ISBE Superintendent Advisory Group Meeting  
Tuesday, November 27, 2012  
10:00 am – 3:00 pm  
Illinois State University Alumni Center, Normal

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:
Lisa Hood, Norm Durlinger, Linda Tomlinson, Angela Chamness, Doug Hesbol, Brad Hutchison, Bruce Klein, Guy Banicki, Diane Rutledge, Judith Hackett, Scott Kuffel, Roger Eddy, Susan Sostak, Brian Schwartz, Joe Matula, Dean Langdon, Diane Cepela, Cal Jackson, Kellie Sanders, Scott Doerr, Deb Strauss, Don Hackmann, Brent Clark, Vicki Van Tuyle, Susan Watkins, Mark Friedman, Mike Jacoby

10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and Introductions

10:15 – 10:30 Review October meeting

10:30 – 11:00 Loyola University Principal Preparation Program Framework (Susan Sostak)

11:00 – 12:00 Superintendent Leadership Competencies (Doug Hesbol)
   Review Competencies from October meeting (Lisa Hood)
   o As a result of comparing the competencies to research on district leadership: Doug Hesbol offered three take-aways:
     1. Change should be systemic change
     2. We need to focus on instruction
     3. In thinking about governance, consider structures and the operationalization of governance polices, roles, and structures.
   o How set in stone are these competencies? How can we make the competencies flexible?
   o Linda Tomlinson responded by stating that the competencies are submitted in rules rather than legislation. This allows the competencies to be more easily modified in the future if they need to be changed.
   o It was also stated that there appears to be some overlap between what is seen in the research, and there are some outliers (standards or principles of effective leadership in the literature that are not found in our competencies). The competencies and our work need to be more proactive rather than reactive. This is important in Illinois when determining where we need to go, beliefs in Illinois, how we get there, but still remaining some local control. It was determined that a comparison of the competencies against research and other work on superintendent leadership would be helpful to identify the overlaps and the gaps.
Open Discussion

- **Diverse candidates and districts**: It was noted that we need to keep in mind the range of diversity of superintendents in state— some have School Business Official certification and experience and some do not. We also have superintendents in areas where there is little to no administrative support versus areas where superintendents have large central administration offices and support. What is the differences in leadership between these district types?
- How can programs be flexible to be able to meet different entry points?
- It was also stated that in law, CSBO cannot go into superintendent program.
- The knowledge and skills needed to be an effective leaders need to be the backdrop of all of this work.
- A member who is a school board members state that there should be a set base—a baseline set of criteria. Board members come from all walks of life. Giving the example of his board, they expect that the superintendent applicant in their district has strong knowledge of curriculum and instruction, and then they work from there to determine if the applicant has the other knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to be effective in their district.
- **Prescription of criteria for preparation programs**: There was a concern about the prescription of the principal preparation programs with the belief that state assessments will inform programs as to what is working well.
- In terms of providing support to superintendent preparation programs, many state level groups were mentioned (e.g., IASA, IASBO, ROEs).

**Discuss Survey Results and Implications for Program Framework Recommendations**

At this point the discussion turned toward discussing the results of the survey and their implications for criteria for superintendent preparation programs. It was the goal to determine where there was consensus indicated in the survey and where there is not.

- **Partnerships between districts and preparation programs**: Should there be a required partnership? There is tension here. The issue of local control versus bringing in community to education. Is this important enough? What are we trying to accomplish? Is this an essential component? What are we protecting? Is it an essential element of a preparation program?
- How do we define partnerships? Is this best left to local? What about the relationships between universities and school districts? It is stated that there is no agreement year on partnership— so maybe the word “partnership” be explored further. Is it an advisory group rather than a partnership?
- Are there accreditation requirements for partnerships? Linda Tomlinson answers, yes. The principal preparation program has criteria for what the partnership should look like. NCATE requires partnerships to earn accreditation through that organization.
In further discussing partnerships, a member asked how a faculty member stays current in schools? Should the tenure process take this into consideration. If assessments of candidates on the competencies takes place in the district, then the instructors need to know the local context.

