**School System Leadership Fellowship**

## Overview

Teach For America launched the School Systems Leaders Fellowship (SSLF) in the fall of 2013. SSLF is a yearlong residency-based leadership development program for alumni committed to taking on leadership within school systems. The Fellowship’s goal is to prepare Fellows to become superintendents and cabinet level leaders (e.g., Chief Academic Officer) within 2-3 years of completing the Fellowship.

## Partner Teach For America

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**Role** Staff Member

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## Type of Breakthrough Participant & Alumni Impact

## Detailed Description

The demand for more courageous systems leaders is urgent. In 2012 alone, Teach For America received more than 150 requests from cities and states across the country to help fill senior leadership roles within their school systems. We expect that this demand will grow at a rapid pace: according to a 2010 survey of our nation’s superintendents, only 51% anticipate remaining in their roles until 2015. Teach For America partnered with Bain to do additional research on meeting this demand and they recommended the creation of the School Systems Leaders Fellowship.

The first cohort – 12 alumni (66% alumni of color) – began their roles in July 2013 and officially completed the Fellowship in July 2014. As a part of the Fellowship, they each worked in senior roles in traditional public school districts (full-time, paid positions), partnered with an executive coach (via Minds At Work, founded by faculty at the Harvard Graduate School of Education), and participated in seven cohort seminars across the country for in-depth study of district improvement strategy.

Upon completion of the Fellowship, our goal is that Fellows will have made significant growth in the leadership skills and traits required to effect transformational change in senior roles in school systems. Skills are aligned with each component of the Fellowship – district placement, executive coaching, cohort seminars, and talent matching.

You can visit our website to learn more about the Fellowship at: <http://www.onedayallkids.org/awards-fellowships/school-systems-leaders-fellowship>

**Evidence of Impact**  
We just completed the first year of the program and have launched the second cohort of the Fellowship.

## High demand: There is strong interest from our alumni in pursuing school systems leadership. We have received applications from approximately 300 alumni who wish to participate in the Fellowship as a means to becoming a senior district leader.

## Strong results: Our first cohort are performing exceedingly well in their district roles, taking advantage of every opportunity for learning we put in front of them via cohort seminars and beyond, and leveraging the executive coaching to focus on their individual leadership development needs. Three fellows have already moved into cabinet level roles: Nancy Hanks – Chief of Schools, Madison Public Schools, WI; David Hardy, Deputy Superintendent of Academics, St. Louis Public Schools, MO; and Bill Murphy – Chief of Schools, New Orleans College Prep, LA.