In attendance: Sara Boucek, Scott Kuffel, Paul Swanstrom, Dean Langdon, Joe Alesandrini, Jason Leahy, Diane Rutledge, Brad Hutchison, Diane Cepela, Scott Doerr, Sandra Watkins, Guy Banicki, Don Hackmann, Joe Matula, Vicki Van Tuyle, Joe Pacha, Mark Friedman, Doug Hesbol, Linda Sloat, Kellie Sanders, Vicki Phillips, Norm Durflinger, Angela Chambliss, Lisa Hood, Peter Flynn, Judy Hackett, Andrea Guerrero, Harry Rossi, Dennice Ward Epstein
Guest speakers: Jenny Tripses and John Hunt

10:00 – 10:15  Welcome by Dean Perry Schoon & Wendy Troxel

10:15-10:20  Welcome and Introductions (Norm Durflinger)
•  Overview of the agenda

10:20-11:50  Presentation by Sandra Watkins (WIU), Jenny Tripses (Bradley) and John Hunt (SIUE) on their research on the perceptions of superintendents on leadership competencies and preparation
•  Questions and comments from the group
•  Powerpoint is attached

Key points:
•  Purpose of the study: to determine IL superintendents’ perceptions of the requirements for entry level superintendents.
•  What is most essential?
  o  Establishing and communicating high expectations for effective teaching and student learning
  o  Ensuring high expectations for academic rigor and excellence with students and staff
  o  Ensuring that human, financial, and material resources are directed toward achieving the district’s mission, vision and goals
  o  Developing effective teamwork among administrators, teachers, parents, and school board
  o  Developing a shared vision, mission, and core values
  o  Listening and hearing others’ perspectives
•  Lower essential items
  o  Understanding and communicating research-based strategies for curriculum alignment
  o  Apply multiple change theories and knowing the difference between technical and adaptive change
  o  Employing the skills of futuristic thinking with a sense of urgency
  o  Levering crucial and political relationships to resolve conflicts
  o  Using the latest technologies to manage the district effectively
Navigating several political arenas successfully
Promoting diversity in all district programs and services
Understanding how demographic, political, and social trends will impact education over the next decade

- Key questions:
  - Do we accept the perceptions of superintendents that change theory, diversity, and use of technology are not important?
  - If we do not accept that, how do we convince superintendent candidates of the relevance of theory, diversity and technology?

- Recommendations for Superintendent Preparation Programs
  - Focus on real-world superintendent experiences and provide more rigorous internship experiences
  - Provide applications of theory to real-world situations (e.g., case studies, problem-based learning, working in teams)
  - Faculty act more like coaches than lecturers
  - If faculty weren’t former superintendent, go in schools and learn what is happening
  - Faculty need to understand the superintendent’s role, demands and challenges
  - Provide the kind of quality instruction superintendents wish to see in their own districts: candidates who can show their work, explain a problem, identify an action plan, and demonstrate how to monitor progress and measure success
  - Practice analyzing curricular, financial, legal, and political realities of a district
  - Provide an ethics them throughout
  - Increased accountability and financial strains, political skills are essential
  - Candidates need to learn the strategies and importance of self-care

Questions and reactions from the group:
- Disappointed that diversity issues are not showing up as important in the survey results; with the excellence gap we are leaving some students behind
- Identify competencies that are demonstrable and measurable
- Visioning is important and a struggle for candidates
  - Visioning is also vague—what is it? What do good leaders do to develop a vision?
- Visioning is fundamentally different than management—how do you close the gap from where you are and where you want to be?
- We need to focus on:
  - What superintendents have to know and be able to do.
  - How do we teach that? What type of experiences?
- Principal preparation criteria that limited adjunct faculty. What were the implications?
  - They are intentionally selected
  - Teaching in way that we know best
  - Teaching skills that we know are best
  - They have to be part of the department
- Programs need to be rigorous to meet the needs of the job
  - Management vs. leadership
  - Theory vs. practice
  - Leadership: how to translate vision and plans so that others follow along
- Mentors are valuable—many say they couldn’t survive without one
  - Need to teach candidates how to be good protégé’s: model this as faculty which shows authenticity in working toward improving the education system
Early childhood, ELL, mentoring during internships will set people up well to succeed.

One challenge in providing mentors is that the pool will be smaller than it is for the principal candidates in the principal preparation programs.

In designing the new superintendent preparation programs—do we (advisory group members) respond from our current perspectives, or do we take a global look at the superintendency?

What are colleagues doing in other states?

National initiative from Carnegie—how to differentiate between Ed.D and Ph.D

Principal preparation program redesign was meant to create stronger principals.

Should superintendent programs be geared more toward what principals are doing?

There was some concern about the prescriptive nature of the principal preparation program redesign. It was said that the superintendent program redesign does not have to be as prescriptive.

It will be interesting to juxtapose what the superintendents’ perceptions with school boards’ perceptions on what is important for entry level superintendents to know and be able to do.

If there is a discrepancy between what those 2 groups deem are essential—how do we bridge that gap?

