



## **School Leadership Task Force IAASE Position paper**

I believe that a significant focus of all of the organizations represented on the School Leadership Task Force, including the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education (IAASE), is an emphasis on ongoing professional development for our respective members as the field of education and the collective expectations for all stakeholders continue to evolve. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to increase the focus, rigor and expectations of our school leader preparation programs so that our future leaders possess the essential skills and visionary leadership essential to improving outcomes for students. As we go forward with our recommendations, I would suggest we continue to use the more comprehensive term of school leaders consistently, inclusive of many different administrative roles – principals, special education directors, school improvement directors, etc. It is time that we look at leadership training with a more inclusive lens, rather than assuming there is one set of leadership skills for school principals and an entirely different set of skills and/or expectations for other leadership positions. While there are unique skills inherent in different administrative roles, the reality is that the majority of leadership skill areas required in graduate programs are applicable to all leaders. After careful review of the Blueprint for Change, the Gap Analysis provided by ICPEA and reflecting on our task force's deliberations over the past several months, the following considerations represent my perspective as the president of IAASE, a graduate of several educational administration programs, my past and current leadership experiences and ongoing role as a mentor and supervisor to many school leaders.

### Considerations for School Leadership Task Force Recommendations:

- ✚ Develop leadership training programs with school-based experiences that prepare future leaders to lead school improvement activities and demonstrate the connectedness of improvement initiatives to instruction.
- ✚ Increased emphasis on student data analysis and the relationship between quality instruction and research-based instructional strategies on student outcomes.
- ✚ Emphasize shared responsibility for all students and include a greater understanding of the diversity of student needs (special education, ELL/bi-lingual, At-Risk) within an educational community.

- ✦ Ensure that school leader programs include a focus on obtaining greater knowledge and application of current research-based practices that result in greater student outcomes.
- ✦ Emphasis on visionary leadership, creating a climate of respect and acceptance of student differences and emulate a collaborative approach to making decisions.
- ✦ Create/expand meaningful clinical and internship experiences with consistent benchmarks across all programs. A full year internship is preferred. Pursue avenues to fund internships to create an incentive for future leaders.
- ✦ Increased emphasis on mentorship and continued support for new school leaders.
- ✦ Increased partnerships with school systems for internships, mentoring programs and review of leadership standards.
- ✦ Expansion of ongoing professional development beyond the initial certification, using benchmarks and a common framework reflective of current expectations in the field of education.

Respectfully submitted by:



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