

# 2025 BES Fellowship for Founding School Leaders - Tennessee

## Fellowship for Founding School Leaders - Tennessee

BES seeks a Fellow for our Fellowship program starting in August 2025 to serve as a Founding School Leader in Tennessee. This Fellowship offers highly motivated leaders committed to transforming education the rigorous, multi-year training needed to design, found, and lead a high-achieving school that meets the unique needs of its community.

BES welcomes applicants from any Tennessee region favorable for new public charter schools and aligned with authorizer priorities, with particular interest in leaders aiming to found schools in the Knoxville, Nashville (outside the city limits), or Chattanooga metropolitan areas.

### Who We Are

Strong schools are built by strong leaders, which is why BES identifies and prepares exceptional individuals to transform education in their communities. From school founders and executive directors to operations leaders, deans, and curriculum directors, we train leaders to build schools, to ensure their schools excel, and to sustain their results over time.

The BES Fellowship and selection process fosters an equitable, inclusive, and empowering experience for Fellows. For over two decades, 120+ BES Fellows have created more than 71,000 quality school seats nationwide, with BES-trained leaders consistently driving student achievement beyond district and state averages and helping to close the opportunity gap.

### What You'll Do

The BES Fellowship for Founding School Leaders includes one year of training followed by three years of Follow On Support to support leaders in building a high-performing, locally responsive school. For a comprehensive description of our Fellowship, please visit [our website](#). An overview is provided below.

Fellows in Tennessee begin with an intensive training year, where they engage in over 300 hours of coursework on school design, leadership, governance, and community engagement, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion. Fellows also conduct in-depth studies of effective schools across the nation and complete residencies at high-performing schools, all while developing a charter application and establishing a founding board.

In year two, the planning year, Fellows partner with a BES coach to refine their project management and leadership skills, hire founding staff, recruit students, and solidify their school vision. This dedicated coaching, known as Follow On Support, helps Fellows bridge the transition from founder to school leader, preparing them to launch a strong, sustainable school. During years three and four, the first two operational years, leaders put their vision into action, welcoming their inaugural class, coaching teachers, and using data to drive academic success. By the second year of operation, they deepen the academic focus, serving a growing population of students, and build leadership capacity to support future growth, all while fostering an empowered, mission-aligned team.

## What You Bring

- **The ability to lead, manage and motivate:** You have demonstrated the ability to lead and manage a team towards results, and you are committed to serving as a school leader in the community for at least 10 years.
- **Self awareness and humility:** You possess a growth mindset and have a continuous desire to improve. You are eager to give, take, and implement feedback with humility and in real time.
- **Commitment to community:** You have experience in the community you are proposing for your school and bring strong organizational partnerships. You can articulate how you will gain and factor in community input.
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion in action:** Your school model will primarily serve students from under-sourced communities and bring an anti-racist lens to the work. You have had success with similar populations of students and been responsive to community needs.
- **Commitment to excellence for all students:** You have a clear vision for your school and can discuss key elements of the school in a detailed, compelling, and direct manner. You hold yourself accountable for results and believe that all students can achieve at high levels.

## Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree required; Master's or Professional degree preferred
- Minimum 8 years of professional experience, with instructional or instructional leadership experience required
- At least 2 years managing and supervising adults in a PreK-12 setting required, 2 years of school leadership experience preferred

- Commitment to serving as a school leader in the proposed community for at least 10 years required
- Ability to establish and activate local connections to support school enrollment
- Strong preference for candidates with 2-3 years of experience living or working in the proposed school region, especially those with strong ties to the community
- Clear, compelling rationale for the proposed school location

### **Compensation and Benefits**

- This is a contract role with a \$100,000+ grant during the first year of the program (the Fellowship training year)
- Health reimbursements available
- Travel and accommodations for training and during school study travel
- Technology support
- Reimbursement for up to \$5,000 in moving expenses
- Up to \$3,500 reimbursed for school design expenses for Build Fellows
- The opportunity to apply for BES start-up fund awards and/or those provided exclusively to Fellows by our partners

### **To Apply**

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible in order to secure limited spots in our available regions. Our regular deadline is February 17, 2025. We encourage you to [connect with our team](#) if you have questions about the Fellowship or selection process before you apply. Apply here: <https://grnh.se/04558d7d7us>