**Professional educational licensure system in Illinois:** The discussion continued with the professional education licensure with endorsements tagged on and an assessment of competencies when they enter a program. If one chooses to go into the program do they need to be an educator? It was stated that if we focus on competencies, we will get to where we want to be. Developing talent = focus experience on competencies.

**Teaching experience:** The conversation moved to a discussion on teaching experience. Will the teaching requirement eliminate certain people? If that is a basic fundamental requirement, what is so important about teaching? Can “education experience” be open and inclusive?

For Principal preparation programs, the requirement is 2 to 4 years. Teaching- 2 years for entrance into preparation programs, and 4 years of teaching experience by the end of the program. It is assumed that these people will have strong knowledge and experience with curriculum and instruction.

What is there about teaching experience that is not provided somewhere else? This question was asked in reference to allowing non-educators into a superintendent preparation program. What about an experiential piece? What are those qualities needed to be a successful and competent superintendent and why are they important? This needs to be brought up if you are not going to require teaching experience (i.e. non-educators).

Someone then stated that individuals who are trained and licensed in any of these fields (not specifically education), those people should not have to have been in the classroom and created a lesson plan. It was then clarified that no matter the number of years, it is important to ensure that their experience is related to the endorsement they are working towards. It is required to have two years of growth (not specifically teaching experience) and four years to get the license (stated in the law). It is not required that the superintendent be a principal first. Candidates need education experience in the endorsement that they hold.

There was consensus that the candidate for the superintendent preparation program should have 2 years experience in the endorsements they hold as consistent with law.

**Approved providers of superintendent preparation:** There was consensus that to be an approved provider of superintendent preparation, the institution should be an approved principal preparation provider.

**Clinical preparation:** There was consensus that programs should be redesigned around clinical preparation.
What evidence is out there to validate the use of a competency-based program? It is then mentioned that when comparing education preparation programs maybe it should be ran similar to medical and law programs. For instance, if an individual went through a principal preparation program 20 years ago they may be able to pass but they are not necessarily current on the issues, it is based on the measure. Does the research state that a competency-based program is more reliable than another type? Someone answers that they are not sure of the specific research base but there probably is. It is also suggested that programs be looking at the types of experiences candidates have, from educational to competency-based.

Competency-based has many problems, from supervision quality, obtaining an internship within their district, time commitment, to logistics. Another important competency to be considered is a candidate’s interpersonal skill. How do we measure this? Someone suggests the 5 essentials survey.

The conversation moved to asking what are some other preparatory areas for education? For individuals not in educational fields that can demonstrate the competencies needed, what should be expected of them? Someone suggested limiting who can show the competencies. Another suggestion mentioned was that the programs offer a broad time frame established without specific hours spent, maybe a span of one year focusing on their competency areas (suggestion of 12 months).

Norm stated that he likes the medical school and law school processes and how their programs and residencies work. You cannot go further through the program without demonstrating competencies in these programs. How do we replicate this in the field of education?

Someone stated that there is value in saying that as part of the program the internship would span a 10 month frame, but the focus needs to be on the individual competencies, focusing on specific needs and making sure the hours are spent on those things. Can there be a mixture of both? Some of this is dependent on when an internship starts and making sure to include all parts of the academic year in the internship time span.

Lisa Hood mentions that there are competencies one can show early in the year and competencies that can be demonstrated later in the year. Norm suggests a minimum of a 12 month period. There is agreement on this time frame.

There was consensus that the internship be a combination of time and competency-based and cover a 12 month period.

**Years of experience of intern supervisors**: Should superintendents who supervise interns need to have a minimum of 2 years experience as a superintendent? Is there consensus on this? Do we have the manpower to provide this?

