

**ACHIEVEMENT PREP**

**2013 RYAN AWARD WINNER:**

**SHANTELLE WRIGHT**

**SCHOOL STATS**  
Washington, D.C.

**450 Students**  
**Grades 4-8**  
**Founded 2008**

**100% African-American**  
**85% Free & Reduced Lunch**

**Shantelle Wright's** dream has had a large impact on the students and families at her school.



**Accelerate Institute®**



## ACHIEVEMENT PREP

**Achievement Prep founder remembers the dreams she and her childhood friends would outline when someone would ask what they wanted to do with their life.** “You just have such big goals and big hopes and you would say anything,” says Wright. “I just realized there were more and more children—they weren’t dreaming any more. There were no more thoughts about ‘I could do whatever,’ or the ‘world is available to me.’”

As the attorney-turned-charter-school director set about establishing Achievement Prep, she thought long and hard about what children who were grade levels behind would need to be ready for college. “I wanted us to have very clear indicators of what it meant to be at our school and very clear values of how we would interact with each other,” she says. Wright, who says she grew up in a neighborhood similar to where her students come from, knew it was those values instilled in her by her mother and others that got her where she is now. “It’s one thing to have dreams; it’s another to be equipped with the tools you need to execute on those dreams,” Wright says. “To say to a child, ‘Oh, dream big!’ and then you don’t teach them to read; that’s not fair.”

*“We can’t expect teachers to actually respond to their data if we don’t then provide time within their day in order to implement.”*



Shantelle Wright was awarded the Ryan Award in 2013. She currently leads Achievement Prep in Washington, D.C.



**Shantelle Wright’s dream has had a large impact on the students and families at her school.** Achievement Prep is one of the highest-ranked schools in Washington, D.C. when it comes to both student achievement on standardized tests and the progress that students make over time. How does Achievement Prep accomplish such great results? They prioritize the use of data.

**Teachers use the Common Core standards to create their curriculum alignment templates,** going through every single Common Core standard and thinking about what objectives will need to be taught, says teacher Erica Franklin. On Fridays, students take weekly “Show What You Know” quizzes based on the week’s objectives. The results are entered into a database. The following Monday, after students are dismissed at 4 p.m., teachers gather for their weekly “data day.” Everyone’s data is thrown up on the board. Teachers divide into grade-level teams. “We put it on the screen from every grade and class and use that data to form ‘Results’ groups,” says head of school Shantelle Wright. The first 45-50 minutes, the staff is parsing the data to create plans for that week’s “Results Hour,” deemed one of the keys to the school’s success. Results Hour is an intervention block held every morning to help students with whatever skills they’re not mastering. In addition, every 6-7 weeks, classes take their interim assessments, which Achievement Prep gets through the Achievement Network, a nonprofit that provides testing and then coaching on how to use that data.

**Results Hour aims to give teachers a chance to respond to the data.** “There’s always this big push around data, and it to inform instruction and using the data to create a rigorous action plan of how you’re going to intervene, or how you’re going to remediate, or how you’re going to accelerate based off what your data says,” Wright says. But schools often don’t provide teachers with the time to do all of this, she says. **“(You should) be responsive to data, let that data inform your instruction, but still continue with the scope and sequence, still continue with your yearly plans, your weekly plans.** Don’t miss your pacing guides. I just thought that was crazy. How can you do both?” she says. “We can’t expect teachers to actually respond to their data if we don’t then provide time within their day in order to implement.”

## #5 DATA-DRIVEN CULTURE

### ACCELERATE FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVE 5

Assessment data is used to drive differentiation.

- 1. Purpose and expectations** of schoolwide data processes are clear.
- 2. Staff is bought into using data** to differentiate instruction.
- 3. Valid and reliable assessments that match Common Core/College Readiness Standards** for all grades and content have been adopted.
- 4. Timely, leader- and teacher-owned processes** are conducted to assess, analyze, and act on data at the school-wide and individual student level.
- 5. Teachers are held accountable** to analyzing and using data.

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Teachers welcomed the idea of being able to act on the data but continue with the pacing for their regular class. With a longer school day, Achievement Prep found the time for double blocks of English/Language Arts and math, and then the 45-50 minutes for Results Hour. Every adult in the building is used to maximize the adult-to-scholar ratio, as every adult is responsible during results. The administration tries to set it up so teachers from certain content areas can lead the groups in those subjects, either pushing ahead with remediation plans, acceleration, or additional practice. In Results, sometimes teachers may have a whole class reteach, to correct a misconception. “The teacher obviously taught it, but (students) didn’t learn it, so at our school, you didn’t teach it. It’s not just about ‘Oh, I taught it. They just didn’t get it,’” Wright says. “At our school we say, ‘you didn’t teach, you have to do it again.’”

*“If we really wanted to get results, it had to be consistent, it had to be daily. It had to have a direct response to the data.”*

**Wright started an early version of Results the first year, held every other day.** But the staff realized it was too sporadic that first quarter. “If we really wanted to get results, it had to be consistent, it had to be daily,” Wright says. “It had to have a direct response to the data.” About midway through the quarter, the leadership changed the schedule. Up until last year, Results Hour was the last period of the day. “One of the things we found is by the time we got to the end of the day, after having gone through all of their classes, their openness and malleability to intervention was not there. It was like ‘I hear you. I know I got it wrong, but I’m just tired at this point.’” Wright says. Not just the scholars, but the teachers as well. “We found that what our teachers would do if we weren’t monitoring very closely, the Results block just became an additional time to get whatever I didn’t get to during class,” Wright says. With Results moved to the first class in the morning, scholars are more alert, teachers more fresh, so “it’s not about trying to make up for the day,” Wright says. “It starts the scholars off and teachers off being able to find some instantaneous success.”

If a math teacher receives “Show What You Know” quiz data and can tell that of her two sections, about 15 students really did not grasp multiplying fractions with like denominators, she can set to work with her partner teacher on targeting that idea in Results. The other teacher may not be a math teacher, but the two will collaborate to devise a lesson plan. Results may be used to push the rigor with one group, and re-drill the issue with the other. Wright says on average, groups end up with a ratio of 10 students for every adult, and that teachers also work in smaller groups within the class. “We really just dissect the data and whatever the data tells us, we respond to it,” she says.

## TEACHERS WELCOME THE SECOND CHANCE

“There’s nothing bad you can say about an extra hour focused on what scholars need,” says teacher Michael Rabin. Teachers usually say there’s no time in the day to go back and reteach concepts before the DC-CAS (the DC annual standardized test), but with Results Hour, “you have this built-in time every single day,” says Rabin. “If you need an extra hour, an extra 45 minutes, here’s your time.”

