Setting our Sights on Quality and Coherence: Creating a Statewide Dialogue

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Abstract

Creating learning communities within higher education incorporates the potential for fostering productive change in the well-guarded ivory tower, and at the same time, improve the practices of those we profess to teach. Unfortunately, such strategies fail to promote coherent and systemic change efforts at the state level. Given the recent onslaught of criticisms touting an alleged failure to adequately prepare aspiring school leaders, this paper first describes how faculty at 17 state-supported institutions in one Mid-Atlantic state established a statewide network aimed at improving the quality of leadership preparation programs. Second, faculty desired to understand what sister institutions and alternative providers found effective in preparing future school leaders. Third, the diverse group discovered a capacity for “deep dialogue for improving the profession” and began to jointly seek state support for their initiatives.
Introduction

The last decade has seen much written and discussed about the quality of educational leadership preparation programs. In fact, Kramer (2004) observes “you would have to have your head buried in the stand to miss the current controversy that surrounds the preparation of educational leaders” (p.1). A recent Southern Regional Education Board (SREB, 2006) monograph claims that:

Current state policies and strategies intended to promote redesign principal preparation programs have produced episodic change in a few institutions but have fallen short in producing the deeper change that would ensure all candidates master the knowledge and skills needed to be effective schools today.” (“Schools Can’t Wait,” p. 4).

Ultimately, critics claim that school leaders muddle about in their response to the press for raising student achievement levels and place the blame for their perceived ineptness squarely on the shoulders of leadership preparation programs and those responsible for their implementation.

Not unlike the teacher preparation programs struggling with defining and enacting democratic practices, stimulating the second order change called for in the current policy churn (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Stainbach, 1999) implies that aspiring school leaders are able to recognize the nature of the challenges to be met, and more importantly, somewhere along the way, have acquired the skills and competencies for meeting them. In turn, this implies that those who instruct leadership candidates have the requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions for developing candidate’s belief that all children can learn and that democracy matters.
Herein lies the problem in our view. While the teacher leadership literature reports the perils associated with battling the bureaucracy, the socialization process for administrators results in a comparable hierarchy where administrative prerogative (Smylie, 1995; Wasley, 1991) enforces an “isolating and compartmentalized structure” (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995, p. 103). Similarly, we argue that a root cause underlying the criticisms of leadership preparation programs resides, in a large degree, in the isolation that programs experience. Despite the fact that the profession continues to benefit from national organizations like the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), the National Council for Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA), the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and its multiple Special Interest Groups (SIGs), namely Teaching in Educational Administration (TEA), substantive and extended conversations between and among programs remains limited or non-existent. Thus, transfer of critical program knowledge has primarily been limited to the presentation and/or publication of research in selected journals or textbooks.

We argue that the antidote to this dilemma lies, first, in looking in our own backyard to learn what successful practices colleagues have adopted and how well they provide candidates with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions for leading in a standards-based environment. While we applaud the emerging clarity addressing this issue in the UCEA 2006 Call for Proposals, we believe that extended opportunities for expanding the dialogue, to a level analogous to the classroom, are required in order to acquire the deep level of understanding required for transforming our profession. Put more simply, the pre-requisite for engaging in a cross-national dialogue is understanding
our local and regional contexts and how local practices facilitate or impede the preparation of future school leaders.

*Purpose of the Session*

This FLASHPOINT SESSION and paper specifically respond to questions posed in the 2006 University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Call for Proposals. We address:

- How can we facilitate better cross-national communication and exchange concerning the preparation of school leaders?

As practitioner partners, we argue that the kind of interaction noted in the Call rightfully begins at the state level and that instituting a dialogue with our 17 sister institutions and alternative preparation programs has helped established a critical scaffold for a larger cross-national conversation. First, by initiating the dialogue at a manageable level, that is, closer to the actual operation of programs where professional practice is more likely to change and grow, we argue that our statewide efforts constitute an authentic dialogue between and among providers. Second, and perhaps, more important, we extend our potential for preparing future leaders by partnering with the New Jersey Department of Education and co-constructing policies aimed at improving the quality of leadership preparation programs.

We unpack this argument by describing the multiple challenges imposed on leadership preparation programs when the New Jersey Department of Education announced changes in its administrative code in 2004. Second, we explain how this policy initiative developed into a substantive collaboration among preparation providers in the state and provided a scaffold for establishing a dialogue with alternative
preparation programs in New Jersey. Finally, we posit that our statewide dialogue creates a realistic launching point for initiating cross-national exchanges regarding improving the larger conversation on leadership preparation.