The next question included two parts. The first part states that “supervisors of interns should have a minimum number of years of administrative experience; the second part states that there needs to be “proven effectiveness in leadership roles.”
needs to be clarified. It was mentioned that it may be tough to find a superintendent supervisor with more or less experience (due to turnover in the role). A situation is put forth that if someone is getting their doctorate and working on their internship and their supervisor leaves, their new superintendent is new and what happens to the intern then? What if it is a rural community, does that intern need to travel to another district? Finding a superintendent may be difficult with those qualifications. It was suggested that anyone at the central administrative level could supervise, because there is concern that finding a competent, qualified superintendent will be difficult. Also, what is the incentive for the superintendent, who is already busy, to take on an intern to work with, will the superintendents be willing and able?

- Someone stated that we need to be careful when determining the qualifications of a qualified superintendent supervisor because there are a lot of people who want to be superintendents but there may not be enough manpower to take on these internships. Another way to go would be to pair up experienced, retired superintendents with new and aspiring superintendents. Ultimately, what is the importance of the internship and how do we accomplish what is needed?

- Lisa Hood brought up another point of agreement in the survey that of strengthening the ties between preparation programs and professional organizations. The tie between the entities will help relieve some of the stress of taking on interns as the professional organization supervises the placement and supervision of interns. There was concern that this could be an expensive proposition. To fund this, it was suggested that candidates pay a fee (like medical students) to cover the cost of the resources.

- What is the ballpark number of individuals needing internships? The answer is 200 individuals, which is pushing 300 people who need support for a year. Is the university running into problems finding mentors during the internship? What about the stipend for the mentors? Are universities finding problems with having superintendents supervise interns? Norm states that Illinois State University is not.

- **Qualifications of the mentor:** The conversation shifted back to the quality of the mentor. Should there be individuals who monitor the quality of the mentors, especially with the implementation of the common core standards?

- There was a question about Chicago Public Schools (CPS). How would one manage that system? Candidates would have to go outside CPS for an internship. It is mentioned that we remember that the license is to be a superintendent anywhere (although CPS has a CEO that is not held to the same regulations of superintendents outside of CPS).

- It was stated that the number of years is not necessarily important in a competency-based program. We would not want a brand new superintendent supervising an intern. This happens now due to convenience but is not the ideal system. It is important to
determine the importance of who supervises the interns in relation to where they want to intern (their district).

- Norm directs the conversation back to the question, concluding that there be a minimum of 1 year experience with proven effectiveness as determined by the university.
- A suggestion was made to exclude first year superintendents from supervising interns. Some exceptions would need to apply- as in the situation where the intern is in a placement and the superintendent leaves and a first year superintendent replaces them.
- What about a second year superintendent? It would rely on the type of relationship that superintendent has with their board of education. What problems will be posed by the board?
- The superintendent needs to know how the school year operates and unfolds in order to help the intern learn. Norm suggests putting this question on hold until the next meeting.

**12:00 – 12:30**  Lunch

**12:30 – 2:45**  Continued Discussion of the Survey Results

- The meeting continued after lunch with a discussion led by Norm Durflinger.
- Norm Durflinger moves the conversation on to the next part of the meeting with a discussion on where are we split regarding the competencies.
- **Superintendent titles:** An area of disagreement was, “the Superintendent Endorsement would be required for any position with “Superintendent” in the title.” There were opposing viewpoints. One opinion is that this should be a market-driven, local control decision of the district. The other view is that requiring the Superintendent Endorsement for any position with superintendent in the title helps maintain the integrity of the position. It was stated that the issue of titles is tough because there are so many different titles for School Business Officials. It is suggested that we differentiate between Associate, Assistant, and Deputy Superintendent. This is such a huge political issue locally in many districts. The impact is little when comparing it to the work done at the district level. Why we would take the chance to derail this work by changing the rule on the title issue.
- It is ultimately an issue regarding the protection of a superintendent’s title and their amount of responsibility. The job description for one official could be identical to another (but different titles) official- it ultimately depends on what the school board says. It was stated that to change the system (referring to the title problem) now seems arbitrary. This goes back to local issues and how districts handle the issue. They would need to change their names to meet the requirements.
o An example is given regarding ELL teachers: they have a different level of competencies than others.

