Education Pioneers
TALENT TO TRANSFORM

For Immediate Release:
May 12, 2011

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Education Pioneers Receives $7.6 Million to Increase the Leadership Pipeline in K-12 Education

Grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will help attract top-notch professionals for careers in public education leadership positions

Oakland, CA – Education Pioneers, a national network of leaders and entrepreneurs committed to improving leadership within public education, but outside the classroom, today announced it received a $7.6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The grant will allow Education Pioneers to attract and develop more than 500 professionals, many of whom are specifically trained in data and analysis, to work in school districts, public charter organizations and state departments of education. This is the largest grant Education Pioneers has received in its eight years of operation. This award showcases the emerging trend of attracting and placing more talented professionals into education leadership positions—a priority that was until recently overlooked.

The selected individuals will use their unique skills and prior work experience on projects such as using student-level data to pinpoint areas for teacher intervention, analyzing data and researching best practices to improve curriculum and instruction, developing a strategic plan for a teacher evaluation pilot, and rigorous classroom observation protocols to provide meaningful feedback to teachers. Other projects include expansion plans for quality charter schools that have proven academic success.

"Education Pioneers has filled a real niche by recognizing that school districts and public charter organizations desperately need, but often don't have the budget or time, to attract and keep top talent in positions outside of the classroom," said Don Shalvey, deputy director, U.S. Program, Education, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Schools and educational organizations that have already benefited from Education Pioneers placements have seen improvements trickle down to the very granular level of improving student achievement. Helping Education Pioneers continue building on that kind of success is a smart investment."

Education Pioneers works with more than 130 organizations across the country, including school districts, government agencies, charter schools, and other leading education groups. The organization operates two Fellowship programs intended to attract professionals at critical career junctures. Their flagship Graduate School Fellowship recruits top graduate students, including MBAs, with at least two years of professional work experience for a summer Fellowship in a leading education organization. The organization's Analyst Fellowship, launched in 2010, attracts early-career trained business analysts from the private sector for a 10-month Fellowship, also within leading education organizations.

Organizations working with Education Pioneers receive direct access to individuals with the skills necessary to improve leadership, data analysis, and project management within education. Some of the organizations include Chicago Public Schools, KIPP DC, Los Angeles Unified School District and the United States Department of Education. Education Pioneers Fellows remain in education at a very high rate, with nearly 70 percent going on to work full-time in the field.

“We are honored to have the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation invest in the work that we are doing to drive education reforms in under-served communities across the U.S.,” said Scott Morgan, founder and CEO of Education Pioneers. “This grant enables us to place more than 500 talented professionals in positions outside of the classroom, providing teachers and school leaders with the support necessary to provide their students the very best education possible.”

Education Pioneers was founded in 2003 in the San Francisco Bay Area. It currently operates in Washington, D.C., New York City, Boston, Chicago, Houston, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Los Angeles. Since its launch, Education Pioneers has placed more than 900 Fellows in public education organizations across the country. The Gates Foundation joins the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, the Robertson Foundation, and the Doris & Donald Fisher Fund as key supporters of Education Pioneers and this initiative.

About Education Pioneers

Education Pioneers mobilizes and prepares a national network of talented leaders and entrepreneurs to transform our education system into one that equips all students with the skills they need to thrive in college, career, and life. Through the organization’s Fellowship and Alumni leadership programs, Education Pioneers increases the talent supply of top leaders in education and improves leadership capacity in key organizations—such as school districts, charter school organizations, and nonprofits—in the education sector. More information about Education Pioneers can be found at www.educationpioneers.org.

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