

**ISLAC Meeting  
January 30, 2015**

## **Panel Members**

### **Shelby Cosner, Associate Professor of Educational Organization and Leadership in the Department of Educational Policy Studies.**

Shelby Cosner is an Associate Professor of Educational Organization and Leadership in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). Her research interests include organizational change, school reform and improvement, the work of leaders (principals and teachers) to improve schools, and principal preparation/development/evaluation. Recent work appears in such peer-reviewed journals as *Educational Administration Quarterly*, the *Journal of School Leadership*, *Urban Education*, *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, and *Planning and Changing*.

Dr. Cosner has served as the *Associate Program Coordinator* and *Academic Program Director* for UIC's Doctorate in Urban Educational Leadership. This program has received major national awards and recognitions for its program quality including UCEA's 2013 award as an Exemplary Leadership Preparation Program (one of two programs nationally to receive this designation) and the 2012 Urban Impact Award from the Council of Great City Schools. Cosner teaches a variety of leadership, school organization, and qualitative research methods courses for doctoral students in the Department of Educational Policy Studies and she received UIC's Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Award in 2009. Cosner supported the design and pilot implementation of Wisconsin's new state-wide principal evaluation system from 2012-2014. Cosner is a former principal and district-level leader.

### **Dr. Diane Rutledge, Executive Director of Large Unit District Association (LUDA)**

Diane Rutledge is a native of Springfield. She served in a continuum of positions in the Springfield School District from classroom teacher to superintendent of schools. Her focus has always been on preparing young people for post-secondary success and leadership development of educators. She currently serves as Executive Director of the Large Unit District Association where she advocates on behalf of the largest school districts in our state, along with serving in a variety of policy and professional development roles.

Locally, Diane serves on the boards of Memorial Health System, Memorial Medical Center, United Community Bank, The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Blackburn College, and is an elder and volunteer at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

### **Mr. Ben Ellefritz, Principal at Brown County Elementary School and Brown County Middle School**

Ben Ellefritz has served as a teacher, assistant principal and principal in Illinois public schools for 10 years. During his time as a principal, Ben has worked in collaboration with leadership teams to drastically improve test scores and re-shape what high quality teaching and learning looks like in his school district. Ben has also had direct experience leading two different schools through the turnaround process. He has also been a senior consultant for Focus on Results and worked with urban St. Louis schools.

Ben has been a leader at the district level for planning and presenting for all levels of teacher professional development. He believes that through professional development around both practices and processes teaching and learning will drastically improve for principals, teachers and students. Ben continues to work side by side with principals and teachers to raise expectations so that all students are successful.

### **Maggie Blinn-DiNovi, New Leaders, Executive Director, Chicago.**

Maggie Blinn DiNovi has served as the Executive Director of the New Leaders Chicago program for the past six years and is responsible for creating and implementing the overall vision and strategy to effectively recruit, train and support outstanding leadership talent to serve in Chicago Public Schools. The program has grown into the lead principal provider for Chicago Public Schools and the largest New Leaders site nationwide. To date, New Leaders trains and supports over 100 teacher leaders, aspiring principals, and principals annually in Chicago, impacting over one-quarter of all Chicago Public School children.

Prior to joining New Leaders, Maggie served as the Deputy Chief Officer of the Office of Principal Preparation and Development for CPS. She also served as the principal investment portfolio manager at The Chicago Education Fund. Prior to entering the field of education, Maggie was a consultant for McKinsey & Company and a corporate attorney at Sidley & Austin. Maggie holds a Bachelor's in Accounting from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and a Juris Doctor from the University of Chicago.

### **Alan Mather, Principal, Lindblom Science & Math Academy, Chicago Public Schools.**

Alan Mather worked for 12 years as an English teacher, track and cross country coach before moving into administration after joining LAUNCH (Leadership and Urban Network for Chicago), the first principal preparation program in Chicago.

In 2005, Alan opened Lindblom Math & Science Academy, a school that had once been top-tier but had declined. Since Alan opened Lindblom, it has become, according to the Sun-Times rankings, the top-performing majority African-American school in Illinois and the only top 20-ranked school that has over 60% of its students on free/reduced lunch.

During Alan's tenure, the school has built the the largest Mandarin program in the Chicago public schools and the largest non-heritage Arabic program in the United States.

Alan serves as President of the Board for the Center for Arabic Language and Culture, a 501(c)(3) that seeks to building Arabic programs and cultural understanding throughout the Chicagoland area; he serves on the Advisory Board of the Museum of Science and Industry's Science Leadership Initiative; and was on the planning committee (and was a participant in a recent professional development opportunity that brought together principals from the US, Qatar, South Africa, and Brazil, to have our students work on Problem-Based Learning Challenges.

Alan is the first recipient of the Stanley C. Golder Award for Principals or Heads of Schools presented by the Golden Apple Foundation.