The Criticisms

The impetus for change has come from a variety of sources both from within and outside of the profession. Accountability from those who recruit and employ the leaders prepared in the educational leadership programs is at its highest level due to the many demands placed on their organizations by the No Child Left Behind legislation. Among many other challenges, school leaders must be prepared to influence student achievement, curriculum and instructional strategies, and to solve complex problems. Subsequently, educational leadership preparation programs must produce qualified leaders to meet this demand. Additionally, we now have national leadership standards, such as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards. According to Orr (2006), these standards have been adopted in 40 states and are used as a basis to form the platform for many high-quality leadership preparation programs and have been the focal point for program evaluation and revision in the states.

The most frequently cited critic, Arthur Levine, in Educating School Leaders (2005), strongly criticizes the preparation tactics being used to prepare and certify new leaders. He claims that many university-based programs are nothing more than a collection of random courses with no clear focus on preparation for the actual job of the principal. Levine asserts that many university-based programs are engaged in a “race to the bottom” as they compete for students by lowering admission standards, watering down
curriculum, and offering faster and less demanding degrees. He cites several reasons for this decline including curricular disarray, low admission standards, weak faculty, inadequate clinical instruction, inappropriate degrees, and poor research. While Levine offers a number of recommendations to improve educational leadership preparation, the most compelling one centers on the fundamental redesign of the educational leadership program: a curriculum that blends practical and theoretical experiences with classroom instruction that should include active learning pedagogy such as mentoring, case studies, and simulations.

During the past decade, multiple documents argue the need for change in how we are preparing our educational leaders including: *Educating School Leaders*, (Levine, 2005), *Southern Regional Education Board’s Leadership Initiative: Why Can’t Schools Wait?* and *School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals* (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005). For example, in a recent issue of Phi Delta Kappan (March, 2006), *Educating Leaders for Tomorrow’s Schools*, Jerome T. Murphy expresses his hope that we can move beyond the criticism and stimulate reforms in the preparation of school leaders. Further, he contends that schools of education must take the lead and act rather than wait for evidence about what works or for overwhelming political pressure to change. Instead, he states:

> We must be part of the solution of redesigning school leadership programs in collaboration with the state agencies that generate the policy on the licensing of our educational leaders. We must eliminate all doubt that we are capable of the designing programs to effectively prepare our future leaders. (p.491)
The increasing demand on the school leader to improve student achievement is evident in the multiple rewards and sanctions on school leaders’ performance. In California, for example, threats to fire principals as a consequence in low performing schools are not uncommon. In Portland, Oregon, a portion of the principal’s salary is based on a set of standards that are linked to student outcomes.

The Recommendations

Principals are expected to become change agents and facilitators and improve learning by creating cultures for enacting professional learning communities (Lunenberg & Irby, 2006). Additionally, principals are expected to be collaborative decision makers who defer from the traditional role as chief problem solver in the school to collaborators thereby, requiring them to lead from the center rather than down from the top. In turn, such competencies require a new set of skills and dispositions (Sarason, 2004).

In spite of the criticisms, Orr (2006) argues that many graduate schools throughout the country have attempted to move in this direction. Describing five key areas of initiatives from recent years including: 1) a reinterpretation of leadership as pivotal for improving teaching and learning; 2) new insights into how program content, pedagogy, and field-based learning experiences can be designed to be more a powerful means of preparing leaders; 3) the redesign of the doctorate as an intensive mid-career professional development activity; 4) the use of partnerships for richer more extensive program design opportunities; and 5) a commitment to continuous improvement, Orr asserts that we have compelling evidence signifying that innovations exist in the field and that such efforts have a positive influence on graduates’ leadership practices. Found in conference presentations and publications of the field’s primary professional associations such as the
University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), the National Council of Professors Educational Administration (NCPEA), Teaching in Educational Administration Special Interest Group (TEA-SIG), and American Educational Research Association (AERA) many new practices benefit both candidates and the schools they serve.

