

# **Principal Preparation Programs**

## **Ensuring High Quality Leadership for Ohio's Schools**

### **Forward**

House Bill 1 of the 128<sup>th</sup> Ohio General Assembly, passed in June 2009, sets forth legal components for higher education reform. Ever since the State instituted mandatory testing on core academic subjects, students in urban and rural communities have scored significantly lower on achievement and proficiency tests than their counterparts in the suburbs. Over the years, the gap widened. “No Child Left Behind,” the massive federal education bill, created standards and required “quality teachers” in all classrooms. The federal government spent hundreds of millions of dollars on reform efforts to positively impact teaching and learning in our low performing schools; however, the discrepancy in student achievement not only still exists, but also in many cases, has gotten worse.

Under former Governor Robert Taft, the Ohio Department of Education revised and strengthened core academic standards and raised expectations for all students. ODE instituted state testing at the fourth, sixth and eighth grade levels and then published a statewide report card to indicate individual school success and individual student achievement. Nearly all of Ohio's 22 urban districts scored below their counterparts and ODE placed them in academic emergency.

Teachers and principals in low-performing districts implemented many strategies to raise student achievement. Districts spent Title I and Title II dollars on professional development to introduce teachers to research-based classroom strategies that focused on literacy and math. Education Service Centers, universities, and private providers offered teachers a myriad of seminars and courses in curriculum, classroom management, reading and math content and data analysis. At the same

time, colleges of education added more and more courses and programs of study approved by the Ohio Department of Education. Since the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education granted accreditation all 51 teacher preparation programs and the 22 principal preparation programs, ODE continued to approve nearly 95% of all new programs. However, no metric existed to determine the quality of these programs and courses. H.B. 1 sought to rectify this situation.

The Bill requires the Ohio Department of Education to establish a four -year resident educator program for new teachers. The resident educator program will be implemented in all Ohio school districts in the fall of 2011. In addition, the Bill requires that the Ohio Board of Regents establish a “metrics system and gives to the Chancellor the authority to approve programs in Ohio’s colleges of education. In addition, all education preparation programs must align with the standards and qualifications for educator licenses adopted by the State Board of Education. Finally, the Bill directs the Chancellor to provide to the State Board of Education the metrics and a list of the approved preparation programs. The State Board then has the authority to publish the metrics, and the approved preparation programs, which incorporate the standards and qualifications for each type of educator license granted by the Ohio Department of Education.

Ohio HB30, which is currently under discussion, calls upon the State Board of Education to “formulate and prescribe” minimum operating standards for all school districts. The standards include the implementation of “systems design” and “collaborative professional learning communities.” Inherent in this approach, school districts would be required to develop a common vision, mission, and set of guiding principles, which include a strong commitment to teaching and learning strategies that utilize technology and emphasize inter-disciplinary real world, project based experiences to meet the needs of a diverse student population. HB30 frames education within systems thinking and organization and thus has implications for educator preparation programs.

HB1 and some version of HB30 establish requirements that will impact administrators at every level. Most principal preparation programs do not provide candidates with the skills and competencies needed by leaders. Over the past ten years, reports from the National Staff Development Council, the Rand Corporation, the Institute for Educational Leadership, the Wallace Foundation and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation raise serious concerns about the quality of principal preparation programs. A study conducted by Arthur Levine, CEO of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, concluded that the majority of leadership preparation programs “range from inadequate to appalling, even at some leading universities (Levine 2005). These studies conclude that nearly all schools of education have low admissions and graduation criterion, lack focus, provide inadequate clinical training, offer disjointed courses that do not reflect reality, and are taught by adjunct faculty. To compound the problem, almost all public school districts award salary increases to teachers with advanced degrees, which increases the demand for principal preparation programs without little attention given to admission and graduation standards.

There is a growing need for highly qualified principals to lead our schools. However, ineffective preparation programs, increased demands and regulations, demographic changes and difficulties with attracting and retaining good candidates contribute to a serious dilemma. As the research suggests, most principal preparation programs do not provide candidates with the skills and competencies needed by school leaders. Many school districts attempt to compensate for this lack of preparation by providing leadership development to their current principals to help them address job demands and challenges. However, these efforts often fall short due to lack of time or lack of funds for sustainability. Thus, in our most challenging schools, the implications of poor leadership are evident: high teacher turnover, low student performance, and increased costs for professional development.

Therefore, to address the legal requirements in HB1 and HB30 and grapple with the issues of quality principal preparation, members of the Ohio Board of Regents Academic Affairs staff and two external consultants convened education leaders to form a Blue Ribbon Committee to address the issue. The Committee members reviewed current research, interacted with experts in the field, discussed the components of nationally recognized principal preparation programs and exchanged information about their own programs.

