



## *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)**

In 2001, Illinois was one of fifteen states supported by **The Wallace Foundation** to take action aimed at strengthening education leadership. IL-SAELP, housed in the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University, is focused on strategies designed to improve both the **conditions** that enable effective leadership and **leadership development** in Illinois schools.

**IL-SAELP passed legislation for an advanced certification system for Illinois principals.**

### **Public Act 94-1039: Principal Certification**

Research shows that quality leadership is an essential component in any school reform effort directed at improving student achievement. A recent study by researchers at the University of Minnesota and University of Toronto found that the principal's leadership is second only to the impact of teachers on student learning. Other studies have identified leader practices that significantly increase student achievement, but have also found that a principal can negatively impact student achievement by focusing on the wrong school practices. **P.A. 94-1039 is designed to strengthen the state's system for licensing and supporting aspiring, new and experienced principals. Key provisions include:**

- Creating a statewide program to pair all new principals with a mentor who will help guide them to become instructional leaders in their schools;
- Requiring the State Board of Education to examine the state's professional development system to identify gaps and improve continuing support for principals;
- Requiring mandatory evaluation of all principals in the state [with the exception of CPS principals, who already are required to be evaluated under Article 34 of the Illinois School Code];
- Creating a statewide program for principals to become master principals;
- Developing a quicker route for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) to become certified principals, recognizing the instructional knowledge they have gained through the NBCT program; and
- Allowing teacher leaders, through leadership coursework, to acquire a Teacher Leader Endorsement to support the important and difficult work of principals and their teaching peers.

**P.A. 94-1039 places Illinois in the forefront of a national movement to require that every principal participate in meaningful and effective induction activities and professional development that will lead to increased student achievement.**

A fourteen-member Executive Committee, chaired by **Dr. Stanley O. Ikenberry**, President Emeritus of the University of Illinois and the American Council on Education (ACE), serves as an advisory board to IL-SAELP staff and its consortium members, a working group made up of over 120 individuals representing 15 state and national K-12 and higher education organizations, 12 Illinois school districts (including Chicago Public Schools and rural districts), and 13 public and private universities around the state.

The IL-SAELP initiative pilots its statewide work in local school districts, including:

Chicago Public Schools,  
Springfield School District 186,  
Elgin School District U-46, and  
Rockford School District 205.

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