

**Illinois State Board of Education  
Illinois Board of Higher Education  
School Leader Task Force  
October 31, 2007  
Bloomington, Illinois  
Minutes**

Task Force members present: Steve Tozer, University of Illinois at Chicago; Chris Koch, Illinois State Board of Education; Linda Tomlinson, Illinois State Board of Education; Debbie Meisner-Bertauski, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Deana Demuzio, State Senator; Michael Smith, State Representative; Jo Anderson, Illinois Education Association; Betty Cittadine (on behalf of Gail Ward), CPS Office of Principal Preparation and Development; Deborah Curtis, ISU College of Education; April Ervin, New Leaders for New Schools, Chicago; Judith Hackett, Northwest Suburban Special Education; Brad Hutchison, Olympia School District; Diane Jackman, EIU College of Education; Michael Johnson, Illinois Association of School Boards; Marc Kiehna, Monroe and Randolph Counties Regional Office of Education; Jeff Mays, Illinois Business Roundtable; Peg Mueller, Chicago Community Trust; John Murphy, Illinois Council of Professors of Education Administration; David Prasse, Loyola University College of Education; Diane Rutledge, Large Unit District Association; Brian Schwartz (on behalf of Jason Leahy), Illinois Principals Association; and, Faye Terrell-Perkins, Chicago Principal and Administrators Association.

Task Force members not present: Judy Erwin, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Brent Clark, Illinois Association of School Administrators.

On conference call: Michele Paul (on behalf of Ed Geppert), Illinois Federation of Teachers; Deane Mariotti (on behalf of Janet Knupp), Chicago Public Education Fund; Patrick Murphy, Illinois State Board of Education

Staff members present: Michele Seelbach, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Erika Hunt, Center for the Study of Education Policy; Lisa Hood, Center for the Study of Education Policy; Norm Durflinger, Center for the Study of Education Policy; Anthony Marotta; and, Dennis Williams, Illinois State Board of Education (by conference call).

10:05 a.m. – 10:20 a.m. Welcome

- Steve Tozer called the meeting to order
  - Reviewed agenda and thanked attendees
  - Introduced Illinois Superintendent of Schools Chris Koch and Associate Director of Academic Affairs Debbie Meisner-Bertauski, Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Chris Koch gave observations on why the Task Force is important
  - Called for action steps from members of the Task Force
- Debbie Meisner-Bertauski stated the needs for highly effect school leaders to nurture and enable staff to their greatest potential, and acknowledged the ability of the Task Force to take important steps toward these goals

10:20 a.m. – 10:35 a.m. Leadership Matters

- Michele Seelbach presented a PowerPoint presentation about why leadership matters
  - Highlights of Presentation:
    - Reviewed examples of recent research from McRel, Leithwood, Sparks, Lyman, and others
    - Michele Seelbach stated that she believes the Blueprint represents opportunity to make a difference in several ways, from quality of preparation programs for school leaders to direction of school improvement efforts in Illinois

10:35 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Introductions and Review of the Task Force Charge and Protocol

- Charge is to prepare report for action plan to strategically improve leadership preparation in Illinois
- Underscored that the Task Force is not limited to the recommendations of the Blueprint and that the Blueprint is a starting point that could, although unlikely, be thrown out altogether
- Protocol has no hidden agendas, but is meant to bring together the most qualified individuals to figure out how to change school leadership programs
- Erika Hunt discussed the Wallace Foundation and how Illinois was chosen as a funded state, and acknowledged IL-SAELP as consisting of schools leaders such as principals and superintendents that work with Springfield, Chicago, and the Large Unit District Association (LUDA)
- Steve Tozer stated that travel reimbursements are possible due to the contribution from The Wallace Foundation
- Steve Tozer presented a review of school leadership programs from a national context

11:15 a.m. – 11:20 a.m. The Context of Our Work: Overview of Federal and State Legislation Related to School Leadership

- Erika Hunt stated that Illinois is positioned with foundational pieces and referred to the handouts and resource page on Public Act 094-1039, which included six key pieces:
  - A teacher leadership endorsement
  - A focused route to leadership for National Board Certified Teachers
  - Mandatory mentoring for new principals
  - Mandatory evaluation for all principals
  - A voluntary master principal program
  - A statewide task force that examined the Illinois Administrators Academy

11:20 a.m. – 11:37 a.m. Overview of the Blueprint for Change and Implications for the Charge

- Lisa Hood delivered a presentation on the *Blueprint for Change*

- Presentation centered on 3 major goals and 6 major recommendations of *Blueprint*
- Dissemination of Report: IBHE Chairperson James Kaplan was pleased with the report when presented at the IBHE board meeting on August 2006 and charged Judy Erwin and Joyce Karen (the ISBE representation on the IBHE board) to carry out the recommendations from the Commission