The members included representatives from higher education, association leaders, superintendents, principals, a research associate from Battelle for Kids and a representative from the Ohio Department of Education (see appendix 1 for a committee list). While individual members did not always agree on specifics, based upon research and in-depth discussion, the group determined that Ohio's colleges of education could improve their principal programs to meet current and future leadership challenges. The group felt that educators have the responsibility to redefine leadership development, examine best practices and develop more meaningful clinical experiences. They agreed that the preparation of principals should not be accomplished in isolation of the needs of k-12 schools. Therefore, it is vital that higher education institutions create collaborative partnerships with the "client" – k-12 public, private and charter schools. The Committee then determined what elements might be needed to raise the quality of Ohio's principal preparation programs.

### **Ohio's Context**

Currently, twenty-one institutions of higher education offer Masters' Degrees in k-12 administration and programs leading to principal certification. Of the twenty-one, ten are public universities and eleven are private. Each program must offer basic course work that meets the Ohio Standards for Principals adopted by the Ohio Standards Board in 1997. However, when one analyzes admissions criteria, collaborative efforts with

other divisions within each respective university (arts and sciences, business, management, finance, law, etc.), graduation requirements, clinical experiences, mentoring, and job shadowing it becomes evident that the requirements and quality of the programs vary.

Research indicates that the role of the principal and the skills and dispositions needed to lead schools have changed significantly over the past two decades. Yet, many of Ohio's preparation programs continue to offer curriculum that does little to prepare the type of leader needed for twenty-first century schools. This situation exacerbates when one looks at the challenges of school leaders in both Ohio's urban and rural public school systems. These school districts, especially the large urban districts, consistently fail to meet the state academic standards, and graduation requirements. While knowledge of Ohio school law, finance and collective bargaining comprise basic core courses needed for the principalship, the content and requirements of principal preparation programs must move beyond management classes and textbook pedagogy. Successful principal candidates should have exposure to and expertise in organization development, team building, motivation, community relations and communication. Knowledge and application of data driven decision-making, classroom observation, conflict resolution, student support and good teaching are also vital leadership skills needed to create an environment for academic success of students and quality teaching for staff.

The two principals serving on the Committee shared leadership expectations for school success. Based upon their experiences, they discussed their role as a leader of a successful school and highlighted the competencies their Boards expected them to demonstrate. The skills and dispositions encompass a deep understanding of effective organizations; therefore, **exposure to and knowledge of organization development (both theory and practice) form the major prerequisite. Other requirements fall within sound organizational practice. The principals suggested that a**

**school leader must create an environment with a governance system that allows all stakeholders a voice in establishing a vision and implementing an action plan to reach goals. Next, they felt that the school leader had a responsibility to support all staff in their professional growth by providing support systems that help teachers, and other members of the academic staff, reflect on their practice and on-going learning.** They agreed that the role of the principal included a deep understanding of how to create the type of environment to support programs needed to allow students to reach their full potential. A principal preparation program that address specific curricular content and clinical experiences to develop the skills and dispositions inherent in the above provided practice would impact the quality of leaders emerging from Ohio colleges and universities. Although the Committee reviewed national models and best practices, we agreed that many of the components of The University of Cincinnati's principal preparation program could serve as a model for a new approach.

Finally, one may ask whether Ohio needs twenty-one principal preparation programs and if so, how new policies can impact the quality of programs to meet the leadership challenges of k-12 education in Ohio Schools.

## Research Summary

Throughout the process, Committee members read several research reports to become better acclimated to national discussions and findings. While the readings were not exhaustive, the reports offered a picture of the state of principal preparation and examples of exemplary programs. A summary follows.

### I. Current Landscape

“In the last decade, a spate of reports from the National Staff Development Council, the Southern Regional Education Board, the RAND Corporation, the Institute for Educational Leadership, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the Wallace Foundation have all renewed concerns about the quality of principal preparation programs. The Woodrow Wilson study, conducted by Dr. Arthur Levine, concluded that the majority of leadership preparation programs ‘range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country's leading universities.’”

Additional research studies, including *Districts Developing Leaders: Lessons on Consumer Actions and Program Approaches from Eight Urban Districts* in 2010 by Margaret Terry Orr, Cheryl King and Michelle La Pointe, *Educating School Leaders* in 2005 by Arthur Levine (referenced above), *School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals* (A review of research commissioned by the Wallace Foundation) in 2005 and authored by Stephen Davis, Linda Darling-Hammond, Michelle LaPointe and Debra Meyerson and *Making Sense of Leading Schools: A Study of the School Principalship* in 2003 by Bradley Portin, Paul Schneider, Michael DeArmond and Lauren Gundlach all have all reiterated this concern.

Due to retirements and frequent turnover, there is a growing need for administrators throughout the country. Our country does and will need a cadre of quality leaders. However, with ineffective preparation programs, increased

demands and regulations, demographic changes and issues with both attracting and retaining good candidates, schools face a growing crisis.

