.

The key to the success of BES Schools is our belief that academic achievement drives every element of a school including design, leadership, culture, decisions, and governance.

### THE PROCESS

While the process of founding a charter school may be viewed over a period of several years, in the first 12 months of the program, Fellows receive a \$90,000 professional stipend and extensive training and support to focus on one goal—founding a high achieving, no excuses urban charter school that is independently managed. Fellows also have an extended residency in a high performing charter school, and ongoing coaching and support around board and charter application development. The culmination of the year is the submission of a well written, thoroughly researched charter application that reflects the best practices in urban school design.

Although the Fellowship is one year, we are committed to the success of BES Schools and continue to drive them during the subsequent years of start-up and operation with a combination of proactive guidance and responsive support and training in Follow-On Support and other programs.



## FELLOWSHIP TRAINING STRANDS

STRAND	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE TOPICS
<b>School Design</b>	Advanced analysis of essential design and leadership concepts	School Visits (25+), Accountability, Assessment, Teacher Development
<b>School Operations</b>	Detailed analysis of essential finance, accounting, and fundraising skills	Facility Finance, Staff Recruitment, Compensation, Fundraising
<b>Governance</b>	Comprehensive training in charter school board development and governance	Board Sourcing, Policies and By-Laws, Succession Planning, Officer Selection
<b>External Relationships</b>	Strategic training in community organizing and relationship development	Parent Involvement, Recruitment, Relationship Management, Public Relations
<b>Residency</b>	Month-long, on-site, hands-on training in general charter school leadership	Assessment Design, Teacher Coaching, Fund Development, Program Development



## SCHOOL DESIGN OF BES SCHOOLS

The ultimate value of the Fellowship rests in the content of its school design training, which uses 10 shared characteristics of every high performing urban charter school as its foundation.

Firm belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels	Clear, outcome-focused mission, understood by all
Highly visible leader, ensuring all are focused on the mission	Structured learning environment and organization
Strong discipline code enforced by all	Strong curriculum focus on skill mastery
Frequent internal assessments with data to drive instruction	Classroom practices promote continuity and predictability across classrooms
Clear and frequent communication with parents regarding student performance	Extended school day and school year

### YEAR 1 Fellowship Year

#### School Founding Progress

- Practice-based training including school design, operations, governance, external relationships and residency
- Build and lead founding board of trustees
- Write and submit charter application
- Charter approval (timeline varies per territory)

#### Fellow is Lead Founder of a proposed charter school:

- Practice-based training
- Weekly calls with BES staff
- Feedback and support on application
- Guide selection of board members
- Support navigating the charter authorization process and local community

#### Training and Support

### YEAR 2 Planning Year

- Transition from founding board to governing board of trustees
- Board hires Fellow as school leader
- Recruit and hire staff, write curriculum
- Recruit students through community outreach
- Secure facility for start-up years
- Create plan to acculturate students, families, and staff to school design

#### Fellow participates in BES Follow-On Support:

- Governing board transition retreat
- Budget reviews
- Student recruitment planning
- Curriculum and assessment planning
- Staff and student orientation planning
- Attend Weekend Warrior Series

### YEAR 3 First Year of Operation

- School doors open to founding cohort
- Lead staff, students, and families on the path to academic excellence
- Maintain sound governance through active work with board members
- Continue to hire staff, recruit students, and write curriculum in preparation for the second year of operation and beyond

#### Fellow participates in BES Follow-On Support:

- Hiring support including phone screens of teaching candidates
- BES staff conducts school audit: culture, instruction, operations
- Leadership coaching
- Assessment and long-term planning
- Staff attends Weekend Warrior Series

## WHO IS THE TYPICAL FELLOW?

BES Fellows share common beliefs far more than they share common experiences. Our Fellows represent a vast range of professional backgrounds including education, business, non-profit management, law, and public policy. Classroom teaching is not a pre-requisite for participation in the program. Building Excellent Schools is looking for high capacity individuals who are deeply committed to fundamentally changing urban education.

Can you successfully manage a multifaceted program, with parallel tracks and intersecting demands, and stay on top of everything? Can you demonstrate the true leadership necessary every day to get an idea off the ground, systematized, operationalized, and realized?



## SELECTION PROCESS

**APPLICATION AND RESUME REVIEW:** Review of each application will begin once all components, including resume and essays, have been successfully submitted via the BES website.

**APPLICANT PHONE INTERVIEWS:** Selected applicants will be invited to partake in a series of phone interviews.

**IN-PERSON INTERVIEW:** Selected applicants will be invited to Boston to participate in a rigorous in-person interview.

**REFERENCE CHECKS AND FELLOWSHIP INVITATIONS:** Invitations to the Fellowship are offered to selected applicants.

The BES Fellowship has proven to be an effective training ground for charter school founders. Unlike a graduate school program in business or education that requires its participants to pay a fee to receive support as they define and refine their interests, the Fellowship pays its carefully selected leaders a \$90,000 stipend to focus their determination, skills, and passion into putting what works with urban students into action at more and more schools across the country.



## NOMINATE A FELLOW

Visit our website to nominate an outstanding leader. BES offers a \$5,000 “finder’s fee” to eligible individuals, groups, and schools who nominate Fellow candidate applicants who then go on to successfully enroll in and complete the Fellowship.

## SPREAD THE WORD

Support our mission by spreading the word and mentioning Building Excellent Schools in conversation, newsletters, articles or meetings.

**APPLY NOW** [www.buildingexcellentschools.org](http://www.buildingexcellentschools.org)