



Fast Track Building Administrator Internship Guidelines and Guidance

What is this?

In accordance with Rhode Island certification regulation [1.10.1 \(B.3.a\)](#), Fast-Track Principals must complete a 300-hour internship. The 300-hour Fast-Track Principal internship can be completed while holding the *Fast-Track Principal Expert Residency Preliminary Certificate* and must be completed to be eligible for the *Building Level Administrator PK-12 Fast-Track Certificate*. This document contains guidance for creating the 300-hour internship to ensure application of the [Rhode Island Standards for Educational Leaders](#).

Who is this for?

This guidance is for stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of an internship experience for Fast-Track Principals. This guidance synthesizes research and input from various institutes of higher education, Rhode Island based education organizations, and the Rhode Island Department of Education.

What are the required guidelines for the Fast-Track Principal Internship?

In order to receive credit for the internship, all internships must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The year-long internship must be a minimum of 300 hours where the Fast-Track principal is currently employed.
- Fast-Track Principals must have an assigned mentor during the internship.
- The Fast-Track Principal must have evidence of opportunities to learn about and apply learning aligned to each of the RISEL standards.
- The Fast-Track Internship must be evaluated by the Superintendent.

What should a thoughtfully designed Fast-Track Principal internship include?

A successful internship design incorporates the following elements:

- Evidence of practical application of the Rhode Island Standards for Education Leaders (RISELs).
- Opportunity to carry out day-to day leadership responsibilities.
- Evidence of frequent discussion and reflection between and mentor and mentee.
- A summative representation or presentation of the internship experience (Action Research/ Capstone Presentation/Audio-Visual Portfolio). This could be used to support the evaluation of the internship experience.

Who is the Fast-Track Principal Mentor?

In accordance with the above-mentioned guidelines, Fast-Track Principals must be paired with a mentor during their year-long 300-hour internship. Selected Principal mentors should have at least three full years of experience as a Building Administrator and have evaluation ratings of effective or highly effective during their most recent evaluation cycle, where applicable.

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According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals, effective [Principal Mentor Competencies](#) Include:

- **Competency One:** An effective mentor sets high expectations for self-development in high quality professional growth opportunities.
- **Competency Two:** An effective mentor has knowledge of and utilizes mentoring and coaching best practices.
- **Competency Three:** An effective mentor is active in instructional leadership.
- **Competency Four:** An effective mentor respects confidentiality and a code of ethics in the mentor protégé relationship.
- **Competency Five:** An effective mentor contributes to the body of knowledge as it pertains to principal and administrative mentoring.
- **Competency Six:** An effective mentor fosters a culture that promotes formal and informal mentoring relationships.

Designing the Internship Experience

The following phases have been developed to support the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Fast-Track Principal Internship. To support a collaborative approach to the design of the internship experience, please consider using the following guidance.

Phase 1: The Planning Phase

We believe collaboratively planning and designing the internship experience with input from all relevant stakeholders leads to a higher likelihood of success for the Fast-Track Principal. This planning meeting should happen after the selection of a qualified mentor.

Suggested Planning Activity #1: During the planning phase, schedule an initial planning meeting with all relevant stakeholders to think through and complete the following planning template.

Questions /Statements to Support Strategic Planning	Example(s):
<p>1. As a team, please develop a list of a range of experiences that help the Fast-Track Principal develop a building-level perspective and apply the RISEs.</p>	<p>Possible Fast-Track Principal Experiences (sample activities below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and administer a culture and climate survey. (standard 1) • Form and promote school-based committees (teacher and students) to encourage collaboration and shared decision making. (standard 2) • Perform an equity audit of school educational activities and implement changes based on findings. (standard 3)



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Questions /Statements to Support Strategic Planning	Example(s):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct informal observations and formal evaluations using the district evaluation system and provide evidence-based feedback. (standard 4) • Audit existing academic and social emotional supports for students and identify 2-3 opportunities for improvement or replacement of supports with more aligned supports based on student needs. (standard 5) • Collaboratively create a school PD calendar that includes external and internal PD opportunities and incorporates moments to celebrate student and teacher progress. (standard 6) • Implement opportunities for each teacher to learn and grow from their peers through the use of “academic learning walks” with a focus on curriculum implementation (standard 7) • Host Parent Open House nights and draft and implement a vision for parental involvement with parents as partners (standard 8) • With teachers, collaboratively draft an updated school schedule that minimizes disruptions to instructional time and builds in time for collaborative planning periods at least 2-3 times weekly. (standard 9) • Promote continuous improvement through the creation and implementation of data teams that monitor progress towards achievement of SLOs/ SOOs. (standard 10)
<p>2. Please identify opportunities for the Fast-Track Principal to observe their mentor or another experienced principal in a variety of situations. What situations does the team feel are appropriate for observation</p>	<p>Once a month, the Fast-Track Principal will observe their mentor or another experienced principal completing the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating and collaborating with parents.



