



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

The School District of Broward County Attains its Leadership Development Goals Using SchoolSims Simulations

“Newly appointed assistant principals are exposed to simulations at our monthly cohort sessions to get ‘real-life’ experience in situations that are taking place in schools across the country. The simulations provide a safe space to practice decision-making and apply what is being taught in instructional sessions to develop the skills to be an effective leader.”

~ Dr. Reginald Pierre-Jerome
Leadership Coordinator
The School District of Broward County

Principal pipelines matter. Professional development for sitting school leaders matters. The Kern Foundation and other researchers have proven that without programs dedicated to those tenets, student achievement suffers. SchoolSims library of leadership sims provides a single solution to those challenges and more. Dr. Reginald Pierre-Jerome, Leadership Coordinator from The School District of Broward County first experienced a SchoolSims simulation as part of a facilitated session conducted by company CEO, Ken Spero, at the National Assistant Principal Conference. As a member of his district’s Leadership Development Department, Reggie immediately recognized the potential for school-based, leadership simulations to accomplish the goals of their aspiring and current Assistant Principal, Principal, and Administrator development programs.

The School District of Broward County has nine distinct Leadership Development programs that span the progression of leadership experience, and simulations are used across the continuum. The District’s intensive, one-year LEAD (Leadership Experiences and Administrator Development) program must be completed by all teachers who wish to apply for Assistant Principal positions. The program involves the

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professional readings, cohort sessions, and mentoring with an experience AP. SchoolSims simulations are facilitated to the group during cohort sessions as well as used by mentors during one-on-one sessions. Dr. Pierre-Jerome shares that in addition to the experience gained by playing through the simulations, much is gained by the discussions that take place at each decision point. That dialogue among participants provides a tremendous opportunity for peer-to-peer learning. Providing aspiring leaders time to practice in a safe environment, allows for the discovery of unconscious biases which must be addressed before they are elevated to leadership positions.

Newly appointed Assistant Principals participate in simulations as part of the District's First Year Assistant Principal's Program (FYAP). The simulations provide these new leaders an opportunity to learn and gain experience by practicing critical thinking and decision making in a safe space. The feedback shared from this group is that when they are working through a simulated experience, that they can literally see and feel what they have learned as they make choices throughout the session.

The District's Leadership Support Program (DLSP) provides coaching and support to newly appointed district leaders to ensure they have the essentials to serve the entire school system effectively. The District

deploys simulations since they essentially allow for the acceleration of time. Novice district leaders do not have to wait for difficult situations to happen in real to gain experience handling them.

While SchoolSims maps its simulations to both NELP and PSEL standards, the District has mapped the library to the Florida Leadership Principal Standards. Because of the breadth of topics covered across the library and within each simulation, at least one of the over 30 simulations cover the spectrum of standards. And because the District uses the simulations within most of their leadership developments programs, their return on investment is high.

"Learning by doing" is recognized as the one of the most effective forms of learning. That is why simulations have been used for decades in the medical and aviation industries to build confidence and teach the behaviors and processes to prepare doctors and pilots for their demanding and diverse roles. SchoolSims simulations offer that same level of effectiveness for aspiring or current school leaders as they too are expected to perform effectively in demanding and diverse situations. The District believes that by providing program participants a safe environment to practice and manage through high stakes situations, they will be prepared when real-life challenges arise.