Levine states that few of today's 250,000 school leaders are prepared to carry out the new agenda they face. Neither they nor the programs that prepared them should be faulted for this. **Put simply, they were appointed to and educated for jobs that do not exist any longer...**The role of today's administrators, both principals and superintendents has changed, they have to manage schools as well as lead them through an era of social change." (Levine 2005)

Across the board, research has shown that schools of education are not adequately preparing individuals to be effective leaders. Programs consistently have low admission and graduation standards, lack mission and focus, provide inadequate clinical training, have irrelevant and disjointed curriculum that does not reflect reality, poor faculty. Adding to the problem is that almost all districts, award salary raises based upon earning an advanced degree, which in turn increases demand for leadership preparation classes, but as a result often lowers both admission and graduation standards.

**One of the results of inadequate university preparation programs is competition. States, districts and third party organizations have begun to create their own programs and the numbers continue to rise.**

## **II Leadership Qualities**

There are essential elements to quality leadership and our preparation programs must reflect them. **Studies show that successful school leaders influence student achievement in two ways; one by supporting and developing effective teachers and two, implementing effective organizational processes which should be rooted in preparation programs.**

Currently, 43 states use the ISSLC standards to guide their leadership programs, but these standards do not guarantee that preparation programs will meet the requirements of effective principals. Additionally, NCATE and TEAC rarely fail to

accredit principal preparation programs. One only needs to look at the twenty-one university based principal preparation programs in the State of Ohio to see that they vary greatly. Yet, all have received accreditation. In *The School Leadership Study* research review the authors outlined the essential elements of good leadership and their essential job functions. These reflect systems thinking, good communication, motivation and student success.

Some of these same leadership qualities are reinforced by *Making Sense of Leading Schools* which outlines seven critical functions a good leader needs in order to be successful regardless of the type of school. The study states that the principal does not have to actually enact all seven functions themselves, but needs to be responsible for them all to be carried out. These include:

1. **Instructional Leadership:** Assuring quality of instruction, modeling teaching practice, supervising curriculum, and assuring quality of teaching resources.
2. **Cultural Leadership:** Teaching to the symbolic resources of the school (e.g. its traditions, climate and history).
3. **Managerial Leadership:** Tending to the operations of the school (e.g. its budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security and transportation).
4. **Human Resource Leaders:** Recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting and mentoring teachers and administrators; developing leadership capacity and professional development opportunities.
5. **Strategic Leadership:** Promoting a vision, mission, and goals and developing a means to reach them.
6. **External Development Leadership:** Representing the school in the community, developing capital, public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests and advocating for the school's interests.
7. **Micropolitical Leadership:** Buffering and mediating internal interests, maximizing resources (financial and human).

The authors of *Making Sense of Leading Schools* believe that there is no single way to lead a school or a single definition of what it means to be a school leader. Factors such as individual style, different school needs and challenges, politics and governance structures all influence school leadership capability. Therefore, policymakers, districts and universities cannot make generalizations about what

principals “need to know and be able to do” and fit it into a succinct list. They need to adjust their current beliefs and regulations in order to support and allow school leaders to effectively lead their schools. (Portin, Schneider, DeArmond and Gundlach, 2003)

### **III Types of Preparation Programs**

As previously mentioned, due to the dismal results of traditional university based preparation programs, many states and districts have turned to alternatives. Several examples include:

- California School Leadership Academy
- Chicago’s Leadership Initiative for Transformation (LIFT)
- KIPP Academies (Knowledge is Power Program)
- Broad Foundation Urban Superintendents Academy
- Big Picture Company

Several aspects of these alternative programs are unique. Alternative programs tend to give more attention to clinical experiences, include a mentoring component, integrate a curriculum that is more pragmatic and use faculty from schools of business rather than schools of education. However, like traditional programs, many do not conduct self-evaluations and their relative newness translates into insufficient data to really gauge effectiveness. That being said, many of their components reflect the elements that are shown in the research to be essential for producing quality leaders for our schools.

*The School Leadership Study* (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPoint and Meyerson, 2005) cites four main pathways or structures to leadership development.

1. University-Based Programs-traditional
  - a. Participants may be enrolled solely to increase their salary, not to truly lead a school
  - b. Centered around discrete subjects
  - c. Low admission standards
  - d. Not tailored to specific district needs

2. School District Programs-self created

- a. Seen in many large urban districts
  - b. Sometimes will partner with third party organizations
  - c. Number of programs continues to increase over time
  - d. Some in-service professional development is being expanded to address leadership
3. Third Party Organizations' Programs
- a. Relatively new (not a lot of data to measure effectiveness)
  - b. Serve multiple districts
  - c. Focused subjects
  - d. Types:
    - i. Non-profits
    - ii. Statewide Leadership Academies
4. Partnership Programs
- a. Collaborations between stakeholders-usually universities and school districts
  - b. Public/Private Collaborations

### **School District Program-self created**

#### **Boston, MA**

Given the achievement challenges of this district and the superintendent's commitment to effective urban school principal, the superintendent decided to develop a "home grown" approach to customize leadership preparation that would align more closely with district needs and priorities. District officials began by initiating conversations with leaders from area colleges and university graduate schools of education. In the end, the superintendent asked a faculty member at UMass Boston to work with other district staff to develop what became the Boston Principal Fellowship (BPF).