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Questions /Statements to Support Strategic Planning	Example(s):
that reflect the normal day-to-day activities of a building administrator?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing teachers with feedback after an observation. • Identifying and implementing SEL focused activities and initiatives school-wide.
3. Please identify and discuss building-level administrator duties that show a gradual increase in responsibilities as the internship progresses.	<p>Below is an example of gradual release of a responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe a PTA/PTO meeting • Co-plan a PTA meeting • Independently plan and lead a PTA/ PTO meeting. <p>*The observe, plan, and lead cadence can be used for a variety of focus areas.</p>
4. Please identify responsibility for at least one major project that the Fast-Track Principal can complete which will make a special contribution to the school.	<p>Below are examples of projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-develop a high-dosage tutoring program with teachers. • Support on-going school-wide community-service project.
5. What should the Fast-Track Principal submit to show regular and on-going reflective practices?	Submit bi-weekly reflection tool/ tracker to their mentor.
6. What should the Fast-Track Principal Mentor submit or create to show regular and on-going touchpoints with their mentee?	Mentor logs should be generated and created monthly.
7. Please identify professional development activities that should be completed by the Fast-Track Principal as a part of their internship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Evaluation - New evaluator training • Effective instructional Coaching Frameworks • DEI Training and Action Planning • Adverse Childhood Experiences training • Curriculum- specific
8. What training and support will the Fast-Track Principal Mentor need?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend a mentor training program • Connect with mentors within other schools within the district to collaborate

Suggested Planning Activity #2

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Creating a timeline of activities for the year-long Fast-Track Principal Internship will allow you to consider the timeline of events in a school year and how they afford opportunities for exposure to key leadership activities. The chart below could also support the gradual release of responsibilities.

	Planned Activity and Desired Time	Rationale of Activity (RISELs)	Dates/Evidence of Completion
July			
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			

The 300 hours of the year-long internship can be flexibly distributed to meet the needs of the school and the Fast-Track Principal. Below are some examples to consider.

*Based on a 10-month contract, at least 30 hours each month must be dedicated to the Fast-Track Principal carrying out administrative responsibilities and duties to reach the required 300 hours for the internship.

*Based on a 12-month contract, at least 25 hours each month should be dedicated to the Fast -Track Principal carrying out administrative responsibilities and duties to reach the required 300 hours for the internship.

Suggested Resource: Please see [Appendix A](#) for example activities.

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Phase 2: The Implementation Phase

Once immersed in the work of their internship, Fast-Track Principals will require ongoing support in order to ensure that they are progressing according to the planned timeline of activities. To ensure activities are unfolding as planned, please consider thinking through the following questions related to internship implementation.

Suggested Implementation Activity #1- Using the following template, respond to the questions and/or statements meant to support implementation of activities with fidelity.

Implementation Goal	Responses (sample responses below)
<p>Change Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the internship implementation team support and champion the work of the Fast-Track Principal? • How will the internship implementation team support the Fast-Track Principal in building relationships within the school community/ district? <p>*Implementation Teams could consist of the Fast-Track Principal Mentor, Superintendent, and/or other leaders within the building or district.</p>	<p>The sponsoring Superintendent will highlight the work of Fast-Track Principals within their district newsletter.</p> <p>The Fast-Track Principal will attend district Principal meetings and be introduced by the Superintendent and mentor principal during the initial meeting.</p> <p>The mentor will support the work of the Fast-Track Principal by identifying on-going opportunities for the Fast-Track Principal to observe and connect with other district leaders.</p>
<p>Project Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an implementation team, please decide on the use of any particular tools to support management of the internship (Google Suite, Microsoft Teams, or paper-based logs) Please provide a rationale for whichever option is chosen. • What will be the expectations for usage of selected tools to support implementation? 	<p>The Fast-Track Principal will maintain a folder on Google Drive with all weekly reflection logs, photos, videos, etc.</p> <p>These logs will be reviewed by the mentor Principal monthly.</p> <p>The Fast-Track Principal will use the Fast-Track Reflection Tool and Tracker.</p>

*****To support capturing evidence related to application of the RISELs, the Fast-Track Principal can refer to the following tracker that aligns to the RISELs. [Fast-Track Principal Reflection Tool and Tracker](#)**

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Phase 3: Internship Evaluation

LEAs must evaluate and be able to attest to the successful completion of the 300-hour internship experience. To support the evaluation of the internship experience, input from all relevant stakeholders should be included to provide a more holistic evaluation. See below for recommended guidance to support internship experience evaluation.

