



PHILADELPHIA
ACADEMY
OF SCHOOL
LEADERS

SELECTION PROCESS
OVERVIEW

1. Online
Application

2. In Person
Interview and
Instructional
Written
Exercise

3. School Visit
(If Applicable)

4. Data
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Checks

5. Final
Determination

Neubauer Fellowship in Educational Leadership Selection Process Overview

The selection process for the Neubauer Fellowship in Educational Leadership identifies accomplished principals across Philadelphia's district, charter, and faith-based schools who are poised to take their leadership skills and their schools to the next level. The Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders (*School Leaders*) has designed the process to gather information and evidence about participants' skills in:

- Establishing and maintaining a school-wide vision for well-managed classrooms that incorporates an ongoing drive for growth and improvement;
- Creating a school culture that develops, supports and engages staff, recognizes strong instructional practices and methods, and focuses on patterns of student achievement and growth;
- Efficiently managing school operations and communications with staff, students, and parents; and
- Nurturing a safe, supportive environment for students characterized by high expectations.

In addition to the skills outlined above, the selection process is also designed to identify candidates who are deeply committed to Philadelphia's schoolchildren and to their own leadership development.

STAGES OF THE PROCESS

In order to ensure that candidates have ample opportunities to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and mindsets, *School Leaders* developed a multi-stage and varied set of activities for the selection process, each one designed to gather evidence in specific areas. Proprietary rubrics evaluate and score each step of the Neubauer Fellowship application process:

1. Online Application

In addition to basic professional information, the online application asks candidates to address aspects of leadership, such as:

- Defining their role as a school leader
- Providing specific examples, with supporting evidence, of steps they have taken to
 - increase student achievement
 - enhance teachers' ability to provide high-quality instruction to students
 - nurture a safe, supportive environment for all students
 - define and address priority areas for school improvement
- Identifying the unique skills and qualities they would bring to the Fellowship and areas for their potential growth

Requested application supporting documents include a professional resume, three professional references and a writing sample. Applications are screened completely anonymously by education experts outside of Philadelphia to ensure that each candidate is evaluated on solely the evidence he/she provides. Answers are evaluated on standards of consistency, completeness and clarity, and on the quality of supporting data and evidence. Each application is scored by at least two screeners—a third scorer is added if the two screeners' evaluations diverge significantly.

2. Interview Day

During the interview day candidates participate in an hour-long interview with two *School Leaders* representatives and complete an instructional written exercise. The interview consists of several open-ended questions and an opportunity at the end for the applicant to add comments and ask questions. Interviewers take notes and

Neubauer Fellowship in Educational Leadership

Since 2015, the Neubauer Fellowship in Educational Leadership, the flagship program of the Philadelphia Academy of School Leaders, has identified our city's most accomplished and promising district, charter, and faith-based school leaders and provided them with a transformative leadership development experience that deepens their impact as collaborative, entrepreneurial principals with a vision for results. The Fellowship curriculum focuses on:

- *Developing outstanding managerial skills*
- *Strengthening teacher development and retention*
- *Applying entrepreneurial approaches*
- *Leading with a focus on results that matter like student achievement and graduation rates*

Fellows receive best-in-class leadership development, build deep relationships with a cohort of exceptional educators, and are treated like the important leaders they are. Fellows acquire the skills and resource networks to make a greater impact not only on their own schools, but on the larger education community in Philadelphia.

score each question on a rubric. Evaluations are based on the applicant's ability to provide detailed responses with evidence, communicate clearly, and demonstrate a commitment to personal growth and school leadership development.

Immediately following the interview, the candidate independently views a video of a teacher interacting with a classroom (candidates are able to select either an elementary, a middle school, or a high school lesson). The applicant then responds to several questions in writing, identifying instructional strengths and weaknesses and how those issues would be addressed with the teacher.

Assessments of the written exercises are conducted anonymously and are based on the candidate's demonstrated ability to identify effective instructional practices, identify high-impact improvement areas, and develop next steps to improve teacher effectiveness. Responses are rated on a scale from limited, developing, proficient, and strong.

3. School Visit

If, after the interview day, the *School Leaders* team believes more information about a candidate is needed, a visit is scheduled to the principal's school. (Other candidates move directly to the data and reference check stage.) During a 90-minute visit to the applicant's school, *School Leaders* representatives look for examples and evidence of how the principal's leadership has impacted instruction and the climate/culture of the school. Representatives gather evidence about the principal's skills in:

- Creating a school culture that develops and engages staff and is focused on student achievement;
- Identifying exemplary instructional practices; and
- Nurturing a safe, supportive environment for students characterized by high expectations.

The tour begins in the principal's office, includes observations of several classes and common areas, and ends with a debrief with the principal.

4. Data Review and Reference Checks

During the data review stage, *School Leaders* staff examines School Progress Reports and other school data sources. In addition, representatives conduct reference checks with supervisors and colleagues.

5. Final Determination

Final determinations are made by examining all the information and assessments that have been collected throughout the selection process. Through a holistic process of reviewing all selection process data, *School Leaders* identifies the candidates who consistently demonstrate that they have the skills and mindsets required to push their leadership and their schools to even higher levels of performance. Those candidates are consequently invited to participate in the Neubauer Fellowship in Educational Leadership.