Foundation and federal support allowed the district to establish a School Leadership Institute within the district offices and to launch the BPF in 2003. The district also obtained state accreditation to offer its own school leader certification program. The BPF program aims to select candidates with strong leadership potential, a commitment to continuous learning, and a willingness to deeply challenge their own leadership beliefs. Fellows worked for a full year, four days a

week, in a residency-type internship. The courses were provided in a series of 17 short and long courses and seminars with faculty from various local universities, and other local experts served as instructors. In addition, the district had arranged with UMass Boston to provide course credit for candidates' work in the program toward the completion of a master's degree in education.

### **Fort Wayne, IN**

Rather than collaborate or compete with local programs in certification-related preparation, the district created three district based preparation programs to precede and follow university-based certification preparation.

- Investigating Series (meetings for individuals who might be interested in pursuing school leadership in the future)
- Exploring Series (a more formalized program providing basic seminars and on-site leadership opportunities to individuals in the process of seeking principal certification)
- Aspiring Leaders (a year-long internship in a few schools)

The Aspiring Leaders program enhanced the candidates' university-based leadership preparation. Components included: a paid, year-long, full-time internship, a series of professional development sessions on the content and skills essential for site leadership, a candidate portfolio and individual and group reflection meetings. The program aligns with the leadership expectations in the district, the ISLLC standards, and the district's core leadership beliefs about effective practice.

### **Partnership Programs**

#### **Chicago, IL**

In 2003, the district developed a leadership development strategy and created a rigorous eligibility process for candidates seeking to become part of the district's pool. In addition, the district took steps to give priority to selected university-based and alternative leadership preparation programs and to provide paid, full-time internships for candidates from those programs. The district's partners included:

the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), New Leaders for New Schools and Teach for America's (TFA) partnership with Harvard University to prepare candidates for school leadership positions.

### **Jefferson County, KY**

**The District aligned its leadership programs between 2007 and 2009. The district formed a partnership with four universities (Bellarmine, Spalding, Indiana University Southeast and Louisville). The district designated these four institutions as its preferred program partners.** As component of this preferred status, the district arranged for facilitators from the other district-based leadership preparation programs to serve as adjunct faculty in the universities' leadership preparation programs. According to the study, "the combination of this preferential status—as earned through program alignment with district standards—and the shared staff helped to integrate the leadership preparation programs' offerings more closely with district leadership priorities". (Orr, King, LaPointe 2010)

The district's continuum of leadership preparation is divided into four tiers:

- Introduction to School Leadership: A one year program designed for K–12 teachers interested in developing their instructional leadership skills.
- IDEAS and University Collaboration/ University Program Redesign: A yearlong program offered in conjunction with the four universities.
- Principals for Tomorrow: A year-long program designed for K–12 teachers and certified non-teaching staff that are in leadership roles and have completed a principal preparation program.
- Internship: A full-year, full-time, paid internship was available each year for up to six aspiring principals who had completed principal certification.

Moreover, the district provided support for new and experienced school leaders, including induction support, mentoring, and ongoing Professional Development.

## **IV Best Practices/Models**

In addition to the programs mentioned above, the totality of the research consistently mentions a few leadership preparation programs that can serve as models and are considered “best practices” in the field.

### **International Model:**

Finding no exemplary model in the US, the Levine study looked to England’s National College for School Leadership as the most promising model for principal preparation. It is a free standing government agency similar to a national war college and it is well financed. It is based on a seamless and continuous set of programs that are organized around the entire progression of a leader’s career and it is geared to the work of practicing leaders by combining on the job training and classroom instruction. Its faculty is comprised of both successful education practitioners and academics from the college. Equally important, they go through an extensive, continuous and rigorous self-evaluation to constantly and consistently improve the program.

