



Principal Preparation Reform in Illinois

Why we undertook principal preparation reform.....

For years Illinois had over 6,000 school leader certificate candidates enrolled in 32 universities. Because of salary incentives for teachers to move up the pay scale, institutions adapted their school administrator programs to meet individual rather than school and district needs. Easily transferable to numerous sites, these programs were popular and lucrative. They prepared administrators who operated more as building managers than school leaders, more as bureaucrats than as creative educational change agents. All schools, but particularly low-performing schools, need strong leaders who can transform a school collaboratively with teachers, students, families, and community members to create a culture focused on student learning—academically, socially and emotionally.

It was no small process.....

- Illinois State University Center for the Study of Education Policy received Wallace Foundation grant and established Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project (IL-SAELP)--2001
- Commission on School Leader Preparation in Illinois University and Colleges--August 2005-2006 resulted in final report: *School Leader Preparation: A Blueprint for Change*
- HJR66: Resolution created a task force to develop an action agenda based upon recommendations from *Blueprint* report—July 2007
- School Leader Task Force—July-December 2007 resulted in action agenda report
- Working Together To Prepare Illinois School Leaders Conference, Part I & II—May/August 2008
- School Leader Redesign Teams (5 teams) meetings—Sept-Nov. 2008
- Special interest groups meeting—January 2009
- Working Together To Prepare Illinois School Leaders Conference, Part III—March 2009
- School Leader Advisory Council meeting—April 2009
- HJR42: Resolution directed ISBE and IBHE to prepare legislative recommendations
- Statewide regional meetings to gather feedback (8)—July-Oct. 2009
- Working Together To Prepare Illinois School Leaders Conference, Part IV—Nov. 2009
- Working Together To Prepare Illinois School Leaders Conference, Part V—March 2010
- PA 096-0903 Principal Preparation legislation—Effective July 1, 2010
- Development of Rules—Summer 2010
- Rules out for Public Comment—Sept.-Nov. 2010 Approved by State Board—Jan. 2011
- Rules approved by Joint Committee on Administrative Rules—April 2011
- Principal Preparation Review Panel, established in Rules, convened—March 2012
- First redesigned program approved by Licensure Board—April 2012

Legislation

- Established a separate PK-12 principal endorsement that focuses on instructional leadership
- Not-for-profit entities approved by the State Board and the Board of Higher Education may offer principal preparation programs
- Must have 4 years of teaching experience (waivers for lesser experience based in rules)
- Programs must meet approved standards as defined in rules
- Included specific requirements for selection and assessment of candidates; training in the evaluation of staff; internship; and a partnership with one or more school districts or State-recognized, non-public schools
- No candidates admitted to general administrative programs after Sept. 1, 2012
- Principals may no longer be entitled with general administrative endorsement after June 30, 2014



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- Beginning July 1, 2014, the general administrative endorsement shall no longer be issued. Individuals holding a valid and registered administrative certificate with a general administrators endorsement prior to July 1, 2014 and who have served for at least 1 full year during the 5 years prior in a position requiring a general administrative endorsement shall, upon request to the State Board and through July 1, 2015, have their respective general administrative converted to a principal endorsement.

An Overview of Newly Defined Principal Preparation Programs

- New certification structure designating PK-12 Principal Endorsement
- Focus on instruction and school improvement
- Must meet ISLLC Standards
- Rigorous admissions criteria
- Strengthened content in programs
- Higher Education partnership with PK-12 schools(s)/district(s)
- Institution must commit sufficient resources for program
- Strengthen internship
- Common assessments for internship
- Revised state assessments

What does this mean?

For Higher Education

- All programs must be resubmitted under new format, align to ISLCC and meet all new program requirements
- Programs not approved or not submitted will have an ending date and will not entitle principals
- Must provide evidence of institutional resources to support program, including number of full-time faculty

For Current Principals

- Those holding Gen. Admin. endorsements will continue to hold those endorsements and be able to continue serving as principals (“Grandfathered”)

For Future Principals

- Required to complete new programs and receive new endorsement
- Required to pass new assessments
- Will be endorsed in PK-12
- Programs focus on instruction and school improvement

Lessons Learned.....

During the process of convening over 1500 stakeholders from public and private institutions, professional organizations, state agencies, parent and community associations and the general assembly, we learned a few essential lessons that will serve to inform us as we advance future educational reform.

- Work to a higher goal—*Improving Student Achievement*
- Keep work focused on that goal, even in light of multiple distractions—*How will this improve student achievement?*
- Be inclusive; invite all stakeholders to participate in the discussions.
- Be transparent; communicate widely the work being done www.illinoischoolleader.org
- Listen and hear the spoken words, see beyond the word