

Accelerate

An elite national corps of new school principals uniquely qualified to accelerate student achievement, attacking the problem of underperforming charter schools. Accelerate identifies the highest-potential leaders from among the ranks of urban educators across the U.S. and transforms them into achievement-accelerating principals.

The two-year program includes:

Paid fellowship as “Ryan Fellows” to develop expertise in achievement-accelerating management capabilities.

- **Summer Institute.** 4-week course of study on Achievement Acceleration Management, in partnership with Northwestern University’s top-ranked Kellogg School of Management.
- **Residency.** Semester-long leadership internship under the tutelage of an achievement accelerating principal in a high-performing charter school.

Guidance and support during start-up school planning and launch.

- **Transition to Leadership.** Guidance in development of an achievement acceleration management plan specific to the new school a Fellow has been hired to lead.
- **School Launch.** Support and assessment of achievement acceleration management throughout the start-up school year.

Ryan Fellowship

The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Foundation has announced an initial commitment of \$5 million dollars to support Accelerate’s mission.

Built on the success and principles of the Alain Locke Initiative

The Alain Locke Initiative has a history of success in charter school leadership and management. The Alain Locke Charter School holds the record for #1 test score gains in Chicago and has been recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Ed. as 1 of 7 schools nationwide best “Closing the Achievement Gap.” Alain Locke has worked with other charter schools to develop achievement accelerating management capabilities for their principals, resulting in an average +32% growth in student achievement in the start-up year.

Without capable leaders, the promise of big ideas goes unfulfilled. In urban education, the consequences are too important to ignore.

For more information and to apply or nominate a candidate please visit:

<http://www.alainlocke.org/programs/accelerate>, or contact:

Elaine Berndes, Managing Director, School Leadership Programs
eberndes@alainlocke.org, 312-491-9100 x218



Nominate an Accelerate Candidate

Identifying high-potential future leaders is the first step in building an elite national corps of new school principals uniquely qualified to accelerate student achievement, attacking the problem of underperforming charter schools.

Please fill out the form below as a basic overview of the candidate you recommend.
A member of the Accelerate team will contact the candidate for additional information.

Nominee: The person you would like to nominate

First Name _____

Middle Name _____

Last Name _____

Email Address _____

Preferred Phone _____

Current Position _____

Preferred Program City _____

City _____

Years of Professional Experience _____

Years of Teaching Experience _____

Nominator

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Email Address _____

School/Organization _____

Relationship to Nominee _____

Why do you think this person would make a strong charter school leader? _____

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What People Are Saying About the Alain Locke Initiative

**Without capable leaders, the promise of big ideas goes unfulfilled.
In urban education, the consequences are too important to ignore.**

“My school achieved phenomenal success as the top-performing start-up school in the state of California, with 100% teacher retention. To open a new school, there’s so much you need to know that doesn’t necessarily flow from being a good teacher. Applying tools from business and marketing made a ton of sense to me.”

Melissa McGonagle, Principal, Rocketship Sí Se Puede Academy

“I commend the Alain Locke Initiative for undertaking this innovative initiative to increase and support talented school leaders who can help the charter community better serve the interest of our nation’s children. This is an area of critical need that must be filled.”

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

“Without going through this process, I would have walked into the school and been devastated. The program helped me to develop a strategic plan so I knew where I was going and the staff knew exactly what was expected of them. The best part is that everyone, including me, is being held accountable to what we have set forth. And we have the mentoring and support to ensure that we can succeed.”

Robin Johnson, Principal, LEARN Excel Charter School

“My new principals develop a laser-like focus on what they need to achieve and how to execute a plan. They establish academic and cultural goals for their schools while mapping out specific strategies to make their schools a success. They move beyond to-do lists to develop disciplined plans structured around accountability.”

Greg White, CEO, LEARN Charter School Network

“The experience opened my eyes to so many things: the importance of creating a strong school culture, choosing a staff with a shared vision, focusing on the long term vs. putting out day-to-day fires. What I learned helped me with a major school turnaround: my school achieved one of the most-improved test score results in the state, and was the number-one achiever my charter school network.”

