

**REPORT ON THE COMMISSION FOR SCHOOL LEADER
PREPARATION REPORT *SCHOOL LEADER PREPARATION:
A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE***

Submitted for: Information.

Summary: This item provides the first annual report on the implementation of recommendations provided by the Commission on School Leader Preparation report, *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change*.

Action Requested: No action is requested.

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**REPORT ON THE COMMISSION FOR SCHOOL LEADER
PREPARATION REPORT *SCHOOL LEADER PREPARATION:
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Overview

The Commission on School Leader Preparation in Illinois Colleges and Universities was established by the Illinois Board of Higher Education in August 2005 in response to mounting concerns about the need to improve higher education programs that prepare school leaders. The Commission, comprised of leaders from K-12 schools, colleges and universities, business organizations, professional education organizations, the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Board of Higher Education, met throughout the following year to address the following charges:

- Evaluate the findings and recommendations of *Educating School Leaders* (Levine, 2005)
- Examine how school leaders are prepared in Illinois
- Propose strategies for improving school leader preparation throughout Illinois

The Commission's report, *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change*, was presented at the August 2006 Board of Higher Education meeting. This report identified three goals and six major recommendations for State implementation.

Goals & Recommendations

GOAL 1: Recruit Strategically

Recommendation 1: Restructure admission criteria & recruit high quality principals

GOAL 2: Focus Preparation Programs

Recommendation 2: Improve programs using rigorous assessment data

Recommendation 3: Create meaningful clinical & internship experiences

GOAL 3: Improve Statewide Coordination & Assessment

Recommendation 4: Establish a rigorous certificate exam

Recommendation 5: Revise the certification & endorsement structure

Recommendation 6: Coordinate rigorous program approval & review processes

Recognizing the need for shared responsibility across the various state and educational sectors, the Commission's report proposed 25 specific implementation actions for the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois State Board of Education, the Governor, the General

Assembly, college and university presidents, and local district school boards for implementing the recommendations.

What has been done statewide?

Significant movement has been made toward initiating implementation of the Commission's recommendations and directives through legislative resolutions, SJR56 and HJR66. Through these resolutions, a representative statewide task force will be convened to recommend a sequence of strategic steps, based on, but not limited to, the measures detailed in *Blueprint for Change*, to implement improvements in school leadership preparation in Illinois. Some areas for which the task force will be responsible are formulating an action plan for restructuring admissions criteria and recruitment of high quality principals, developing a rigorous assessment system, creating clinical and internship experiences, revising the school leader certification and endorsement structure, and coordinating a rigorous program review and approval process. Included also in the action plan will be strategies to implement directives charged to the ISBE, IBHE, local school boards, the Governor, the General Assembly, and college and university presidents specific to their jurisdiction. The chairperson of task force will be appointed by the Governor in consultation with the Board of Higher Education and the State Board of Education. A report citing the findings of the task force will be filed with the General Assembly, the Office of the Governor, the State Board and the Board of Higher Education on or before February 8, 2008.

Also crucial to implementation of the Commission's recommendations is the establishment of an Illinois P-20 Council through HB1648. This bill, which has passed both houses, seeks to leverage statewide resources for systemic educational improvement. Specifically addressed within the bill is the development of working groups to address areas of interest in teacher preparation, mentoring and induction, diversity and "highly effective administrators." The Board of Higher Education and the State Board of Education will serve as ex officio members of the Council.

The creation of the P-20 Council meets the Commission's proposal that the Office of the Governor and the General Assembly activate and support a statewide P-20 entity to advance improvement in school leader preparation. The Council will assist in implementing the Commission's recommendations for increasing the quality and effectiveness of school leaders as well as coordinating the efforts of the state agencies in program review and data collection.

What has been done by IBHE?

Eight directives were presented to the Illinois Board of Higher Education to advance implementation of the Commission's recommendations. Following are the actions taken to implement the directives for which the Illinois Board of Higher Education is responsible.

1. Ensure wide dissemination of this report

Immediately following the August 2006 Board meeting, copies of the report were disseminated to legislators, university presidents, regional superintendents, professional education organizations, state education agencies, business organizations and other relevant stakeholders. The report is available under Reports and Studies on the IBHE website, <http://www.ibhe.org>.

2. Strengthen Goal 2 of *The Illinois Commitment*, which should be revised to read: "Higher education will join elementary and secondary education to improve teaching and learning at all levels, and proactively work to improve all programs that train

teachers, leaders, and auxiliary staff so that all who receive a certificate have the knowledge and skills necessary to improve student achievement.”

3. Provide funding to support pilot testing of innovative programs
4. Seek legislative support for funding clinical faculty roles
5. Reward programs for quality admissions and training

HJR69 and SJR57 resolve that IBHE undertake a master plan for Illinois higher education through the creation of a Task Force on Higher Education and the Economy. One duty of the task force will be to “review existing policies to determine how the Illinois higher education system operates and meets the public needs of the State in such areas as...teacher and school leader preparation...” the master plan and public agenda envisioned by the joint resolutions will forge a stronger and more explicit partnership of shared responsibility for addressing the needs of students throughout the span of schooling from preschool to graduate school.

6. Require IBHE staff to provide annual updates on the progress of recommendations.

Action is evidenced in this report.

7. Reconvene the Commission in the fall of 2009

This is a future directive; however, IBHE maintains current data on Commission members.