

Balanced Leadership Academy

There's no denying it: School leaders have a challenging job. Balancing the needs of students, teachers, parents and community stakeholders requires skill, courage and finesse. Your leadership can mean the difference between a student body that is achieving and one that is not.

School administrators often feel stretched in many directions. The Balanced Leadership Academy will help you strike the right balance and concentrate on key areas where your leadership can impact your school community.

What is the Balanced Leadership Academy?

The Balanced Leadership Academy is a series of five professional development sessions designed to help school administrators learn and apply effective leadership practices. It focuses on 21 key leadership responsibilities identified in research compiled by McRel. The program combines proven research with practical applications. School administrators will leave the program with the skills of knowing how to lead, why leadership is so important, and when it's critical to provide effective leadership.

This academy is a joint effort of the School Administrators of South Dakota, South Dakota Department of Education, McRel, and North Central Comprehensive Center.

Who should apply?

The Balanced Leadership Academy is designed for public school superintendents and principals. The 2008 cohort is limited to 40 superintendents and 40 principals. Participants will be asked to commit to attend all five sessions. Anyone interested in becoming a trainer in the Balanced Leadership Academy - for future cohorts - should contact School Administrators immediately.

What are the 21 responsibilities of a school leader as identified by McRel?

- Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation
- Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines
- Protects teachers from issues that would detract from their teaching time or focus
- Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for successful execution of their jobs
- Directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment practices
- Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention
- Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction and assessment practices
- Has quality contact and interactions with teachers and students
- Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments
- Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students
- Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders
- Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies
- Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures
- Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff
- Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo
- Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations
- Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling
- Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning
- Adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent
- Is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems
- Ensures faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture

Tell me more about the five sessions.

Session 1 provides participants with an overview of McRel's research related to balanced leadership and guidelines to developing a purposeful community. The overview focuses on six major research findings. Participants gain knowledge and skills to improve their leadership practices in each of these areas.

In **Session 2, Developing a Purposeful Community**, participants engage in a variety of hands-on learning experiences that help school leaders use existing assets to produce outcomes that matter to all community members.

Session 3, Managing Change, is designed to increase an administrator's knowledge and skills in initiating, monitoring and leading change effectively.

In **Session 4, Choosing the Right Focus**, participants examine research-based classroom practices, school practices and leadership responsibilities that are positively associated with high levels of student achievement.

Session 5 is a culmination of the first four sessions. It brings principals and superintendents together to discuss how to leverage their leadership abilities.

How much time will this take?

During the summer of 2008, two cohorts will begin the Balanced Leadership Academy. The first cohort is made up of public school principals at the elementary, middle and high school levels. The timeline for the one-year academy is as follows:

1st Cohort

June 23-27, 2008, Sioux Falls

- Session 1 - Overview (2 days)
- Session 2 - Purposeful Community (2 days)

Fall 2008

- Session 3 - Managing Change (2 days)

Spring 2009

- Session 4 - Choosing the Right Focus (2 days)

Summer 2009

- Session 5 - Leveraging Leadership (1 day)

The second cohort is made up of public school superintendents. The timeline for the one-year academy is as follows:

2nd Cohort

June 23-27, 2008, Sioux Falls

- Session 1 - Overview (2 days)
- Session 2 - Purposeful Community (2 days)

Fall 2008

- Session 3 - Managing Change (1 day)

Spring 2009

- Session 4 - Choosing the Right Focus (1 day)

Summer 2009

- Session 5 - Leveraging Leadership (1 day)

What is the cost?

Cost of the academy is \$250 total for all five sessions. Trainers, materials, facilities and some meals will be provided by the sponsors. Lodging, travel and some meals will be the responsibility of the school districts.

Is credit available?

Yes, graduate credit will be available to all cohort participants. The details are being worked out.

For more information

Visit School Administrators of South Dakota Web site at www.sasd.org for more information or to apply to become part of a Balanced Leadership Academy cohort. Questions can be directed to John Pedersen, School Administrators, at (605) 773-2525 or john.pedersen@sasd.org.