

# Tips for Mentoring Principal Interns

**Source:** Washington State University, College of Education,  
Department of Educational Leadership

**The purpose of the internship** is to provide practical experience in the duties and responsibilities of the principal. The core of the internship experience is centered around the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards and the skills defined in the Washington Administrative Code. The intern will complete 720 hours of internship-related activities. The experience includes working on the job before school starts and additional hours after school ends.

**The purpose of the principal intern mentor** is to teach, give helpful feedback and counsel the principal intern. The mentor is also to provide supervision of the principal intern by scheduling regular meetings, assigning projects/tasks, and involving the intern in as many activities as possible which demonstrate competency of the ISLLC standards.

**Effective experience for principal interns should include experience aligned with the six ISLLC standards.**

*The following are examples of intern activities that relate to the ISLLC standards:*

## **Standard 1: Articulate, implement, and steward a vision of learning**

- Participate in school improvement leadership activities, including developing/affirming vision, mission and goals.
- Present student performance data analysis to the staff and/or parents.
- Assist staff in aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with state learning goals.

## **Standard 2: Maintains school culture and instructional programs**

- Participate in observation, coaching and supervision of staff.
- Plan and lead staff development activities related to the school action plan.
- Assume a leadership role in the staff selection process.

## **Standard 3: Management of the school's organization, operations, and resources**

- Assist with the development of the school budget.
- Experience student discipline practice and procedures.
- Become familiar with negotiated agreements and their implications.

## **Standard 4: Collaborates with families and community**

- Be visible to parents, media and businesses; establish partnership where possible.
- Conduct school-wide parent meetings.
- Attend PTA meetings and events.

**Standard 5: Acts with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.**

- Develop operating principles for meetings, decision-making or communications.
- Foster an environment of trust.
- Demonstrate ethical behaviors in all student, staff and parent interactions.

**Standard 6: Understands political, social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts**

- Attends school board meetings in two or more school districts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of key communicators in all school constituencies.
- Demonstrates knowledge of professional certification.
- Demonstrates knowledge of strategies to change.

**What are mentor responsibilities?**

1. Assist the intern to develop a plan of standards-based activities.
2. Meet regularly with the intern.
3. Collaboratively complete a summative intern evaluation.
4. Communicate concerns to the university supervisor.

**What do effective mentors do?**

- Provide appropriate opportunities to learn leadership skills.
- Work with the intern to establish a calendar of experiences over the course of the internship.
- Monitor progress.
- Provide timely feedback through coaching and reflective discussions.
- Set up regularly scheduled conference times (weekly).
- Encourage and arrange for professional growth activities including workshops, trainings and professional reading.
- Assess leadership skills, knowledge and performance.

**Washington State University Educational Leadership Faculty Contacts:**

**Spokane/Wenatchee**

Jim Howard, Ph.D.    509.358.7948    [jamesh@wsu.edu](mailto:jamesh@wsu.edu)

**Vancouver**

Gay Selby, Ed.D.    360.546.9668    [selby@vancouver.wsu.edu](mailto:selby@vancouver.wsu.edu)

The Washington State University Educational Leadership faculty would like to thank you for assuming this vital professional responsibility.