The main elements include:

- Problem solving, experiential, field-based learning
- Coaching, mentoring
- 360 degree feedback, self-assessment, portfolios
- Cohorts, peer learning
- Simulations, technology

### **University Models:**

- The University of Virginia’s School Turnaround Specialist Program
- Stanford’s two-year joint M.B.A. and M.A. in education
- Harvard’s Graduate School of Education
- Peabody College at Vanderbilt University

- The University of Wisconsin at Madison
- Delta State University in Mississippi
- University of Connecticut
- Washington's Center for Education Leadership

### **District Models:**

- Jefferson, KY
- NYC Leadership Academy
- San Diego
- St. Paul, MN

### **State models:**

- The Connecticut Administrator Test requires principal candidates to map out school improvements and respond to concrete school-wide problems based on school and community profiles and data about student learning.
- The North Carolina Principal Fellows Program provides an annual scholarship loan of \$20,000 for two years of study, the second year of which candidates spend in a supervised full-time administrative internship in a public school. Fellows repay the scholarship loan with four years of service as a principal or assistant principal at a public school.
- In the late 1990's, the state of Mississippi shut down all of its university-administered preparation programs and made them re-apply for accreditation. They then required at least 80 percent of a program's graduates to pass the state administrator test. Initially, every program failed to meet the 80 percent pass rate, but that forced an overhaul of the university-based programs, strengthening the principal pipeline statewide.
- Missouri Leadership Program
- Georgia's Institute for School Improvement

### **Partnership Models:**

- The University of San Diego's Educational Leadership Development Academy and San Diego Unified Schools
- Bank Street College with Region 1 NYC
- Gheens Professional Development Academy and Jefferson County, KY

- Mayerson Academy and Cincinnati, OH and local businesses

### **Alternative/Third Party Models:**

- New Leaders for New Schools
- KIPP's Fisher Fellows program
- New York City Leadership Academy
- Big Picture Company-Principal Residency Network

### **An Ohio Model:**

The University of Cincinnati offers a leadership preparation program that includes many of the best practices cited in the research. This is not to say that other Ohio Principal Preparation Programs lack research-based approaches; however, UC's program appears to be the most comprehensive.

The University of Cincinnati's Educational Leadership Program includes its Leadership Development Academy, an induction experience for master's degree and principal licensure programs. The Academy is an intense, six-week experience that introduces potential school leaders to the knowledge base, skills, attitudes, and values needed to become a school leader. In collaboration with area schools, the Education Leadership Program also offers the Aspiring Leaders Program to identify and support individuals who have the potential to become effective leaders in elementary and secondary schools.

The leadership model exemplifies "the principles of Social Justice, Caring, Diversity, and Collaboration in authentic tangible ways in all aspect of the program." The central tenets of the program include:

- **Problems of Practice:** Students engage in problem-based learning in which they develop and test theories in context
- **Partnerships:** Partnerships between many schools in the Cincinnati area offer students a comprehensive experience. Candidates, along with their professors, form professional learning communities to share experiences and become active problem solvers.
- **Diversity:** Education settings are composed of different types of people with various backgrounds and experiences. The program helps students explore knowledge of self, acquire social and cultural knowledge of others, and develop strategies to create inclusive learning communities.
- **Democratic Transformational Leadership:** The goal of transformational leadership is to create an environment for growth both for

the candidate and for the candidate's prospective school assignment. The work is intellectual, ethical and reflective.

- **Inquiry:** The program focuses on a variety of research approaches that concentrates on problems identified in the field. The University and the school districts work closely in developing leaders who can formulate important and relevant research questions and who can use systemic inquiry in seeking the answers.
- **On-going and Culminating Field Experiences:** A year-long internship, along with other course-based clinical experiences, offers candidates an opportunity to work within schools and communities to better understand the promises and challenges of leadership.

## V Essential Components

One overarching theme in the studies is that there needs to be a seamless and coherent system for leadership development, which responds to the changing demands placed on schools and their leaders. In *Making Sense of Leading Schools*, every principal stated that “Their preparation for the principalship was poorly aligned with the demands of the job”. A look at best practices shows that effective preparation programs are a continuum of experiences, not an isolated event. Preparation programs must address the needs of the leaders ranging from developing to new to veteran. The report states that experiences in initial preparation, mentoring and on-going professional development must be included to help principals meet the challenges of effectively leading their schools.

The body of research points to common elements/essential components of quality preparation programs. Those programs mentioned as models contain the majority of these elements including:

- Research based instruction
- Curricular coherence
- Adult learning theory
- Problem based instruction
- Experience in authentic contexts/internships
- Use of cohorts

- Utilization of mentors
- Emphasis on instructional leadership, change management and organizational development

## **VI Conclusions/Recommendations**

Levine states: “the field is rooted neither in practice nor research, offering programs that fail to prepare school leaders for their jobs, while producing research that is ignored by policy makers and practitioners and looked down on by academics both inside and outside of education schools. As a field, despite some strong programs around the country, educational administration is weak in its standards, curriculum, staffing, the caliber of its student body and scholarship. Its degrees are low in quality and inappropriate to the needs of school leaders.”

