

LIFTing Up Effective Leaders

Creating the pathway to leadership is an inherent part of NIET's approach in building teacher leaders. While NIET's 75 partnerships with educator preparation programs often focus on equipping classroom teachers, a recent federal grant partnership with Texas Tech University (TTU) exemplifies how NIET can work with higher education to elevate and enhance programs to train school leaders effectively.

NIET and TTU partnered with 12 high-need districts through a federal Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant to create the Leadership Instruction for Teachers (LIFT) program. Through LIFT, which Texas Tech has continued even after the grant ended this year, aspiring school leaders enroll in the educational leadership program at TTU and are embedded as "principal fellows" in high-need school districts. This enables them to take the classroom instruction received at TTU and implement it in real-life circumstances with the supervision, evaluation, feedback, and guidance of an effective, experienced school leader. The process provides authentic training, where theoretical learning is implemented and skills honed with expert mentors on-site, as well as ongoing TTU academic support.

Establishing a high-quality leadership

This partnership has helped the district grow and hire campus leaders who can lead by example and empower others to create success for all students.

Patricia Lewis, associate superintendent in Grand Prairie ISD

pipeline takes districts' ability to drive systemwide effectiveness to the next level. "Grand Prairie ISD's work with NIET and TTU has helped us grow as a district in growing our own leaders," said Patricia Lewis, associate superintendent in Grand Prairie ISD. "Our most effective leaders serve as principal mentors and leadership coaches. This partnership has helped the district grow and hire campus leaders who can lead by example and empower others to create success for all students."

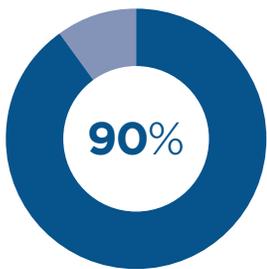
The impact of this program has been tracked in three areas: leadership competency, program satisfaction, and post-graduate placement. The results are powerful.

Historically, school leadership programs have been criticized for their disconnect between what is taught in class and what leaders actually need. However, the job-embedded learning of the TTU-NIET partnership

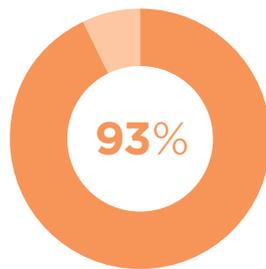
resulted in fellows demonstrating improvements in all areas assessed using the Texas principal evaluation rubrics. Over 90% of principal fellows reported they felt "job-ready" following their in-school residency, while 93% rated their experience as good or excellent.

Most impactful: 87% obtained a leadership position within a year of graduation, and 80% of participants were hired to work in high-need schools.

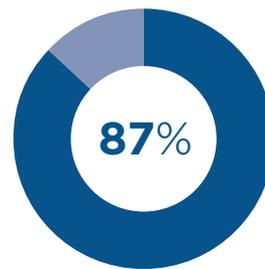
Growing leadership is often seen as a back-burner priority, but too often that results in the least prepared principals being placed in the schools that most need effective leaders. However, the NIET-TTU partnership shows how investing in hands-on, expert training can create a pipeline of talented leaders who can improve the educational experience for students in some of Texas' most challenged districts — and it has proven to be a model other institutions can follow.



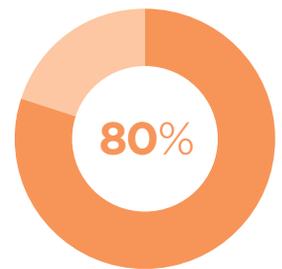
Percent of principal fellows who **reported they felt "job-ready"** following their in-school residency



Percent of principal fellows who rated their experience as **good or excellent**



Percent of principal fellows who **obtained a leadership position** within a year of graduation



Percent of principal fellows who were **hired to work in high-need schools** within a year of graduation