o It was suggested that for those people who are affected in their jobs with the title change, it would be preferable to give that individual a year (hypothetical) to meet the requirements of the title or leave the position.

o The proposed rules state that the new principal endorsement will only be open to principals and assistant principals (taking out assistant superintendents); this brought up the 6% cap. If we look at who gets a superintendent endorsement, we need to make sure these assistant superintendents are covered. Plus, the fact that the assistant superintendent need to have the license, all while being conscious of the certification issues. Someone stated that they don’t know if it is an opposition issue, but it needs to be a reformed process. TRS is taking a hard line that a certificate is actually different, no matter what the argument that is made about how different the positions are. This matters when it comes to TRS. We need to be aware of the 6% rule.

o Someone stated that they feel the titling issue is a waste of time, but if it would help clear up issues with salary and credentialing with TRS than that person would get on board. The problem lies in moving up the hierarchy within one district. If this is going to be a big deal than we need to handle it, but it is a TRS rule.

o Central office staff preparation: It was pointed out that from the preparation program standpoint there is a huge gap in the preparation of central office staff that is being ignored. There is one program for superintendent preparation and one for principal preparation. Is there a need for another certification?

o Norm Durflinger suggests leaving this question alone for now and coming back to it later.

o Years of leadership experience: The conversation moved back to the original question regarding years of leadership experience. It is currently 2 years. Is there worry about this one? The survey stated that there are 41% in agreement for 3-5 years. It was stated that if two years of experience is required before admission to the program, then it will take 4-5 years to finish and a Doctoral program can take up to 7 years to complete. Someone suggested including the superintendent endorsement with the doctorate because of the requirements of some districts.

o Alternative route to the superintendency: Someone asked, should Illinois have an alternative route to the superintendency? This goes back to competencies and if they have to demonstrate competencies. There is a specific area of law that determines alternative programming. Few universities have this option available. It was suggested to leave this question alone for now.

o Timing of internship: The discussion then shifted to the question of whether or not it be required that a candidate have a year of coursework before entering their internship. It was stated that we don’t want to put people into the internship without coursework, which could then be a drain on the supervisor. Members suggested that
they start the internships after a year of coursework. Someone then brought up that there was agreement earlier in the meeting on the importance of field work throughout all coursework- meaning the internship needs to begin right away. Someone then stated that there is a distinctive difference between field experiences and internships. This will be a battle between time based and competency based programs. Someone suggested that there could be an exception based on the experiences of the specific candidate. There can be flexibility in what experiences are had during different parts of the field experience or internship and the candidate knowing the difference between what they are competent to do and what they need to work on.

- **Timing of the superintendent exam**: The next question in the discussion was whether or not candidates have to pass the superintendents exam before the last semester of the internship. Linda Tomlinson clarified that it was proposed to change the language so that interns do not have to complete the exam until the end of the last semester, instead of before the start of the last semester. This change is still up in the air and being reviewed.

- **Supervision of interns**: A question was then asked, can a regional superintendent supervise an intern? Do they need to meet any certain requirements?

  - Someone stated that in a large school district, with multiple superintendents, the superintendent supervisor can delegate who to talk to when the intern needs something or needs a certain experience, signing off based on who that supervisor trusts is competent to help the intern. There was agreement on this point.

  - The superintendent would need to sign off on those people being involved. A Regional superintendent is a different question- that person may not have the endorsement or the requirements needed to do the job. There was agreement to not allow supervision by Regional superintendents.

  - Someone asked if there is a limit on the number of interns one can supervise? The current limit is 2. With a few exceptions of some school districts, this may not be a real big problem.