As a reminder, any person using a Fast-Track Principal certification must be evaluated according to their district's model of evaluation for building administrators. In addition to the three site-visits to collect evidence as a part of the RI Model of formal evaluation, the evaluation rubrics and tools can be used informally throughout the internship to provide the Fast-Track Principal with formative feedback.

How should the internship be evaluated?

The Superintendent should schedule meetings with the Fast-Track Principal and the Fast-Track Principal's mentor. The following questions could be used to guide the conversations:

Superintendent questions for the Fast-Track Principal:

- What were the experiences you had in each of the RISELS and what did you learn?
- Which of the standards do you feel most proficient in and why?
- Which of the standards do you feel you want to push yourself to continue developing your comfort and skills with?
- What have you identified as priorities within the school and how do you plan on addressing those priorities?
- What have you come to know about your leadership style?
- What is your vision for the upcoming school year? How will you engage the school community and other stakeholders in embracing and supporting this vision?

Superintendent questions for the Fast-Track Principal Mentor:

- Which of the standards do you feel the Fast-Track Principal demonstrated the most proficiency in and why?
- Which of the standards do you feel the Fast-Track Principal should continue developing their proficiency?
- What are strengths of the Fast-Track Principal that you were able to observe throughout the internship?
- What design elements of the internship seemed beneficial? What suggestions do you have to strengthen the internship experience for future Fast-Track Principals?

Based on the conversation and review of any related artifacts, please complete the Fast-Track Internship Verification Form to confirm successful completion of the internship. This form can be found in the Building Level Administrator PK-12 Fast-Track Principal Certificate application.

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APPENDIX A

Possible Timeline of Activities- The activities below are meant to be examples of possible activities the Fast-Track Principal could be engaged in throughout the internship year.

August/September

- Introduce the Fast-Track Principal to staff members in their school communities (teachers, parents, students, counselor, department coordinators/chairpersons, team leaders, office staff, etc.)
- Take a tour of the building/area
- Create and review professional development plan
- Show location of materials (manipulatives, construction paper, etc.) and review supply inventorying and ordering procedures, construction paper, etc.)
- Share checkout procedures for books, materials, etc.
- Tour teacher workroom: supplies, copy machine procedures, etc.
- Review assigned duties & responsibilities for each duty
- Share teacher dress code (Friday Spirit Day, etc.)
- Discuss/share grade level/content area or department daily class schedules
- Share first day/week activities—provide guidance on organizing the first day & first week
- Review testing dates, administration procedures, etc. (if applicable. This is relevant to beginning of year benchmarking)
- Discuss/share school opening announcement procedures & expectations
- Explain procedures (attendance, tardies, lunch counts)
- Discuss arrival/dismissal procedures
- Discuss playground rules (if applicable)
- Discuss student dress code & procedures when an infraction occurs
- Share building forms (nurse, hall pass, office, etc.)
- Review procedures for fire drills and emergency procedures
- Discuss FYI issues regarding school culture and customs
- Discuss upcoming or completed observations OR ensure new evaluator training is scheduled for attendance.
- Discuss lesson planning protocols and procedures and share lesson plan expectations & an example of a completed weekly lesson plan (This might be the work of another member of the instructional leadership team, however the principal should have a clear understanding of effective lesson planning processes and procedures.)
- Share grading guidelines, deficiency notices, quarterly grades, grade book & record keeping systems.
- Discuss communicating with parents, tips for upcoming Open House procedures & share agenda/presentation ideas
- Discuss Special Education and/or MTSS referral processes

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- Parent contacts (Think aloud regarding parent contacts and preparing for parent conferences)
- Discuss expectations for substitutes and ways to support their success. Also learn the substitute plan protocol that teachers will follow and how to secure building substitutes.
- Discuss ways the Fast-Track Principal could support morale and change management in the building.

October

- Discuss formal observation(s) or upcoming observations
- Discuss staff evaluations
- Examine/discuss classroom management/discipline plans and discuss trends in behavior with the mentoring principal
- Debrief department, grade level, team, and committee meetings
- Support the identification of students needing accommodations for state or district testing (if applicable)
- Discuss school holiday/function policies (parties, dances, food, activities) and best practice for these events.
- Review grade reporting system & how grade reports will be distributed to parents (progress reporting).
- Continue discussion on parent/teacher conferences & tips in how to conduct
- Review teaching videos and discuss strategies/applications to share with teachers based on observations
- Discuss Benchmark assessment data trends and interventions.

