Grant Proposal: Aspiring Administrators’ Academy: Educating the Catholic School Leaders of Tomorrow

Introduction

According to the “effective schools” research, students are able to reach their full potential when there is strong leadership coming from the teachers themselves and the administration. Instructional leadership is one of the seven correlates to student achievement that that were identified by the “effective schools” research. The correlates are the basis for allowing all students to receive the same equal, highly effective education. The Instructional leadership correlate indicates that principals and other administrators should act as instructional leaders and communicate their vision and goals to the staff, parents, and students.

More recently, the research organization, McREL completed a study which investigated superintendents’ and other administrators’ leadership skills and the correlation with student achievement. According to this study, there is a strong, positive correlation between the effectiveness of principals, superintendents and other administrators and student achievement. (Walters, Marzano. 2006)

Information from the effective schools research and the study conducted by McREL illustrates the point of this grant proposal. When school leaders such as principals, superintendents and other administrators are effective at carrying out their various duties, student achievement rises.

The Need

The value of Catholic schools is well-documented. Respected educational scholars and researchers such as, James Coleman, Thomas Sergiovanni and others have documented the effectiveness of Catholic schools. In addition, the “effective schools” research indicates that the variable that most consistently correlates with effective schools is the presence of strong leadership. However, since Catholic schools are privately funded, they do not always have the financial resources to attract the most credentialed teachers and administrators. Therefore, a significant number of Catholic school teachers and administrators are not State certified. Even though Catholic school students routinely out-achieve their public school counterparts largely because of the high quality teaching present in these schools, there is reason to believe that the achievement rate of the students would be even higher if every Catholic school teacher and administrator were State certified. Therefore the primary goal of this grant proposal is to provide a high quality, affordable and accessible State certification program for Catholic school leaders and aspiring leaders in the form of an Aspiring Administrators’ Academy (AAA).

Saint Joseph’s University

Saint Joseph’s University’s Educational Unit is dedicated to preparing exemplary teacher, educational leaders, and educational researchers. The department seeks to promote a vibrant intellectual community, recognized for preparing reflective educators and leaders
committed to social justice, Catholic values and democratic principles; acknowledged for quality under graduate and graduate teaching research, and scholarly contributions that enhance educational theory and practice in teacher education, educational leadership, special education, and related disciplines; known for leadership and other educational opportunities; and established to contribute outstanding professional service and outreach.

The Center for Catholic Urban Education

The Center for Catholic Urban Education is a division of the Educational Leadership Institute of Saint Joseph’s University. The Center is dedicated to the ongoing existence and sustainability of Catholic schools in urban areas, with the belief that these schools offer an essential option for families committed to a values-based, quality education for their children.

The Program

The Department of Educational Leadership and the Center for Catholic Urban Education at Saint Joseph’s University offer an online Master of Science degree in Catholic School Leadership. The MS in Catholic School Leadership requires 36 online graduate credits, and results in the attainment of Pennsylvania Principal and Curriculum Supervisor certifications provided the candidate already has an Instructional I certificate.

The following courses are required to complete the program:

EDL 600 The Catholic School Educational Leaders as Researcher and Reflective Practitioner (3 credits)
EDL 655 Interpersonal Relations for the Catholic School Leader (3 credits)
EDL 660 Measurement and Evaluation of Instructional Outcomes (3 credits)
EDL 665 Administration, Organizational Culture, and Planned Change in Catholic Schools (3 credits)
EDL 670 Educational Leadership and Human Resource Development in Catholic Schools (3 credits)
EDL 675 Curriculum Development and Practice in Public, Private and Catholic Schools (3 credits)
EDL 680 Law and American Education (3 credits)
EDL 685 Seminar in Administration of Curriculum and Instruction in Catholic Schools (3 credits)
EDL 690 Managing Financial and Material Resources in Catholic Schools (3 credits)
SPE 620 Fundamentals of Special Education Practices for Catholic school Leaders (3 credits)
EDL 695, 696, 697 Advanced Fieldwork/Seminar I, II, III, (2 credits each)

Application Requirements
In addition to the following admission requirements, the candidate must be recommended for the program by the sponsoring diocese or its designee:

- A completed SJU graduate application
- Official transcripts of undergraduate/graduate coursework
- 3.0 GPA in undergraduate work
- A valid teaching certificate (not required if not seeking a principal/supervisor certificate)
- Five years teaching experience (not required if not seeking a principal/supervisor certificate)
- Two letters of recommendation, one being from a diocesan official

**Budget Highlights**

- Cohort of 15 students
- $515 per credit
- 36-credit program = $18,540 per student
- 15 cohort members = $278,100 over three years

**Contact information:**

Dr. Robert Palestini

Executive Director, Center for Catholic Urban Education

rpalesti@sju.edu

Saint Joseph’s University

5600 City Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19131

610-660-1288 (o)

610-660-2950 (f)