

**Illinois School Leader Task Force
November 27, 2007
Springfield, Illinois
Minutes**

Task Force members present: Steve Tozer, University of Illinois at Chicago; Linda Tomlinson, Illinois State Board of Education; Debbie Meisner-Bertauski, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Jo Anderson, Illinois Education Association; Gail Ward, CPS Office of Principal Preparation and Development; Linda Shay, CPS Office of Principal Preparation and Development; Brad Hutchison, Olympia School District; Diane Jackman, EIU College of Education; Michael Johnson, Illinois Association of School Boards; John Murphy, Illinois Council of Professors of Education Administration; David Prasse, Loyola University College of Education; Diane Rutledge, Large Unit District Association; Jason Leahy, Illinois Principals Association; Faye Terrell-Perkins, Chicago Principal and Administrators Association; Ed Geppert, Illinois Federation of Teachers; Carlene Lutz, Illinois Federation of Teachers; Chris Koch, Illinois State Board of Education; Deborah Curtis, Illinois State University; Judy Erwin, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Patrick Murphy, Illinois State Board of Education; Mark Kiehna, Regional Office of Monroe and Randolph Counties; and Judy Hackett, Northwest Suburban Special Education Organization

Task Force members on conference call: Peg Mueller, Chicago Community Trust and Janet Knupp, Chicago Public Education Fund

Task Force members not present: Deana Demuzio, State Senator; Michael Smith, State Representative; April Ervin, New Leaders for New Schools, Chicago; Jeff Mays, Illinois Business Roundtable; Brent Clark, Illinois Association of School Administrators; and Darlene Ruscitti, DuPage ROE

Guest presenters: Joe Pacha, Illinois State University; Linda Morford, Eastern Illinois University; Jon Crawford, Northern Illinois University; June Grivetti, University of St. Francis; and Jenny Tripses, Bradley University

Staff members present: Michele Seelbach, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Erika Hunt, Illinois State University; Lisa Hood, Illinois State University; Anthony Marotta, Illinois State University; and Dennis Williams, Illinois State Board of Education

10:07 a.m. – 10:20 a.m. Welcome

- Steve Tozer called the meeting to order
 - Led introductions and discussed plans for the future of the Task Force
 - Announced for later discussion the value of an internal survey and position statements to obtain viewpoints of Task Force members
- Judy Erwin raised a few concerns about timing and direction of the task force
- Tozer mentioned the need to form a drafting committee for final document
- Tozer introduced John Murphy and members of the Illinois Council of Professors of Educational Administration (ICPEA) Special Task Force and thanked them for their gap analysis on principal preparation programs

10:20 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. Defining the Gaps Between Preparation and Practice: A Gap Analysis of Principal Skills and Preparation and Programs in Illinois

- John Murphy introduced the *Gap Analysis*, which was a study commissioned by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. A task force from the Illinois Council of Professors of Educational Administration collected data from Illinois teachers, principals, superintendents, as well as preparation program chairs and faculty members.
 - Defined purpose and participants in study
 - Introduced members that collected data and turned the presentation over to Dr. Joe Pacha, ISU
- Joe Pacha provided an overview of the *Gap Analysis* data
 - Reviewed each Blueprint recommendation and asked preparation program chairs/coordinators and faculty to rate the importance of each recommendation in improving principal preparation in Illinois on a scale of 1 = Not Important, 3 = Neutral & 5 = Important. (Please refer to the corresponding powerpoint presentation for more details.). Mean averages were reported for the data collection.
 - **Recommendation One: Restructure Admission Criteria and Recruit High Quality Principals**
 - Overall findings: Many of the programs are already moving toward more stringent admission criteria and partnering with school districts to recruit teachers with leadership potential. Program chairs reported that it was particularly important to adopt admission criteria based on the critical leadership attributes known to improve student achievement and holistically examine each applicant's qualifications based on these criteria.
 - **Recommendation Two: Improve Programs Using Rigorous Assessment Data**
 - Overall findings: Both faculty and chairs said that preparation programs should use a rigorous assessment system to assess candidate learning and use these data for program improvements. However, ICPEA notes that programs that are NCATE accredited are already required to develop and use an assessment system.
 - **Recommendation Three: Create Meaningful Clinical and Internship Experiences**
 - Overall findings: Program chairs and faculty viewed internship experiences as important and are always looking for new ways to fund quality and sustained experiences. Strengthening school-university partnerships and providing mentor training for clinical supervisors and mentors were particularly rated as important for assuring high quality experiences.
 - **Recommendation Four: Establish a Rigorous Certification Exam**
 - Overall finding: Program chairs and faculty were neutral on the recommendation that the state replace the current leader certification exam with the School Leaders Licensure Assessment and School Superintendent Assessment developed by the Educational Testing Service.
 - **Recommendation Five: Revise the Certification and Endorsement Structure**
 - Overall findings: Program chairs and faculty were primarily neutral on this recommendation to reserve the Type 75 for principals and change the statutory language requiring the Type 75 to evaluate teachers. Teachers often feel that their