“These weaknesses are exacerbated by public school policies that tie teacher and administrator salaries to longevity on the job and the accrual of graduate credits and degrees. Such incentives have helped create an army of uninterested students, expanded the number of low-quality off-campus educational leadership programs and spawned degree inflation. These policies have helped foster an environment in which low quality programs threaten to drive out high quality programs. **It is a race to the bottom in which educational leadership programs are forced to compete against one another to attract students by offering easier cheaper programs.**”

Levine and others agree on four main strategies to improve leadership preparation programs: eliminate incentives that promote low quality programs, set high standards and insist on accountability, weak programs should be strengthened or closed, redesign the curriculum to be systemic and clinically based.

## **Presenters**

**The Committee** met on three separate weekends: September 24 and 25, 2010; November 5 and 6, 2010 and January 28 and 29, 2011. Nationally recognized speakers presented at each session. During the months of October and December 2010, committee members reviewed research, prepared for whole

group sessions, and communicated via internet and telephone to further address major issues raised at the meetings.

The September session set the stage for the Committee's work. Dr. Arthur Levine, CEO of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, shared his research on principal preparation and leadership and discussed national trends. Dr. Levine framed his presentation within the current national context. National leaders and elected officials have challenged higher education institutions to "create something new." The demands of a rapidly changing world create a new reality. Our society is more mobile, our populace more diverse. Corporate America demands a highly skilled labor force to compete in a global economy. Schools must graduate students who have mastered core competencies within a rigorous curriculum. The "information age" and the new technologies drive the demand for outcomes and accountability. This requires "revolutionary" changes in our educational system. The shift from process to outcomes, from teacher-centered to student-centered classrooms throws everything into question. Practitioners built the current educational system for a world that no longer exists. To meet these new challenges, schools need leaders whose skills go well beyond management – individuals who can redesign and effectively lead within a rapidly changing global environment.

Dr. Levine shared data suggesting that while universities still produce 90% of school leaders, alternative routes are increasing. Across the country, states want better results. However, alternative pathways, without program standards and accountability could lead to bad policy. He believes that higher education has the opportunity to create structures that currently do not exist.

Dr. Levine shared his research. Over 500 school leadership programs in the country produce 15,000 masters' degrees and 2300 doctorates, but far too many of these programs are not preparing leaders to meet the needs of students to compete in the job market. His studies suggested that 80% of the school leadership programs offer the same foundational courses, yet, 40% of the principals surveyed indicated the leadership programs they completed were outdated, 44% indicated that the programs lacked rigor and 45% indicated that

the programs were of low quality. More than 50% of the respondents stated that the only reason they pursued leadership programs was that they were looking for a salary increase.

The quality of these programs often suffers because most courses are taught by part-time faculty who are also full-time teachers. Traditional university faculty tend to have little experience or involvement with k-12 schools. Dr. Levine suggested that effective integrated pedagogy occurs in the classroom and on the job. He challenged that higher education needed to create an environment where practice drives research; where professors teaching leadership classes understand the “practice” of school leadership; where theory is integrated with practice.

Dr. Levine’s research and belief that colleges of education must change their entire approach to preparing leaders provided the committee an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon the following:

- The meaningful changes that would need to occur to raise the quality of principal preparation programs.
- The causal relationships of the problems so that pathways for improvement are clear.
- The standards that could ensure leadership effectiveness and accountability.
- A focus on student learning as one measure of effectiveness.
- A set of experiences and competencies that include a clinical practice component.

To complement Dr. Levine’s presentation, the Committee invited Harold Brown, Executive Director of EdWorks Knowledge Works Foundation, to speak at its November session. Mr. Brown brought an “Ohio” perspective on the state of principal preparation. He discussed his experiences assisting school districts in their “turn around” efforts and suggested that many principals lacked the necessary preparation to serve as instructional school leaders. Mr. Brown reiterated that more and more private institutions, like New Leaders for New Schools, offered alternative routes to preparation and certification.

In January, Jillian Darwish (get her title, etc.) presented to the Committee. Using her vast knowledge of trends, and data, she painted a picture of the leader as a “continuous learner” able to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing complex world. Even if colleges of education embrace current reforms, they must still take into account what students and districts will need in the future. Colleges and universities must design a leadership curriculum that includes ways to help develop resiliency, flexibility, and innovative

## **Discussions and Challenges**

### **The Work Comes Together**

The Committee addressed several issues: recruitment (identification, recruitment and selection of principal candidates), standards (with an emphasis on instructional and transformational leadership), and skills and dispositions. The Committee discussed these issues within the context of research, presenters’ ideas, and individual members programs and experiences. The components needed to raise the quality of principal preparation programs fell into five broad categories: recruitment/admissions, authentic content pedagogy, clinical practice/internships, partnerships/collaborations, and metrics. The Committee analyzed these components and then raised issues for further discussion and decision.

