

Leadership to Integrate the Learning Continuum (LINC)
Advisory Committee Meeting
October 29, 2008
Chicago, Illinois

Those in attendance:

Matthew Brue – Illinois Association of School Administrators
Matthew Clifford - Learning Point Associates
Karen Craven – America’s Edge
Norman Durflinger – Illinois State University
Marina Escamilla – Chicago Public Schools
Elizabeth Foste – Illinois State University
June Grivetti – University of St. Francis
Kay Henderson – Illinois State Board of Education
Lisa Hood – Illinois State University
Erika Hunt – Illinois State University
Paula Jorde Bloom – National-Louis University

Nancy Latham – Illinois State University
Sessy Nyman – Illinois Action for Children
Erica Okezie-Phillips – McCormick Foundation
Sheena Panoor – Voices for Illinois Children
Christopher Rosean – Chicago Public Schools
Nancy Shier – Ounce of Prevention Fund
Sara Slaughter – McCormick Foundation
Deb Strauss – Illinois Parent Teacher Association
Dennice Ward-Epstein – Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education
Robin Young - Prairie Children Preschool

Welcome and Introduction

- The group was welcomed by Paula Cottone from the Office of Early Childhood Education at the Chicago Public Schools.
 - She distributed a handout and spoke about the early education and kindergarten options offered by Chicago Public Schools. CPS offers many different options for early education and some of the examples that Paula gave were the half and full day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs. There is a ‘step-up to kindergarten’ program that takes place in the summer to get students ready for kindergarten.
 - Questions were asked regarding special education in blended classrooms.
- Lisa Hood gave an introduction and overview of the day’s agenda and goals

Overview of LINC Principal Survey Research Findings presented by Lisa Hood

- Findings (key points):
 - Surveys were sent out to all elementary school principals in Illinois (approximately 2,600 principals). Thus far, 167 principals have responded.
 - 95% of the respondents worked in a district that has a Pre-K program, and 60% of the respondents said that they had a Pre-K program in their building.
 - Only 14% of these principals said they had any Pre-K teaching experience while the majority had teaching experience in K-3 and 4-9 (51% and 70% respectively).
 - Lack of *funding* and *time* were listed as the two largest barriers inhibiting principal’s ability to work with the early learning community.

LINC Advisory Committee Meeting
October 29, 2008

- In the preliminary, the data suggests a trend that the respondents' schools are engaging in alignment and collaboration activities within their own schools (within and across grade levels) and engaging Pre-K teachers to work with the early elementary teachers when the Pre-K program is housed in the same building. However, schools are engaging less in these activities with the early care and education providers in their community who are not affiliated with their schools.
- See handout and PowerPoint for more information
- Reminder e-mails will be sent to principals within the next couple of weeks to get the respondent number higher.

Preliminary Findings and Information from National, International and local (Illinois) Policy Scans was presented by Erika Hunt

- **International Scan** – key countries (see LINC web site for more information)
 - Great Britain – their National College for School Leadership is gaining world-wide attention and acclaim.
 - Canada – The Australian Primary Principals Association and Early Childhood Australia published a book on *Your child's first year at school: A book for parents*
 - Australia – The Canadian Association of Principals published an issue of Early Childhood Education.
- **National Scan** – States were chosen based upon their work with early childhood education
 - National– The Kellogg Foundation is sponsoring the *Governors' Forum on Linking Ready Kids to Ready Schools*, which is convening state policy and education stakeholders in Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Ohio, and Pennsylvania with the goal to align programs and practices across early learning and the early grades.
 - Iowa – Iowa has created specific criteria for principal candidates that requires experience in settings for diverse populations.
 - Ohio – The Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators is creating statewide Ready School professional development opportunities for K-12 administrators and will be awarding Ohio's Readiness School Initiative grants to ten elementary school principals to pilot the Resource Guide in their schools.
 - Nebraska –Nebraska is conducting a 'Birth through grade 3 research to practice conference'
 - In general, not much information was found on the role of leadership in the learning continuum. So in this sense, Illinois is quite progressive in its current consideration and interest in this topic. Information could not be found on what states are doing for early childhood directors (leaders), but Paula Jordan Bloom said that she could provide some information to the group on that.
- **Local (Illinois) Scan** - Illinois is redesigning the Illinois accreditation criteria for college and university principal preparation programs. Early learning representatives from LINC will have a chance to influence the new criteria with principles from early care and education and the learning continuum.
 - Standards Redesign team is looking at school leadership standards.

- Residency redesign team is developing the internship piece for the principal redesign program
- Assessment redesign team is developing criteria for assessments of principal candidates and current principals.
- Principal structures and endorsements team is considering a principal endorsement for those who earn the Type 75.
- The School/University partnerships team is developing the criteria for partnerships between university preparation programs, schools, and districts.
- In each of these teams, there is a significant role in which early care and education principles may be infused into this work.

Overview and Description of the Conceptual Map of Leadership and the Learning Continuum

- Lisa Hood discussed and explained the current conceptual map which was developed by project staff based on the discussion during the October 7th meeting. Prior to this meeting, Lisa sent the map to committee members and asked for their feedback. Twelve committee members responded and Lisa gave a general overview of their comments, most of which was positive (see powerpoint presentation).
- At this point, Lisa opened up the floor to the committee members to discuss the map and its usefulness for moving our work forward. Feedback from the group included:
 - It is important to think about the ‘vision’ presented by the map and how the pieces fit together.
 - We need to consider the stakeholders involved because each individual at each level has a different vision or lens for understanding and implementing the learning continuum.
 - The issue of parents as a stakeholder was mentioned in order to ensure that parents are welcome to be involved in the transition to kindergarten and beyond.
 - Principals need to be considered the strongest stakeholder and in a sense, a ‘gatekeeper’ to encourage teachers, parents and the community to be involved in the learning continuum throughout the year.
 - The conceptual map is too broad, we need to pick one or two of the boxes and concentrate on its fine details because it is from this that action and consensus will evolve.
 - We need to pick an issue; if it’s leadership than let’s concentrate on that. There is too much information in this conceptual map for it to be effective. It is a lot to take in and take action on all at once.
 - The group agreed that we should focus on the right half of the conceptual map (The *Leadership, Preparation & Training* and *Communication* boxes).
 - If we focus on the “who” (e.g., leaders & leadership) than it will/should eventually affect the other boxes. Therefore, we should concentrate on the leaders, with a distributed paradigm of leadership that includes teacher-leaders, parent-leaders, and so forth.

Lunch

Brainstorming on Potential Policy Recommendations/Policy Levers (related to leaders, pre-school and school-age leaders)

- Committee members brainstormed potential policy recommendations, or policy levers, related to education leadership (in early care and education and K-12 schools).
- A list of policy recommendations and related issues was generated and will be disseminated to committee members for their review and feedback after project staff re-organized the list.

Moving Forward

- Project staff will disseminate the committee members' list of policy recommendations to the advisory committee members.
 - Committee members will have a chance to provide feedback on the list to recommend modifications to the list (additions, deletions).
- IMPORTANT NOTE: **The November 10th meeting is canceled.**
 - To allow LINC staff and members time to pull together recommendations, the November 10th meeting was cancelled, but LINC members agreed that we should meet again before Christmas to finalize policy recommendations.
 - Within the next two weeks, Lisa will send out information about potential meeting dates and locations.