Similarly, non-traditional programs proliferate as part of the response to the demand for new leaders. Such programs challenge universities to revise their preparation programs or, perhaps, be relegated to a secondary role in a process where they were once exclusive providers. Murphy and Hawley (2003) argue a more basic point, that we are building school administration from the wrong set of blueprints, and thus, provide a partial explanation of the appeal for such programs. They identify three areas of content deficiencies that characterize most preparation programs: 1) a lack of attention to matters of practice; 2) a nearly complete void in the area of values and ethics; and 3) low levels of attention to the core issues of education i.e., learning and teaching. Murphy and Hawley state:

In many ways, educational administration had become empty bodies devoid of a heart and soul. Undirected by a central mission and untethered by a unifying conception of the field, the profession had drifted a long way from its roots-educational concerns and the ethical and moral dimensions of schooling. (p.1)

In sum, they contend that the most obvious place to assess a program is the curriculum, noting that most preparation programs are built around two core features; management and behavioral sciences. While they contend that these areas cannot be
Totally ignored, Murphy and Hawley argue that educational leadership programs should begin to move away from these core areas and focus their efforts on four main questions:

1. **What do we know about schools that are especially effective in helping all youngsters learn at high levels and about the men and women who lead these organizations?**

2. **What are the valued outcomes of schooling and how can we use these valued ends to rebuild the profession?**

3. **What is the valued “stuff” we want our school administration students to possess?**

4. **What are the new roles we want our graduates to enact?**

Murphy and Hawley (2003) propose an internship comprised of three components: first, internship activities that involve real school challenges, opportunities, and problems; second, experience that “floats on top of the curriculum” and mirror the life cycle of the school year and the corresponding work of the principal; finally, internship activities that 1) build new knowledge; and 2) consolidate gains from earlier field-based activities and test and extend knowledge and skills gained in various courses.

Finally, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) *Schools Can’t Wait: Accelerating the Redesign of Principal Preparation Program* (2006) reiterates what has been reported in other studies on the topic of school leadership preparation and elaborates on “how we can do it right.” Unlike the other research, however, they issue a challenge to state agencies that develop policies and strategies intended to promote the redesign of principal preparation programs. SREB President Dave Spence, places a heavy emphasis on the states to lead the charge with regard to redesigning principal preparation programs. He indicates that state leaders have relied on the universities to “get the job done.” But, now he believes that it is time for the state’s leaders to step forward and take a more
active role in redesigning school leader preparation programs consistent with the demanding role that had been established for principals. The SREB report concludes that current policies and redesign efforts have produced episodic changes and not the systemic change needed that would ensure that all candidates are well prepared and equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective school leaders. The issue is not whether preparation programs have to change, but how change will occur and who should be involved in such a process. The report further concludes that there is an urgency to the redesign of educational leadership programs, and it must be fostered by the committed leaders of change at the state, university and local levels.

Spence contends further that schools cannot wait for university programs to find solutions to their design problems. He says, “It is essential that there must be a commitment on the part of governors and state legislators to make this a priority.” The SREB report concludes with a discussion of the value of including districts in the redesign process by encouraging joint design teams to develop curriculum on the leadership concepts, procedures, and skills that principal preparation programs need to address.

Finally, Lee Teitel (2006) explains that alternate programs train and support new leaders in response to the lack of meaningful change by university programs. He posits that, “the university monopoly on preparation programs of school leaders is over and the university establishment must learn to adjust to this new reality” (p.501). Acknowledging that this competition can be threatening to universities, Teitel suggests that rather than be threatened by the competition, universities should view the innovative approaches taken
by these alternative programs as “the best thing to happen to university educational leadership programs.” Arguing that we should not:

- sit on the sidelines, but instead bring our knowledge, skills and passion to bear on the problem of preparing leaders for our schools and work with other stakeholders to get the necessary resources and support that puts a skilled and effective leader at the head of every school and district in the nation. (p.507)

Teitel offers three suggestions for modifying our approach to preparing school leaders:

1) We need to think about the participants in our programs not as customers or clients, but as investments;

2) We need to think differently about our “real” customers: the communities and institutions to whom we are accountable in preparing school leaders;

3) We need to think about how we partner with others as part of a larger school leadership preparation system.

**New Jersey Acts to Revise Leadership Preparation Programs**

Adopting the standards promulgated by ISLLC, the state required preparation programs offering administrative licensure to reapply for state approval pending a state review of program modifications and participation in a Critical Friends Review conducted by a panel of national experts. Professors of educational leadership participated in the assessment of their current program and submitted a written report to a review team of three to four nationally recognized scholars and/or highly respected state practitioners who worked collaboratively to review the documents and, in turn, provide constructive feedback to the organizations on how to further the success of their
respective programs. Drawing on the outcomes from other states (e.g., Delaware, Iowa, Texas, North Carolina and Mississippi), New Jersey believed that the process would serve as a catalyst for substantive reform of the university-based school principal preparation programs.