11:50-12:15 Superintendent Job Description Analysis (Lisa Hood)

Questions and comments from the group

Analysis document is attached

Key points: In an analysis of over 60 superintendent job brochure descriptions used in district searches, the following knowledge and skills were most commonly listed as desirable by the search committee for the position (these items were listed over 50% of the time):

- Interpersonal skills
- Community-oriented person
- Maximize financial and human resources in support of educational programs
- Interpret complex educational and financial data to the board, community and staff
- Provide leadership for effective staff selection, assignment, development and assessments
- Provide leadership in working with the board to develop short and long range district goals
- Forge a partnership with the board
- High expectations for self and others, including high academic expectations

Responses from the group:

- The items listed seem to have a downstate, rural perspective
- Are the items based on the leadership standards? They don’t seem to be. We should use the leadership standards to develop the criteria that pertain to all areas whether downstate, urban, rural, etc.
- In regards to interpersonal skills and collaboration—what our university programs doing to help in this area? Dispositions, communication skills? Where does communication fit in the program?
  - Critical thinking about why candidates gave certain reactions and working with others
- There seems to be a tension between technical and adaptive skills. Technical skills are often more urgent and frequent and can get the superintendent in trouble, but adaptive skills are important for moving the district forward toward achieving its goals. So, how do we blend these skills so that superintendents can do both?
How do we provide the bridge so that the superintendent candidates can master technical skills and get to the adaptive skills?

12:15-12:45  Lunch

12:45-1:45  Revised Leadership Competencies (Joe Pacha)
- Questions and comments from the group
- Document is attached
- Next steps to finalizing the competencies
  - Vet these to an outside group of experts?
  - View these as a set of working competencies to guide future work and revisit at the end to see if any further revisions are needed?

Responses from the group:
- There was consensus from the group that the ISLLC Standards will be the foundation for the competencies.
- It seems that in looking at the competencies as drafted that some are action items (things to do) and others are competencies (things to know)
- What is a competency? How do we measure it?
- SAG has the responsibility for identifying the competencies and deciding the framework for which these competencies will be taught in the preparation programs.
- Need to think about the competencies in terms of what is it that entry-level superintendents need to be able to know and do
- Should we prioritize the competencies—some come first, others come later?
  - For example, financial competencies taught first, while curriculum and instruction are taught later?
- Can we provide some flexibility in this program to accommodate the fact that the candidates will come in with varied experiences due to the varied positions they have held (e.g., principal, central office staff; financial experience, curriculum and instruction).
  - Candidates would still have to show mastery of all competencies—but they may come into the program with mastery in some of the competencies. The candidate would have to show evidence of having mastery of any competencies.
  - Could there be an individualized learning plan that guides the candidate through the program, and helps the faculty ensure that that the learning experiences the candidate gets is aligned with the areas in which the candidate needs more learning experiences?
  - Because the competencies are so prescriptive in the principal preparation programs, there is interest in providing more flexibility in the superintendent programs.
  - This would provide a menu approach for experiences.

It was suggested that the competencies be aligned to the ISLLC functions. Joe Pacha pulled out the competencies and aligned them to the functions. That document is attached.

Continued discussion on other elements of the preparation program framework:
- Internships
  - There was a discussion about the first year of the superintendency being a “residency” year where the superintendent has to show competencies by the end of the year. This would entail a one-year contract with the district, and the superintendent would have a mentor. If the superintendent does not fulfill the competencies, the district can release
the new superintendent after one year, and there would need to be some discussion about what would happen to the new superintendent? Would s/he receive the endorsement, or have to undergo some remediation prior to receiving full endorsement?

- There was some pushback on whether this would be a viable option. Would districts go for it?
- How do courses and internships fit together in a program? There seemed to be consensus that internships should be integrated with coursework (i.e., coursework and internship experiences should be offered to candidates at the same time so that there is a tight integration).
- Internship should have both a formative and summative role in monitoring progress toward achieving the competencies, and finally making a determination as to whether or not the competency has been achieved.
- Need to define the terms “field experiences” and “internships.” Are they the same things or different—make it clear.
- What evidence will need to be demonstrated for showing attainment of competencies?

- **Partnerships:**
  - How will we define partnerships? Who should be involved in the partnership? What will the roles and responsibilities be of each party?
  - How formal?
  - With districts, or with individual superintendents?
  - There is some concern that districts won’t be interested because they are already partnering with principal preparation programs.

- **Qualifications:**
  - Can someone who wants to be a superintendent be eligible if they do not hold the principal endorsement?
  - Will an assistant superintendent have to hold the superintendent endorsement? Or will the superintendent endorsement only be for the superintendent position?

- **How do we create the model for this superintendent training?**
  - There has been a lot of discussion from our various perspectives about the current challenges in the superintendency and where we see superintendents fail, and what we think they need to know and be able to do.
  - We have brought up all the barriers to providing the type of program that we think we need to design.
  - Should we take off our lenses and design the ideal program, and THEN decide how it needs to be modified so that it can work in the real-world?

1:30-2:00 Next Steps

- **October 23rd**—Begin discussing the preparation program framework
  - Partnerships
  - Eligibility/Qualifications
  - Selection criteria and process
  - Course content
  - Internships
  - Assessments
- Information needs for upcoming discussions
• Conduct a survey with the leadership competencies after they have been aligned to the ISLLC functions so that we can conduct a further refinement.