America Achieves Fellowship for Teachers and Principals
Program Overview
March 2013

Across the country, teachers and principals are proving that all students can succeed at high levels when they are taught to high levels. These teachers and principals are committed to providing a great education for all, and are engaging in practices that create the necessary conditions for student success. The America Achieves Fellowship for Teachers and Principals exists in order to seek out and identify these outstanding educators and bring them together to share their knowledge and expertise with us, with one another and with policy makers; to capture and highlight their successes; and to inform the larger education debate so that many more students can benefit from their knowledge and expertise.

Our program provides Fellows a platform for sharing best practices, developing resources and tools, designing systems for scaling effective teaching and school leadership, and giving them voice in the national debate on education and policy.

The Teacher and Principal Fellows are a diverse group of educators from across the United States who are committed to improving academic outcomes for all students and strengthening their own professional learning and growth. Started in 2011 with an initial group of 45 teachers and principals, the Fellowship has expanded to 107 in 2012; accepting only 22% of applicants in 2012.

This highly-selective program brings together some of the country’s most effective teachers and principals to share ideas, engage thought leaders, develop skills, and advise policy makers on local, state and national education policies. For example, the current group of 107 fellows has met with U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Congressman George Miller, and Los Angeles Unified Superintendent John Deasy.

This fellowship is designed to leverage participants’ expertise to help other educators improve student outcomes and strengthen leadership and management at large scale across the education system. We do this through:

- **Skill building** – Fellows improve skills as educators, advisors, and public speakers through conferences, webinars, an online collaborative workspace, and one-one guidance to provide professional development, training, resources, feedback and support.

- **Targeted support** – Fellows undertake individual or group Impact Projects to influence practice, policy, and the public conversation. Based on their area of impact, Fellows receive training, connections, and guidance to maximize and capitalize on their ability to create change for students, schools, and communities.

- **Networks** – Fellows share and capitalize on the wealth of resources and experience within the Fellowship. The Fellowship also offers opportunities for Fellows to expand their networks of influence via introductions to policy makers and thought leaders across the country. Most importantly, Fellows provide advice and counsel to policy makers and leaders so that policy and reform follows the lead of the educators who are achieving outstanding gains with their own students and schools.
By the Numbers:

The Fellows

- 107 teachers and principals (81 teachers and 26 principals), all have proven records of improving student achievement in their classrooms and schools, solid leadership experiences, and a strong understanding of broader policy.
- Fellows hail from 29 different states and 50 districts, with Fellows representing all major US regions.
- The group is highly diverse with regards to ethnicity, age, and years of experience. Teachers have experience in a variety of classroom contexts—from kindergarten to high school chemistry and art. They hold a variety of leadership posts—from math chair to union representative.

Accomplishments

- As a group, the Fellows have had candid discussions with national leaders including Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, US Representative George Miller, Governor John Hickenlooper, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, DC Chancellor Kaya Henderson, LA Superintendent John Deasy, and others.
- Fellows have played a crucial role in three of NBC's nationally televised Education Nation summits.
- Two Fellows are members of the Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council, which is a three year commitment to directly advise the Gates Foundation policy.
- Many Fellows serve on district and state committees and commissions that drive change in their communities.

The Fellows’ Work

Fellows influence policy, practice and the public conversation by:

- Serving as leaders on key committees and groups to advise mayors, districts, states, counties, charter management organizations, the Department of Education, nonprofits and foundations on topics such as teacher evaluation and compensation, city-county school system mergers, Race to the Top applications, pre-kindergarten expansion, providing wrap-around services in schools, community engagement, and creating teacher leadership opportunities.
- Demonstrating the “shifts” in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to the public on the America Achieves Common Core Website (commoncore.americaachieves.org).
- Identifying, completing, and partnering on an Impact Project to create substantial evidence of positive change at the school, network, district, state, and national levels.
- Attending convenings as an entire group, participating in an additional in-person meeting on the topic of their Impact Project, and engaging in webinars on subjects related to their work.

America Achieves

America Achieves is a non-profit organization, established in 2011, devoted to making America a global leader in educational excellence and equity and to preparing every student for citizenship, college and careers. We distill lessons learned from leaders, educators, schools, and organizations with strong track records of success to promote larger-scale change and improvement in education through a blend of policy, people, and practices. We aim to support the creation of "proof points" of large-scale success and improvement in specific states and communities – including through dialogue and cooperation among diverse leaders, groups and individuals who share a common interest in dramatically improving educational results.