#### **. Recruitment and qualifications for selection into school leadership programs:**

Currently, most candidates come from the teaching ranks or middle management positions in a school district. There does not seem to be agreement upon minimum standards/requirements for acceptance into a principal preparation program even though the Ohio Standards Board identified five standards, which fall within three levels of competency for principals: proficient, accomplished, distinguished. Nearly all of the preparation programs focus on preparing principals to reach the “proficient

or basic level of competency. A review of the standards suggests that the skills and competencies required promote good leadership. However, preparation programs have wide latitude when designing the curriculum for principal preparation. The experiences, course work, and even admission requirements vary among the 21 preparation programs. The Committee came to agreement on the following. *“When recruiting candidates, find a means to ensure that they have the proper dispositions and interpersonal skills to be successful, whether the candidate comes through a traditional or nontraditional pathway.”* There is a need to develop an admissions process that includes criteria to attract and retain. **The challenge will be to agree upon a method or instrument to assess these dispositions and interpersonal skills.**

**Analysis:** Create a recruitment and admissions process that attracts and retains a high quality, diverse candidate pool. This would require agreement on basic qualifications for all candidates entering a program. OBR could initiate the effort by working with the State University Education Deans association, along with superintendents and current principals to begin to address admissions criteria for principal preparation programs. Special programs that identify individuals from outside of the education field similar to the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for teachers would offer a path for non-traditional candidates. Candidates coming from the teaching ranks or from other educational professions (counselors, etc.), would engage in some type of selection process that would include an evaluation approach utilized by New Leaders for New Schools or the Martin Haberman’s recruitment and selection tool for principals.

New Leaders for New Schools, a national non-profit organization, conducts leadership development programs in several large urban districts across the country. New Leaders incorporates a highly selective process to choose emerging leaders and then, provides them with an intensive year-long program. New Leaders prepares potential principals in operational,

instructional and cultural transformation. The goal of the program is to provide intensive field experiences using a strong coaching model.

Martin Haberman, They agreed universities should exercise some type of quality control to monitor who enters the program – some type of agreed upon screening process. Leadership/preparation programs should not be open to anyone who fills out an application and possess a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

**Questions:**

1. How do Ohio's university programs collaborate for the greater good?
2. Is it viable for universities to enforce stricter principal selection process?
3. Should all principal preparation programs have the same entrance requirements?
4. How does the state address "on line universities" that accept anyone who wants to sign up for a principal preparation program?

● **Authentic Program Content and Pedagogy:**

The Committee suggested that all preparation program content directly link with an effective clinical experience. In this way, emerging and perennial issues become part of the curriculum and the disconnect between the college classroom and school building is minimized. Development of management skills (budgeting, knowledge of law and collective bargaining, etc.), while important, must give way to those courses and experiences that create the opportunities for candidates to develop the leadership skills needed to meet the knowledge explosion, the use of social media, and the competitive global economy. Technology provides parents and the community with necessary information about their schools academic success, curriculum, finances, athletics, issues, board meetings, etc. so they can become more knowledgeable and active consumers. Flexibility and

agility become central to leadership preparation – knowing how to address the issues of the day, and embracing the issues of tomorrow.

**Analysis:** A focus on the critical issue of what principals should know and be able to do frame the discussion on program content. Each of the presenters suggested that today’s principal preparation programs do not include content that addresses the “future.” Programs do not expose candidates to the different dimensions of a changing world or the technology explosion. They suggested that educators stay connected with the best minds from different disciplines to assess whether programs address the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Jillian Darwish called this an “intentional think tank of experiences” provided to candidates rather than reliance on classroom courses. Although some university preparation programs cooperate, with other divisions (i.e. Law, Business, Finance, etc.) these efforts represent collaboration in course design and team teaching rather experiences embedded in real situations. The Committee agreed that school districts should provide input about principal preparation programs so universities can better meet the needs of their “clients.”

### **Questions:**

1. How can colleges of education learn from private organizations that offer principal preparation programs like *New Leaders for New Schools*?
2. How do we create a system that is competency based?
3. How do we get the faculty to agree to sustainable change?
4. What is an effective mechanism that can be used to review current principal preparation program and make recommendations for change?
5. What incentives could be provided for a small group of universities to pilot an innovative program?
6. What is the district’s role in granting licensure?
7. What will be the process for change?
8. What support will be provided by the Board of Regents

- **Clinical Practice**

Analysis: All Committee members agreed that a clinical practice practicum become a requirement in preparation programs. However, the Committee had varied opinions about the design of this component and the length of the experience. They concurred: that the clinical experience closely incorporate best practices, research and theory, that highly trained mentors and coaches assist prospective candidates throughout the program and during the principals first and second year of employment, and that at the end of the clinical practicum, faculty and clinicians together recommend candidates for licensure.