evaluations are used against them rather than used to improve their practice. Therefore, it is inferred that chairs and faculty may be neutral to this recommendation and prefer that teacher evaluators must have the Type 75. In addition, faculty may feel threatened by the recommendation to reserve the Type 75 for principals because they perceived that this would reduce the numbers of students in their programs and threaten their job security.

- **Recommendation Six: Coordinate a Rigorous Program Review and Approval Process**
 - Overall findings: In regards to coordinating the work of the IBHE and ISBE to develop a collaborative program review process and amending state statutes to give IBHE additional authority to close or put programs on probation, program chairs rated these recommendations as being of higher importance than did the faculty. Both program chairs and faculty rated the recommendation low to implement a third party review of programs.
 - The next section of the report presented the findings of the teacher, principal, and superintendent surveys. Based on 177 skills/competencies documented by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), principals were asked to rate the quality of the preparation they received on the competencies. Teachers and superintendents rated the quality of their principals' skills on each of these competencies. Finally, all three groups were asked to rate the importance of each of these competencies for improving student learning.
 - Overall findings: Superintendents rated their principals' skills higher than teachers did, but the difference was not significant. Principals overall reported that they received adequate preparation on the 17 skills. All three groups rated the competencies as important. Not one of the competencies was identified as not important.
- Linda Morford presented preparation program data collected from 17 out of 31 contacted programs. These data included program descriptions regarding their selection and admission criteria, curriculum, and internship experiences.
- Joe Pacha overviewed the 10 recommendations ICPEA presented in the *Gap Analysis* (pg. 24-25)
 1. "P-12 teaching and learning" must be the central focus of principal preparation programs.
 2. A rigorous state certification exam must be aligned to agreed upon standards (i.e., NCATE/ELCC) and should provide valid and useable data and information for program improvement.
 3. We should think about the continuum of principal preparation and development. Preparation programs provide "initial principal skills and knowledge." Ongoing in-service professional development should be explored, developed, and funded.
 4. Internship data shows that there is little program consistency across the state. The State should develop standards or adopt NCATE standards for the internship and require ALL programs to adhere to these standards.
 5. Principal candidates need longer classroom teaching experiences (a minimum of 4 years are recommended) before being admitted to preparation programs.
 6. Partnerships should be integral to preparation programs and regional partnerships should be recognized and funded.

7. College and universities should revise their standards for tenure to reward the service of preparation program faculty (currently the tenure system rewards scholarly/research efforts more so than public service).
 8. The task force should support the recommendation that coordinates the program review processes of IBHE and ISBE.
 9. The task force should support greater curricular content consistency of principal preparation programs across the state. Beyond a core set of courses, programs across the state have very different curricula.
 10. Preparation program faculty should possess successful experiences in PK-12 educational settings.
- Joe Pacha summarized that we need to create education leadership programs for the 21st century that meet the needs of our future educational leaders and go beyond the 20th century practices for the system to change