11:37 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.      Recap and Questions

- Steve Tozer recapped the morning, reviewed the agenda, and asked for initial reactions
- Ten different members of the Task Force contributed varying perspectives on the issues raised so far, including: problems with certification system, real and perceived; qualifications of university faculty; incommensurate compensation for university faculty and school leaders; competing definitions of leadership and problematic conceptions of principals, including the “heroic leader” notion; currently available internship models in Illinois; and the extent to which higher ed preparation programs are not sufficiently coherent programmatically

12:00 p.m. – 12:37 p.m.      Lunch

12:45 p.m. – 1:25 p.m.      Group Breakout Session: Initial Assessments of Blueprint Recommendations

Group 1: Restructure Admission Criteria and Recruit High Quality Principals and charge to the Illinois Board of Higher Education

- Charge 1: Bullet 3 (partnership between universities and districts) is necessary as well as supporting clinical faculty to support the clinical experiences of aspiring principals
- Goal 1: “Grow your own” has a positive potential to create a continuum of leadership potential in the district
- Also supported recommendation to explore ways in which preparation programs can be rewarded for quality admissions and training.
- Least needed were many of the state requirements such as revising Goal 2 of the Illinois Commitment and wider dissemination of the Blueprint.

Group 2: Improving Programs Using Rigorous Assessment Data and Charge to the State Board of Education

- Charge 2: Revision of certification and endorsement program for Type 75 is necessary; 3<sup>rd</sup> Bullet is necessary to engage a qualified review board without a conflict of interest – take recommendation to IBHE and ISBE
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Bullet and last Bullet are least needed – they must be modified to equalize money
- Recommendation 2: 4<sup>th</sup> Bullet is the most necessary because it sets the tone for other bullets; need to set standards on each measure; must be held accountable for results of assessment process

Group 3: Creating Meaningful Clinical and Internship Experiences and Charge to the Governor

- Goal 3: First Bullet is necessary – a year long internship has a great deal of promise, and the rest of the bullets support this
- Charge 3: P-20 council could be vehicle to do at state level
  - Least needed is the 5<sup>th</sup> Bullet (finding a variety of sources to fund the internship experience) because it is too much of a patchwork quilt of funding mechanisms

Group 4: Establishing a Rigorous Certification Exam and Charge to the Legislature

- Goal 4: Agree with the recommendations to replace current school leadership program exit exam but also to include emotional intelligence in exam, either in vignettes or with the clinical supervisory piece for aspiring principals
- Charge 4: 1<sup>st</sup> Bullet is needed for the legislative support recommendation of Joint Education Committee, depending upon who comprises the JEC
  - Least needed is Bullet 2 because the principal is the only instructional leader uniquely qualified to evaluate certified staff

Group 5: Revising the Certification and Endorsement Structure and Charge to University Presidents

- Goal 5: 1<sup>st</sup> Bullet (reserving Type 75 for principals only) is necessary because standards and selectivity should be raised for leadership program admittance; special licensure for principalship should be explored
  - Should a Masters in Ed. Admin. or Teaching be needed? Tenure might need to be available for principalship
  - The group also discussed whether universities should be the only organizational structure allowed to certify principals
- Charge 5: The last bullet (developing a collaboration of support for aspiring principals) should also include ROEs

Group 6: Coordinating a Rigorous Program Review and Approval Process and Charge to School Boards

- Bullets 1 and 3 are important; the school district and program must work together for the internship process; affordability feeds into selectivity
- Bullets 2 and 3 are promising – an external 3<sup>rd</sup> party creates more resistance; 2 and 3 consolidate into an official model
- A new bullet should amend Illinois statutes; a different principal licensure is beneficial

Following reports from groups, general discussion ensued, addressing such issues as:

- the definition of leadership and what are the implications of the leadership roles of teachers and the career ladder
- bigger districts conducting Masters programs on weekends and evenings
- public and private colleges and universities have good practices but may need to collaborate on better marketing of their successes.

- consistency of quality of tenure-line and adjunct higher ed faculty
- continued mentoring of new school leaders

1:55 p.m. – 2:05 p.m. Key Messages/Next Steps Forward

- interest in featuring some best practices every time the Task Force meets
  - possible invitation of someone from Massachusetts who could speak to their innovations
  - someone from Springfield could present as well at the task force meeting held in Springfield
- request for minutes and a report by Saturday, to which Erika Hunt responded that it would be released by email on Friday
- Steve Tozer thanked the members of the Task Force for a most encouraging start and adjourned the meeting