*The Critical Friends Review Process*

To Murphy, McCarthy, and Moorman (2005), leadership emerges as a critical theme in much of the school improvement literature. They argue that the role of the principal has been reframed and preparations programs of the past are no longer adequate for the current and future leaders of our schools. Outlining the events during the past 25 years, they dub this as the “reform churn” and discuss the various outcomes of these efforts including deregulation and choice, professional models, entrepreneurial models, and experiential models.

Such change is often initiated and implemented using four core competencies, including building a shared vision, engaging in inquiry, striving for mastery, and promoting collaboration (Fullan, 1993). In New Jersey, the Critical Friends Review process provided both the launching point and the scaffold for developing a second order change in its leadership preparation programs. Through this work, an infrastructure comprised of six principles and practices was developed which consisted of: a) foundation-based programs, b) value-based admissions, c) zero-based curriculum development, d) practice-anchored learning experiences, e) community grounded culture, and f) outcome-based accountability (Murphy et al., 2005).

Basically, in the Critical Friends Review process, Murphy challenges university faculty to conduct a “zero-based” curriculum review where all existing courses are “off
Faculty are asked to reframe preparation programs around the best practices grounded in the Interstate School Leaders Consortium (ISLLC) standards rather than forcing the standards into the existing coursework or aligning those courses to the standards.

**NJ-NCPEA as Framework for Collaboration**

Teitel’s third suggestion captures the essence of our goal (NJ-NCPEA) to establish and maintain a collaborative relationship where dialogue with the state department of education represents the way we do things around here. As a learning community of leadership preparation faculty, we are committed to continuous improvement by developing our capacity for preparing more capable and competent leaders. Further, we believe that collaborative decision making is a best practice because groups tend to generate more ideas and make higher-quality decisions. This process allows for a fresh perspective to be brought to the fore and, since we will likely have to live with the outcomes of such a process (Green, 2005), everyone benefits, especially when the stakes are so high.

The New Jersey Chapter of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NJ-NCPEA) began with an organizational meeting held at Kean University with faculty from leadership preparation programs. NCPEA sent Charles Achilles as a guest speaker to explain how a state chapter might operate. A second meeting brought scholar Joseph Murphy who agreed to serve as an advisor to the grassroots organization. Listening to the concerns regarding the additional anticipated code changes and recognizing the need for having a voice in the process, Murphy
extended an invitation for Dr. Wendy Webster-O’Dell, Coordinator of Educational Administration from the New Jersey Department of Education to join the effort.

Subsequently, meetings scheduled at the College of New Jersey saw Murphy, Webster-O’Dell, and other state representatives engaging in dialogue regarding infusing the notion of quality and best practices into all approved preparation programs. Recognizing that a two-pronged approach would be needed (building our own capacity as we helped develop new code), a series of planning meetings were scheduled aimed at organizing a state-wide conference to be held at Rutgers University in June 2006, with a second conference hosted at Rider University in October 2006. In order to prepare for the conference, we read the research, discussed, reflected, and shared our work. In the future, NJ-NCPEA will create two regional groups to continue the work, raising important questions and issues that impact our role as providers preparing qualified leaders for our schools.

Engaging in The Real Work: Revising the Code

In 2005, Dr. O’Dell invited the chapter to participate in an exchange of thoughts and ideas with the state Department of Education staff regarding prospective changes in state regulations related to principal certification. Beginning with a discussion of the existing state Administrative Code (6A:9-12.5), our meeting culminated with a recommendation to remove the following section:

(a) To be eligible for the principal Certificate of Eligibility (CE), the candidate shall:

2. Complete graduate study, within the master’s program or in addition to it, in each of the following topics:

i. Leadership and human resource management;
ii. Communications;

iii. Data-based research strategies for decision-making

iv. Finance; and

v. Law

These five areas have served as a framework for most leadership programs in the state with these terms appearing in many of the course titles and/or course descriptions.

