

New Structure for Leadership Certification & Endorsements
Monday, November 24, 2008

Leadership Certification & Endorsements Co-Chairs

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Leadership Certification & Endorsements Team Members in Attendance

Carlene Lutz, Illinois Federation of Teachers
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Brian Schwartz, Illinois Principals Association
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Review of Charge

The charge to the New Structure for Leadership Certification and Endorsement Redesign Team is to develop a draft leadership continuum structure in Illinois that will provide career ladders for teachers, other administrative positions and principals. Special consideration should be given to 1) a specific principal endorsement which requires preparation for school improvement through instructional leadership and should be a prerequisite for the superintendent endorsement; 2) recommendations regarding the number of years of teaching experience for entrance into the principal preparation program; and 3) recommendations regarding the number of years between issuance of the principal endorsement and becoming a principal (shelf life of the endorsement).

Review of Issues that were discussed earlier in the morning.

It was decided by the group that the Teacher Leader Endorsement would not be focused upon at this time. The current focus will be the Principal Certificate Issue and other certifications will be tabled.

The first discussion focused on Recommendation #2: Recommending the number of years of teaching experience for entrance into the principal preparation program.

The following question was raised: what is equivalent experience now?

- The group came to the consensus that Counselors and School Psychologists must provide evidence of employment that exhibits teaching qualities in order to have equivalent experience.

Revised Recommendation:

Candidate must have the equivalent of four 4 years of experience in teaching or school service personnel experience at completion of the principal preparation program in order to be entitled to a principal endorsement.

Standard Teaching Certificate was eliminated from the original recommendation.

Next, the recommendations from the morning session were discussed as well as the original statement of encouraging (not requiring) two years of teaching experience, with the group ultimately deciding to keep the statement the same, leaving the decision up to the university. However, encourage was changed to recommend.

Next, the group discussed Recommendation #3: Recommendations regarding the number of years between issuance of the principal endorsement and becoming a principal (shelf-life of endorsement).

At the morning sessions, “6 years” was recommended as a refresher (the shelf life). Another group recommended one academy (refresher specific) each year to keep certification.

Anyone who holds a Principal/Type 75 certificate must take an annual academy in order to keep certification. This also will count as CPDU credit for current practicing teachers.

The following question was raised: For individuals who leave the field of education for a period of time, but are not engaged in education, what happens to his or her certification? If the individual takes an academy each year and pays to keep certification active, will his or her certification still be valid and no refresher is needed at this time?

In accordance with the recommendations and comments from the morning, the recommendation was changed to the following statement: For those individuals who leave the educational field for five years or more and have not engaged in professional development for certificate renewal for five years or more, he or she will be required to attend a refresher course in order for the endorsement to be considered valid and active.

The discussion then turned to the contents for the refresher course, if one is needed. Should this be used for someone with a lapsed certificate?

The group decided that it could not fully address the shelf-life question until the original licensure questions have been addressed.

The first paragraph on the original recommendations will be removed.

The phrase: “We recommend that a new strand of the administrator’s academy be developed for teachers holding the administrator’s endorsement” will be added to the recommendations.

The group added the following to the rationale: We also recommend six graduate-level credits in educational administration be taken by teachers and administrators who hold the type 75 principal endorsement who have left the field of education for five or more years.

Currently the administrator’s academy is used to provide statewide professional development, therefore providing necessary accessibility. However, after five years, more extensive study is required at the graduate-school level.

The **first recommendation** (specific principal endorsement) was then discussed, with particular focus on other administrator positions. While most of the recommendation remained the same, one change was made to the first recommendation:

“Before an endorsement specific to building level principals is created, the impact on other administrative positions has to be considered. We recommend exploration of the teacher leader endorsement.”

The following questions were raised:

- What about conditional admits? Can they be counted in numbers?

The second rationale for recommendation #1 was eliminated, as well as the fourth.