



## *Increasing Student Achievement Through Effective School Leadership*

Illinois State University • Center for the Study of Education Policy

### **Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project (IL-SAELP)**

**High quality school leadership is critical with improving teaching and student learning. Research shows that principals are second only to teachers in their impact on learning.**

In 2001, Illinois was selected by The Wallace Foundation as one of fifteen states charged with strengthening education leadership. In 2005, IL-SAELP introduced legislation (Public Act 094-1039) designed to license and support aspiring, new, and experienced principals. This included the creation of a teacher leadership endorsement, mandatory mentoring for all new principals, and a master principal designation program (known as the Illinois Distinguished Principal Leadership Institute).

In 2006, The Wallace Foundation increased its award to Illinois expanding the state's work to focus on:

- **Outcomes-based standards** that define clear expectations for skills and behaviors and guide principal training, continuous development, and evaluation;
- **Strengthened leadership training** with greater accountability for all of the state's principal preparation programs;
- **Team-based professional development**, including the School Administrative Manager (SAM) initiative, dedicated to building skills and creating capacity for shared leadership; and,
- **A school climate study** of issues that impact the working conditions for administrators and teachers.

Supported by IL-SAELP, in 2007, the legislature passed House Joint Resolution 66 creating a School Leader Task Force. Convened by the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Board of Higher Education, the task force made recommendations to improve the preparation of principals including:

- Developing a **specific principal endorsement** separate from the general supervisory certificate.
- Developing **new criteria for approving principal preparation programs**; and,
- Establishing a **new licensure exam** for principals.

Implementation of these recommendations – coupled with the previous leadership development that has occurred in the state – will create a system-wide, coordinated approach to developing and supporting school leaders that benefits the learning of all students.

A 16-member Executive Committee serves as an advisory board to IL-SAELP staff and its consortium members, a working group made up of representatives from state and national K-12 and community organizations, school districts, and public and private universities. Chicago Public Schools and Springfield School District serve as demonstration districts for the work of IL-SAELP, while organizations such as the Large Unit District Association (LUDA) and Consortium for Education Change (CEC) work with their member districts to further IL-SAELP's strategies.

IL-SAELP is housed in the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University. For additional information contact:

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