First, we urged state officials to incorporate the language and the tenets associated with the ISLLC and New Jersey Professional Standards as the basis of course development (See Appendix A). Our second recommendation included increasing both the breadth and scope of field-based experiences for candidates. With the internship acknowledged as a significant and powerful opportunity to learn from skilled practitioners (Capasso & Daresh, 2001) and given the increased demands placed on school leaders, we argued that candidates need to understand and master the complex role of an educational leader in multiple venues. The revised code, however, did not require an internship experience for leadership candidates as part of their preparation programs. Instead, New Jersey requires its candidates for administrative licensure to engage in a two-year induction mentorship under an approved practitioner after receiving a letter of eligibility. After multiple discussions among ourselves and with colleagues across the state, we recommended that all candidates for administrative licensure must serve a minimum of 300 hours as part of “stand alone” internship as part of their preparation programs. Reflecting a rigorous set of field-based and academic experiences, our recommendations are tentatively scheduled for discussion and approval at the state Board
of Education meeting in January 2007, at which time members of NJ-NCPEA will speak on behalf of the proposed recommendations.

Discussion

Taking the time to learn what other public and private institutions in the state discovered about improving their programs was initially time consuming and lacked focus. However, as the dialogue continued, program faculty realized that sister institutions incorporated the newly revised state standards in innovative ways. Concluding that each of us still needed to learn and grow, and persuaded that we could benefit from working with policymakers and other institutions, our newly organized consortium sought additional dialogue with state officials. Sharing mutual concerns about the growing competition from outside alternative and online providers, NJ-NCPEA was committed to providing quality educational experiences and not “caving to the competition by requiring less rigor.” We were firm in our belief that our accrediting agencies helped keep our programs current and that faculty assigned the delivery of teaching candidates were “highly qualified.” Surely, all candidates are entitled to experience with appropriate degrees, experiences, and currency in the field?

Previously, New Jersey loitered in the background as other states actively pursued changes in leadership preparation programs and, as SREB reports (2006), little substantive change was evident in how candidates were being prepared. Programs floundered as external and online providers offered quicker and less expensive programs culminating in licensure for the principalship. Aware of the multiple layers of criticism and the resulting larger and still ongoing national conversation about revising preparation
programs, no one quite knew where to turn for advice about how to reverse the current trends and then, how to compete with a growing number of out-of-state program providers.

Nevertheless, the mandated Critical Friends Review Process (see Appendix B) and the decision of the state Department of Education to require these self-studies as a condition for granting renewal of their programs to prepare leadership candidates allowed faculty to explore meaningful changes in the delivery of curriculum and begin to focus more deliberately on the teaching and learning process. In turn, this decision prompted a virtually risk-free dialogue among preparation programs in the state. Willing to share the outcomes of their reports, faculty shared proposed program modifications and strategies for coping with the mandated review.

Unlike the past, program faculty now had a venue for sharing how they managed the workload and suggested tactics for negotiating the multiple sets of standards required by the accrediting agencies. Ideas for developing program coherence were openly discussed and faculty e-mailed syllabi and program documents, including assessment heuristics, to each other. With our national consultant and a state Department of Education liaison officially appointed to meet with program faculty, we were able to define common issues and begin to address the frustrations we faced.

For example, institutions in the state require different processes for approval of curriculum revisions. In some cases, this constrained the timeframe for making substantive changes in programs. Several institutions were concurrently undergoing National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educations (NCATE) reviews thereby, limiting the time available for considering and then implementing program revisions.
The policy churn, in turn, fostered a sense of community as we pondered why higher education made “doing the right thing” so very difficult. Early on, we began to believe that we “were all in this together” and needed to “cleave unto one another” in order to survive diminishing enrollments created by the growing number of alternative providers now competing in the state.

We continue, as evidence of our commitment to provide quality leadership preparation, to invite others to join our consortium to improve leadership preparation. New partners join with us as we tackle each new task. Recently, a mini-workshop held at Rider University, focused on how to increase different levels of authentic fieldwork throughout individual courses and to increase the timeframe for the internship. Rowan University presented its recently revised program and then shared its plan for future modifications to the curriculum. William Paterson University described how it mapped its program against the ISLLC standards and provides a non-traditional program delivery model. Participants in the workshop were able to explore how alternate program structures and course organizations, along with policy frameworks, might focus efforts for modifying program delivery.

_Implications for the Future_

While it has take us nearly a year to organize ourselves, we believe that a larger national conversation between and among leadership preparation program providers cannot begin until states agree to co-construct a forum for dialogue among leadership preparation program providers and provide support for the work of groups like NJ-NCPEA. Although we suspect that good intentions pave the road to false clarity (Fullan,
2003), New Jersey, despite its slow start, represents an exemplar of the way to authentic second order change.

