

EDUCATION REFORM



GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENTIAL CENTER



The Alliance to Reform Education Leadership

Redefining School Leadership

AREL'S NINE PRINCIPAL PREPARATION COMPETENCIES

Toward its goal of redefining school leadership, the Bush Institute crafted a set of best practice standards to determine the high-quality and innovative approach necessary to affiliate with the AREL Network. Each of AREL's principal preparation programs have all committed to implementing the following standards:

1. Program Purpose

The program is designed for the express purpose of producing and placing school principals who dramatically improve student learning and sustain that improvement. While graduates of school leadership programs may also serve in other leadership capacities at the campus and district level, the focus of the AREL project is on preparing and empowering principals.

2. Competency Framework

All program components are organized around a competency framework based on research and evidence of effective practice that defines the set of skills, knowledge and dispositions in both instructional and operational domains that a principal must have to drive high levels of student achievement.

3. Recruitment

The program has a proactive, targeted recruitment strategy that attracts an expanded candidate pool with skills and dispositions aligned with the competency framework.

4. Candidate Selection

The program uses a rigorous selection process aligned to the competency framework that only admits those candidates who demonstrate the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to develop into effective school leaders.

5. Coursework

Program coursework is aligned to the competency framework and is highly experiential and applied, with candidates receiving frequent feedback and assessment about their performance and progress toward acquisition of the competencies.

6. Clinical Leadership Experiences

The program provides candidates leadership opportunities with real responsibilities for driving student achievement gains, leading adults, and performing an array of leadership functions with structured coaching or other mechanisms to support their reflection, practice and growth.

7. Post-Graduate Support

The program provides tailored support for placing graduates and ensuring their success during at least their first year as a school principal.

8. Context

The program partners with local school districts or other operators of schools to influence the conditions and level of decision-making authority necessary for the principal to successfully impact student achievement. Throughout this document the term "districts" should be interpreted to include all organizations that operate schools, including charter schools and private schools.

9. Evaluation

The program actively collects data to continuously improve its own performance and measure the effectiveness of its graduates.