11:45 a.m. – 12:10 p.m. Question and Answer Period

- Steve Tozer opened the meeting up for discussion.
- Jason Leahy raised concerns with placing any recommendations for requiring a set number of years of teaching experiences prior to becoming a principal.
 - Task force members discussed various perspectives on having minimum years of teaching experience. Some said that teachers respected the leadership of principals more if they had more teaching experience, but others said that the data is unclear and that years spent teaching may not be as important as the effectiveness of their teaching (e.g., someone could have taught for 10 years and still be an ineffective leader and vice versa).
- Steve Tozer questioned whether or not NCATE set the bar high enough. Deborah Curtis said that NCATE provided the minimum standards for programs.
- Michael Johnson suggested that lowering the number of principal candidates could save money. These resources could be concentrated on providing high quality internship experiences for those candidates who are serious about being a principal.
- Linda Tomlinson expressed concern with the reality of having a part time internship while full time teaching and still trying to obtain a quality experience.
 - Jason Leahy claimed that having fewer candidates would make it easier to provide a quality experience.
- Steve Tozer closed the discussion by asking what information was still needed to be able to make smart recommendations, then announced the format for the rest of the day and broke for lunch.

12:50 p.m. – 1:40 p.m. Program Presentations

- Faye Terrell-Perkins gave an overview on LAUNCH (refer to the attached materials for more information)
 - Started in 1998 to fill a void in principal and leadership education and support
 - Constantly evolved and changed
 - Looks at leadership from a more holistic perspective; must be incremental learning overall
 - Has a principal preparation program beyond Type 75
 - High selectivity; only candidates who really want it are taken

- Big time hands on partnerships
- Full time internships (due to selectivity and extra funding)
- Database program assessment results in far higher yield
- Diane Rutledge, LUDA, gave an overview of the partnership between Springfield Public School District #186 and Illinois State University in providing a principal preparation program (refer to the attached materials for more information)
 - Courses are team taught
 - District data is used in instruction
 - Ends in capstone course
 - Internships are weeklong and build into courses
 - Candidates are pushed out of comfort zones into different schools and levels
 - Yearlong internship for a handful of candidates
 - Offers a continuum of support; everyone has a mentor for first two years
 - Joe Pacha and Michele Seelbach commented on their experiences as teachers in this principal preparation program. Joe discussed the relevance of relating the theory and practice of educational leadership. Michele discussed the relevance of teaching topics on the No Child Left Behind Act, state assessment data, and school improvement planning to the current work of students.
- Steve Tozer claimed that to implement high quality programs correctly it will cost money.
 - Not treating all Type 75 candidates in principal preparation programs as principal candidates may focus resources and funding for principal preparation.
 - Must be more creative in higher education to offer Master's programs for those teachers who want advanced certification (e.g., teacher leader), but do not necessarily want to be a principal.
 - Mark Kiehna expressed a need for teachers to increase their level of proficiency in their given content areas such as English and mathematics.
 - Steve Tozer responded by questioning if such a degree could articulate to a leadership degree later on.

1:40 p.m. – 2:05 p.m. Plans and Processes for Drafting the Final Report/Next Steps

- Steve Tozer gave an overview
 - Need to create a sub-group of the task force for drafting the final report.
 - A survey will be posted on Survey Monkey giving task force members a chance to anonymously rate the most important aspects of Blueprint to pursue.
 - Task force members are requested to develop position statements (formal or informal) to get their point of view heard by Dec. 10th or Jan. 8th.
- Jo Anderson asked for a time for more group dialogue.
- John Murphy asked for any Illinois based data to validate leaders' impact on students
 - Steve Tozer mentioned the Consortium Chicago School Research as a reference to correlational results that show leadership as being effective in low-income schools.
- David Prasse said that we don't know what specifically points to leadership success from current data about leadership preparation programs.

- Judy Irwin said that Illinois is constructing a data warehouse so that we can have these answers.
- Steve Tozer claimed that we need to build ways to collect data on the recommendations that come out of the task force to assess their effectiveness in years to come.
- Jo Anderson said that more powerful assessment system tied to indicators would be a high leverage practice and wants to know more about the ETS school leader certification exams, which could be a lever for changing programs.
- Steve Tozer announced that the next meeting will be on **December 10, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the ISU Bone Student Center in Bloomington-Normal, IL**, and called the meeting to a close.