Despite the fact that we view our early efforts at collaboration as successful, we recognize that we have just begun to develop the framework for an extended dialogue in the state. And, while collegial relationships help bring coherence for preparing a new breed of school leaders, others must be invited to join the dialogue. Currently, we work with one New Jersey-based alternative provider. Plans for future conferences and planning meetings include inviting members of alternative preparation programs, practitioners from local school districts, online program providers, educational leadership scholars who have made significant contributions in their areas of expertise, and members of the business community, but we are not there yet.

Ultimately, our intention is to forge a larger statewide collaboration for providing New Jersey with educational leaders who possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to address the issues associated with creating schools of quality where, truly, no child is left behind. Such a challenging goal raises many fundamental questions for us to consider: How do we effectively prepare educational leaders for the positions they will assume in our schools? Should we be more performance-based in our preparation? How should we configure the internship component in our respective educational leadership programs? Are we adequately preparing leaders to raise student achievement levels, improve curriculum and instruction, and effectively solve problems in our schools? Our goal is to construct the answers to these questions in a collaborative manner with other providers in New Jersey. In order to accomplish this, however, new partners will need to share information about their programs regarding curriculum, faculty, assessment, and
outcomes. Then, perhaps, we will be ready to engage in a larger cross-national conversation.

Conclusion

We believe that, in general, program providers have not given sufficient thought about how to approach the complex task of re-thinking leadership preparation. The New Jersey effort represents one state’s response to maintain quality of preparation programs while creating a vehicle for bringing all stakeholders to the table. Our real-time action research is instructive in that it suggests the next steps for establishing a comprehensive statewide communication system and forum for exchanges regarding the preparation of future school leaders. We posit this as an important pre-requisite for facilitating better cross-national communication and for increasing program quality.
Appendix A

The new amendment proposal for an internship requirement for all pre-service preparation programs in educational leadership is as follows:

**6A:0-12.5 Principal**

(a) To eligible for the principal Certificate of Eligibility, the candidate shall:

2. Complete a state approved program of graduate study, either within the master’s program or in addition to it, encompassing the competencies of the New Jersey Professional Standards of School Leaders as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9-3.4. The graduate study must include a 300 hour stand alone internship as part of a rigorous set of field based and academic experiences.

The academic experience must include each of the following topics:

i. The vision of learning;
ii. The culture of learning;
iii. The management of learning;
iv. Relationships with the broader community to foster learning;
v. Integrity, fairness, and ethics in learning; and
vi. The political, social economic, legal and cultural context of learning.

The in internship shall include:

i. Significant opportunities for candidates to synthesize and apply academic knowledge, develop skills, and practices the professional performances identified in the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders;
ii. Developmental experiences ranging from observing to participating and leading authentic activities typical of those preformed by educational leaders; and
iii. Substantial, sustained, standards-based work in school settings that is planned and guided cooperatively by the preparation program faculty, cooperating school district personnel, and candidate for graduate credit.

It is our hope that the recommendations made in this proposal will be adopted fully by the State Board of Education and that this adoption will bring some consistency to the preparation of candidates of educational leadership programs throughout the state.
Appendix B

Critical Friends Guiding Questions

Provide a description of the program faculty and students
  Faculty profiles
  Information on students (recruitment/selection)

Provide a description of the program (w/course syllabi)
  Curriculum
  Delivery System
  Structure

Describe the foundations on which the program is built (standards, principles, values, vision).

Explain how the program addresses the foundations outlined in #2
  Show how the program emphasizes school leadership that focuses particularly on student learning and school improvement.

  Describe how the program incorporates technology as appropriate in program content and delivery.

  Describe how the program comments to exemplary leadership practice in schools.

  Chart how the program involves practicing school leaders in meaningful ways in the development/refinement of the program and in program delivery.

  Explain how the program provides quality field-based work:
    as part of courses
    as related to practicum experiences

  Relate how the program provides students with a high quality internship experience.

  Outline the plan for the professional development of faculty, including activities undertaken during the program development work.

Describe the process the unit intends to employ to ensure continuous monitoring, self-renewal, and improvement for the program, including accountability.

  Explain the "performance assessment" architecture embedded in the program.

  Describe how your current program differs from the previous program (if applicable).

  Present evidence you have on the effectiveness of your program.
References


Fry, B., O’Neil, K., & Bottoms, G. (March 2006). *Schools can’t wait: Accelerating the redesign of university principal preparation programs*. Monograph prepared by The Southern Regional Education Board: Atlanta, GA.