November/ December

- Discuss how busy both professionally and personally it is between Thanksgiving & Winter Break and how to keep the students engaged & productive
- Discuss concerns/successes of students with the mentoring principal and possible ways to support students as needed.
- Share e-mail & parent communications
- Discuss procedure for snow day/delayed starts
- Appraise instructional pacing
- Review holiday units & activities
- Share “tricks of the trade” to get through the upcoming weeks
- Identify students needing accommodations for state and district testing and discuss documentation and implementation of needed accommodations with relevant school staff (90 days prior to testing)
- Brainstorm and share ideas on how to plan meaningful and engaging activities for the days prior to winter break
- Discuss upcoming observations and formal observations, walk-through, etc.
- Discuss pacing and curricular progress
- Calibrate overload and assist in determining priorities
- Provide information/clarification regarding end-of-course exams, grades and report cards

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- Begin to discuss quality professional development opportunities for the Spring
- Celebrate successes of teachers, students, and staff members prior to winter break.

January

- Review and discuss first semester experience
- Discuss and/or assist in developing personal goal or professional development plan for second semester
- Document accommodations for state and district testing (90 days prior to testing)
- Review report cards/progress reports to send home
- Contacting parents of struggling students
- Examine second semester classes/schedule
- Discuss upcoming observations and formal observations, walk-throughs, etc.
- Discuss home communications & ideas to strengthen home/school connections—postcards home, e-mail communications, newsletters, tips to parents, etc.
- Discuss how to prepare students for upcoming testing
- Mutual sharing of professional growth goals and strategies
- Joint planning for upcoming units
- Clarify schedules, recordkeeping, reporting, etc.
- Encourage collaborative opportunities with other colleagues
- Discuss Retention Policy
- Think about supplies and materials for next year – Start the list
- List any other items discussed

February

- Review monthly district/building activities
- Discuss upcoming testing (state or district testing, etc.) for requirements, procedures & documentation of accommodations has been done for designated students
- Discuss learning resources to suggest to parents when asked how they can help support their student's learning
- Discuss upcoming observations and formal observations, walk-throughs, etc.
- Observe mentor's post- evaluation conferences with a teacher.
- Update goals regarding student performance data from Winter benchmarks
- Clarify/share information regarding final evaluations, schedules (spring break, student testing, etc.)
- Review professional development log
- Collaborate on observations by mentee and mentor
- List any other items discussed

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March

- Review standardized testing schedule, testing procedures & suggestions for conducive testing environment
- Review accommodations for designated state and district testing students prior to testing dates
- Become aware of professional organizations in your discipline or area of interest
- Look for upcoming workshops, classes, professional development opportunities
- Provide information/clarification on student files/records, parents conferences, etc.
- Plan logistics for spring benchmarking
- Prepare and review the End of Year testing schedule and testing plan for the state's testing window
- Provide direction related to standardized testing preparation and training for teachers that will be test administrators
- (practice testing, morale building, letters to parents).
- Celebrate successes

April

- Discuss procedures for end of year events, ordering, field trips, etc.
- Discuss end-of-year schedules, final evaluation, student testing, field trips, etc.
- Create directions for classroom inventorying and pack-up
- Begin planning for Summer school (logistics, goals, students needing to attend)
- Create staffing plans for the upcoming school year (anticipate vacancies, review requests for changes in grade level assignments)
- Begin to collaborate with administrative team members, parent organizations, and community stakeholders to develop a plan for Teacher Appreciation week in May

May/June

- Discuss procedures for closing out the end of the school year—room preparation
- Review purchasing/ procurement procedures for the upcoming school year
- Celebrate end of year successes
- Schedule a final reflection and next steps conversation with all staff members
- Conduct end of year conferences with staff members
- Final check for clarification on parent contacts and reports
- Continue strategic planning for next year and planning for summer in-service

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Research Base for guidance development:

- New York State Department of Education- [The Principal Internship: How Can We Get It Right?](#)
- Association of Washington School Principals- [Activities to Consider During Your Internship](#)
- Indiana State University – [Principal Intern Handbook](#)
- Washington State University –Educational Leadership Faculty – [Tips for Mentors](#)
- Southern Regional Education Board [Good Principals Aren't Born, They're Mentored](#)
- Wallace Foundation- [Getting Principal Mentoring Right](#)
- [Red Hook School District Mentoring Program](#)
- [UNCC Principal Mentor Handbook](#)