



**Beat the Odds School Leadership Academy in Partnership with the
National Institute on School Leadership**

**Quarterly Grant Report (Final Report)
Prepared for the Office of the Governor
June 2018**

Grant Project Overview

Research has shown that there can be no great schools without great school leaders. Since 2007, the Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) has provided training and mentoring to more than 200 school leaders through the BTO principal program. With strong support from Governor Ducey through his Great Schools, Great Leaders initiative and matching investments from Helios Education Foundation and the Burton Family Foundation, CFA significantly expanded its commitment to leadership development through a collaboration with the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) to create the Beat the Odds (BTO) School Leadership Academy in 2017.

The BTO Academy is a locally delivered, research-based executive leadership training for aspiring and current school leaders across Arizona. The BTO Academy provides executive leadership training to school leaders across the state by integrating the original BTO principal mentorship model with the National Institute for School Leadership's (NISL) nationally recognized and research-based principal leadership development program.

Aligned with the goals of the Arizona Education Progress Meter and Achieve60AZ, the BTO Academy serves three important functions for Arizona's education system: (1) prepares school leaders to lead for excellence and equity; (2) closes student achievement gaps and creates a culture of high expectations; (3) enhances teacher recruitment, retention, and quality.

The NISL Executive Development Program is the curriculum for the BTO Academy and is proven to impact student achievement for all learners. The NISL curriculum consists of (12) two-day units, delivered locally in a cohort format over the course of 12-15 months, supplemented with online coursework, readings, and job-embedded application of key concepts. The NISL curriculum is delivered with fidelity by BTO Academy trainers who are proven Arizona education leaders, recognized in the field, and nationally NISL certified.

With the investment from the Governor's Office of Education in the form of a \$250,000 grant, CFA expanded the number of Arizona school leaders trained through the BTO Academy. The funds

invested by the Office of the Governor were leveraged by private investment from philanthropy to support the critical transition and capacity building of the BTO School Leadership Academy to deliver training to school leaders throughout the state.

The funds invested by the Office of the Governor were specifically used to provide the NISL Executive Development curriculum to 50 school leaders participating in the BTO School Leadership Academy.

Grant Project Outcomes

(Services Rendered in Accordance with the Governor's Office of Education Grant Agreement)

CFA successfully met the intended outcomes for the grant project, which were to (1) expand the number of school leaders trained through the BTO School Leadership Academy, with a focus on low-to moderate-income schools/school districts as well as LEA's with a high population of Latino students and (2) establish the BTO academy as a financially sustainable fee-based program able to meet the needs of school leaders across the state.

- During the course of the grant project, 50 school leaders enrolled in the BTO School Leadership Academy and received the NISL Executive Development Program curriculum. Training is still underway. The participants are from the following school districts: Phoenix Union High School District, Alhambra Elementary School District, Roosevelt Elementary School District, Tolleson Elementary School District, Mesa Public Schools, and Paradise Valley Unified School District. The majority of the leaders participating in the BTO Academy lead schools that serve predominantly low-income and Latino student populations. Upon successful completion of the BTO Academy, each of these school leaders will receive a nationally-recognized NISL Executive Development Program certificate of completion.
- CFA established the BTO Academy as a financially sustainable fee-based program. Phoenix Union High School District and Mesa Public Schools have indicated they will invest in multiple BTO Academy cohorts as part of a long-term leadership development strategy. Phoenix Union High School District is investing in a second cohort to begin in fall of the 2018-19 academic year. The cohort will also include school leaders from Phoenix Union High School District partner K-8 districts and charter schools. Mesa Public Schools is planning to invest in a second cohort that will begin in spring of the 2018-19 academic year.
- CFA is proactively working to expand the number of Arizona school leaders trained through the BTO School Leadership Academy across the state. CFA is doing this through a variety of means including statewide information sessions, individual meetings with interested LEAs, and relationships with education, business, and community-based organizations across the state. Recruitment work is underway with the following communities: Northern Arizona, including Flagstaff Unified School District; Verde Valley; Southern Arizona; West Phoenix; and tribal communities.

- CFA effectively supported the CFA cadre of nationally certified NISL Executive Development Program facilitators to ensure they have the resources, tools, and training they need to effectively deliver the training to Arizona leaders. During the grant project period, CFA NISL facilitators began participation in a 5-day NISL coaching institute that will be completed in fall 2018. CFA is providing ongoing support to the BTO NISL facilitators through in-person quarterly meetings, webinar and electronic communication, and the development of an online portal for facilitators to access resources and materials.

Conclusion and Next Steps

CFA is incredibly appreciative of the investment made by Governor Ducey's Office of Education in the BTO School Leadership Academy. The investment enabled CFA to expand the number of Arizona school leaders trained through the BTO Academy and, through the match of private investment from philanthropy, to support the critical transition and capacity building of the BTO School Leadership Academy to deliver training to school leaders throughout the state in order to improve student success for all learners.

Moving forward, CFA will continue to increase the number of school leaders trained across the state with the goal of training 75-100 school leaders each year. Broader metrics of success for the program over time include: improved talent pipeline and retention of high-quality school leaders, improved student achievement, and enhanced teacher recruitment, quality and retention.