

School Leader Task Force

CLASS Leadership Development
Chicago Principals and Administrators Association
Position Paper

January 8, 2008

We commend the work of the Illinois School Leader Task Force and support the document *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change*, which offers several thoughtful recommendations for consideration.

The goal of strengthening leadership preparation in the state of Illinois is a critical investment in our future. We offer the following for discussion as we move forward:

- We support rigorous-year-long internships with standard benchmarks as a measure for evaluating candidates' success. Universities might consider a "pre-internship" component where candidates would observe a number of hours in the location they will serve as an intern prior to the completion of the Type 75 program. District and state funding should be allocated to insure the viability of the year-long internships.
- The Type 75 should be maintained for individuals interested in K-12 administration, i.e. dept. chairs ...However, an additional gate should be considered for those seeking the principalship. We recommend an Emotional Intelligence Assessment.
- We support state approval of all programs (public and private) preparing individuals to become instructional leaders in Illinois.
- Consideration must be given to situational leadership. While we share concerns about developing high-quality leadership preparation programs in the state, we must also consider the socioeconomic and other challenges leaders in many school districts face. A successful principal candidate in one environment may not have the skill sets needed to insure his or her success in another environment. The issue of counseling principal candidates to consider the "right fit" is essential.
- Finally, principal candidates should have a minimum of 4 years of teaching experience. We strongly believe that one must understand instruction in order to serve as an instructional leader.