  - The next issue addressed the minimum qualifications for supervisors and whether or not they should be standard across the state. Someone stated that they should not because it may be different geographically, that person states that they thought the partnership would maintain this responsibility of standards.

- **Diversity of internship experiences**: The next issue was whether or not the internship experience should be required at all grade levels, including preschool-12th grade. Someone stated that if you have interned at an elementary setting and end up at a higher grade level after the program, you are entering a completely different world and may be unprepared. This also depends on the other experiences that individual has had prior to entering the internship (preschool teacher, etc.). It was stated that it is
important we acknowledge diverse experiences, mandate PreK-12 experiences, and encourage more diversity in experiences.

- There is diversity among the districts, but someone asked why experience in a diverse setting is required? Someone responded by stating that our schools are becoming very diverse and those experiences are good to prepare for that. Not being able to deal with diverse schools will lead to a superintendent possibly losing their job in that school. Principal redesign requires diverse experiences.

- Lisa Hood stated that we are preparing superintendents to be system leaders—understanding the entire system and finding the root of problems. She stated that the student/community population of today in terms of racial/ethnic and socio-economic status may be drastically different 5-10 years down the road. So gaining knowledge and experience in working with diverse students enables aspiring superintendents to be prepared for working with new populations of students that they can’t anticipate now. It is another means of being proactive in the state rather than reactive based on future demographic trends identified in the research today. This is an opportunity to enhance what diversity means and carry it back to the preparation programs.

- Someone stated that they are not sure if this is a market issue or something that needs to be explored further. Does diversity need to be defined? Are we looking at economic diversity? Racial diversity? A diversity of settings is unlimited and is completely different from cultural/racial diversity.

- The next question in the discussion was whether or not candidates should be able and demonstrate proficiency on all of the competencies? If yes, then what percentage? It was stated that we need to look at follow-up questions such as a percentage. It is asked, what is proficiency? We would need to go through the score-setting process to determine what proficiency is.

- Someone asked about whether the candidate passes the competencies or the standards? The response was that both are used for assessments, and a candidate would have to pass all sub-areas. This would answer the question about candidates demonstrating proficiency on all competencies. It is required to have a passing score on all sub-areas. The content goes to a testing company to ensure the assessment is created well and assesses all competencies.

- When should candidates be able to demonstrate proficiency on the superintendent leadership competencies? Someone asked why would this be before the completion of the program? Someone answered that it depends on what this is used for. It is proposed that it be the end of the last semester of the internship instead of the beginning of the last semester of the internship.

Norm Durflinger’s Notes Regarding Superintendent Licensure “If Norm was king for the day”:
• Superintendent associations (e.g., IASA) with 50% or more superintendent membership will partner with universities to determine who will get into the preparation programs.

• Programs are competency and modular based. They can be developed by ISBE or the professional associations. The modules are mandatory for use in classes. Modules are to be developed to take up 2/3rds of the class time and 1/3rd professor discretion. Modules will be placed in one of the Clouds for access.

• Licensing test is competency based and students can proficiency out of modules. Test can be taken prior to program start date.

• Administrative associations with 50% or more superintendent membership can be a provider of preparation instruction.

• There would be no alternative licensing process.

• Professional Practice must be completed by all even if a student proficiencies out of a module on the licensing test.

• Superintendent associations of 50% or more are the providers of professional practice and will provide trained mentors and supervisors for professional practice. A student fee is charged for cost of the program.

2:45 – 3:00  Next Steps

a. CANCELLED: Next meeting is in December 11th at the Bone Student Center- would like to see a crosswalk of the competencies with a broader research lens. Try to type up all of the elements and ensure we have them all and frame them in the right way. A few items were put on hold and what to do with those.

b. What are the next steps to move this work forward for December- nail down the competencies in order to move forward, maybe an external review and verification?
   • Crosswalk the competencies.
   • Work on the ideas that were put on hold.