**Analysis:** The creation of a required clinical experience became a major focal point for the Committee. Nearly all of the research identified job embedded field experiences throughout formal coursework that continues to build skills in every aspect of the program. Through the clinical practice, these skills will be developed in partnerships between universities and school districts. In addition, the Committee suggested that the clinical experience provide specialty areas. In addition, the Committee suggested that the clinical experience provide exposure to specialty areas such as urban, rural, suburban, elementary, middle and high schools. The Committee agreed that a strong mentoring component was an essential part of the clinical practice. Mentors should come from the university and the district. Mentors should be formally trained to provide constructive criticism to assist candidates meet the challenges of a rapid, continuous change. The design of the clinical practice – its focus, content and duration, needs a great deal of further discussion and planning. However, all acknowledged the importance of this component.

**Questions:**

1. What type of monetary support could be offered to candidates to enable them to engage in a full time clinical practice?

2. What are the incentives to become a mentor (released time, increased compensation, stipends)?
3. How can we plan and design the clinical practice to include real input from the field?
4. What support can we expect from the Ohio Board of Regents?

- **Partnerships/Collaboration**

**Analysis:** Every member of the Committee agreed that partnerships among universities, districts, organizations, and foundations are vital for success of any principal preparation program not only during the clinical practice but also throughout a continuum of support. The Committee felt that universities could offer high quality professional support after the clinical practice and assist the new principal address developmental issues. A new principal is not a “finished” product. This approach would call for a preparation plan using a competency-based model at different stages of a principal’s career. OBR and ODE should work collaboratively on a comprehensive professional development plan to take principals from novice to exemplary. The focus on partnerships is interwoven in all aspects of the report. First, the preparation program can no longer rely upon course work as its main stay. Second, although there are basic skills needed by candidates, school districts are unique in many ways. Therefore, whenever possible district personnel (teachers, etc.) should be engaged in planning curriculum and the clinical experience. In addition, the Committee agreed that an effective partnership would include the entry year. A 360 degree feedback during the clinical practice and entry year would provide data regarding principal effectiveness in many areas. Universities and school districts have an opportunity to collaborate and design on-going professional development for new principals. A strong mentor component should be a part of the ongoing support for new principals.

**Questions:**

1. How do principal preparation programs help candidates explore diversified leadership experiences that respond to cultural norms, economic differences, and communication challenges?
2. What is the mechanism to connect universities, districts, state associations, and other organizations so that meaningful partnerships will be developed?

**Metrics:**

**Analysis:** HB1 calls for a metrics system to evaluate colleges of education and their programs. The USO colleges and universities will be required to provide data that can be analyzed based upon on the job performance. Using a value added model, it may be possible to address leadership competencies. Test scores, alone, from parents, students, community leaders, etc. However, the evaluation tool(s) must be valid and reliable.

**Questions:**

1. What defines quality?
2. How will we pilot an instrument?
3. Will there be financial incentives for those universities that participate?

## **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

If as the research suggests, current principal preparation programs do not address many of the skills and dispositions needed to become a successful leader, what are the policy implications for Ohio's programs?

First, HB1 of 2009 as well as our commitment to the Race to the Top (RttT) federal grant, frames the need for the development of a teacher and principal performance assessment. Over the past year, a committee under the leadership of the Board of Regents developed a series of metrics to evaluate the performance of educators prepared in Ohio's approved

institutions. This includes a new assessment for teachers called the Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) created by Stanford University. The Ohio Board of Regents is currently looking to implement a similar process for evaluating the performance of principals prepared by approved institutions in Ohio.

This document represents the first phase in the development of a principals' performance assessment and the process can be modeled after the approach used to create the Ohio Teacher Performance Metrics. The document sets the groundwork to establish the metrics by which the Chancellor will evaluate principal preparation programs in the future.

One major issue that will impact policy is the need for colleges and universities to include an embedded clinical practice component as part of their preparation requirements. The nationally recognized principal preparation programs highlighted in the document included a meaningful clinical practice. In addition, the Wallace Foundation has created "The Principal Residency Network" where aspiring principals craft individualized learning plans that incorporate state standards and school needs with professional learning goals. The program is grounded in project-based learning. Those selected to participate engage in a full-time site-based program under the guidance of a mentor principal. The Ohio Board of Regents is committed to similar approaches and is willing to require institutions to revamp programs to meet new clinical requirements.

Currently, recruitment and selection criteria are determined by individual colleges and universities. Another policy consideration might be to establish base line standards for entrance into programs. Some measure of the quality of candidates recruited into the principal profession will be included into the Ohio metrics for principals for both program approval and program evaluation by the Chancellor of Ohio.

A third issue for discussion that may have impact on policy is the Regents approval process for new programs and the implementation of the new national paradigm for accreditation.

Clearly, Ohio is poised to address these major topics and determine how best to raise the quality of our principal preparation programs.