Anik Zampini, Former Principal,
Donald J. Marquez School,
UNO Charter School Network



Accelerate Selection Criteria

Uncommon Vision

- **Possesses vision beyond the commonplace**
- **Is unwavering in vision of what is possible**
- **Works with passion, has a can-do attitude and a zeal that is contagious**
- **Communicates unique vision**
 - Communicates clearly and simply and is repetitive and illustrative when necessary
 - Communicates vision convincingly and invests others
 - Explains ideas, visions and concepts until the uninitiated understand
 - Creates a picture which others can visualize and strive for
 - Refines articulation of own vision to get others' endorsement
- **Recognizes the importance of team in realizing the vision**
 - Recognizes talent and surrounds self with bright individuals
 - Finds others' talents inspiring, not intimidating
 - Influences key decision makers

Relentless Focus

- **Approaches undertakings with a single-mindedness**
- **Knows exactly where to go and how to get there**
- **Prevents the urgent from eclipsing the important**
- **Possesses professional drive and is tenacious and goal-oriented**

Disciplined Execution

- **Is strategic, tactical and opportunistic**
 - Develops a consistent, simple strategy and tactics related to the few key predictors of success
 - Adjusts tactics quickly and decisively depending on outcomes
 - Recognizes unexpected opportunity and seizes it
- **Is confident in taking risks**
 - Possesses assuredness in vision, providing confidence in risk-taking to accomplish goals
 - Recognizes continued success requires assuming ever-increasing risk
- **Engages in the enterprise at all levels in every aspect**
 - Closely guides team members to develop within them a consistent application of the leader's vision
 - Possesses expertise to guide curriculum and develop mastery in others' instructional delivery

Note:

Minimal eligibility requirements for charter school administration vary from state to state. Please consult state boards of education or call Elaine Berndes 312-491-9100 x218 for more information.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is Accelerate?

Accelerate, is a rigorous, two-year journey that identifies an elite national corps of the highest potential school leaders from among the ranks of urban teachers across the U.S. and transforms them into achievement-accelerating principals destined to making a difference.

Created by the Alain Locke Initiative, Accelerate directly attacks the issue of underperforming charter schools by addressing the single largest factor as to why those schools fail: a lack of qualified leadership. Candidates chosen for Accelerate join a national corps of principals who have the personal vision, drive and skills to transform underperforming charter schools.

Why principals for charter schools?

Charter schools have severely underperformed against their promise. What is needed: school leaders who can hit the ground running – a national corps of the superior principals who can rapidly achieve academic success.

By definition, charter schools offer flexibility and autonomy not currently possible in most traditional district schools. These unique attributes enable charter school principals to realize an uncommon vision, focus solely on critical drivers of success and implement cutting-edge strategies in the interest of accelerated student achievement.

How long is Accelerate?

Two years. In year one, participants attend a Summer Institute at the Northwestern University's top-ranked Kellogg School of Management. This is followed by a six-month residency at a high-achieving charter school. Accelerate staff then work with the participants to secure and begin a position as a principal in an urban charter school. Accelerate principals work in collaboration with our staff and their employer to develop their strategic plan and receive one year support to ensure implementation.

Where is Accelerate located?

Participants in Accelerate attend summer courses at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. The residency takes place in the city where the Accelerate participant would like to lead a charter school. In 2011, Accelerate is piloting the program in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, Chicago, New York and Newark. Accelerate staff is located at the Alain Locke Initiative headquarters in Chicago, Illinois.

Who can apply?

Applicants who are outstanding educators with a minimum of 3 years in the classroom and have a track record of leadership and achievement in urban schools are encouraged to apply. Because each state has varying requirements for charter school administration, please confirm with state boards of education that the following applies:

In California:

- A minimum of 3 years of full-time experience teaching in a K-12 classroom at an accredited school
- A bachelor's degree

In Illinois:

- A minimum of 3 years of full-time experience teaching in a K-12 classroom at an accredited school
- A bachelor's degree

In New Jersey:

- A bachelor's degree
- A master's degree
- A teaching certificate
- A minimum of 5 years of full-time experience teaching in a K-12 classroom
- Provisional Administration Certification

In New York:

- A bachelor's degree
- A master's degree
- A teaching certificate
- A minimum of 3 years of full-time experience teaching in a K-12 classroom

How many people are accepted?

Up to 15 participants in the class to begin in July 2011.

