

October 29, 2010

Dear Superintendent -

On behalf of the Illinois P-20 Council, we want to make you aware of important developments related to the preparation of principals in our state.

Research shows that principal leadership ranks second only to teacher effectiveness among school-related factors that impact student performance. Teachers cite lack of administrative leadership and support as the single biggest factor in leaving a school or the teaching profession. Strong leaders, in turn, are essential to recruiting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Principal preparation programs have a key role to play in producing the best possible school leaders.

This spring, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation (P.A. 96-0903) designed to prepare more effective principals. The work around Public Act 96-903 reflects five years of stakeholder engagement that includes recommendations from several state task forces. In addition, the ISBE and IBHE reached out to stakeholders across the state by hosting five Principal Preparation Program meetings with public and private university and P-12 representatives and seven informational sessions on changes in principal preparation coordinated with ROEs throughout the state. Over 800 constituents participated in one of more of these meetings, which provided the information to hear upcoming changes and provide feedback.

This legislation calls for providers of principal preparation programs to replace the old model of a broad Type 75 certification program required for anyone with the responsibility of evaluating teachers with redesigned principal preparation programs that are committed to careful selection of candidates aspiring to be principals or assistant principals, deep partnerships with school districts and regional offices of education, and intensive clinical experiences for these specific positions. These new, more focused programs will provide extended opportunities for leadership practice as well as rigorous assessment of on-the-job leadership performance.

While Illinois does have a large number of individuals certified to serve as principals and only about 400 available principal positions, this bill is not about decreasing numbers. This legislation is about increasing quality with focused and rigorous programs designed for 21st century teaching and learning. Illinois currently has approximately 1040 schools out of 4400 in Illinois that have demonstrated 3 consecutive years of academic gains. The updated requirements for principal preparation programs can make a difference in meeting the challenges that schools face today and in increasing these numbers.

This legislation commits all Illinois principal preparation programs to demonstrate improved quality, increased selectivity, and closer partnerships with schools, so that Illinois can produce the best principals possible. However, some questions have been raised around the proposed rules for P.A. 96-0903. The enclosed document provides some responses to questions raised around the state in regards to the proposed rules.

Please use this frequently asked question sheet as a guide to answering questions that you may have regarding the proposed rules for P.A. 096-0903. Any questions

regarding the rules can be directed to Dr. Lizanne Destefano at destefan@illinois.edu.

Sincerely,

Lizanne DeStefano, on behalf of

Miguel Del Valle
Chair, P-20 Council

Frequently Asked Questions Proposed Rules for P.A. 096-0903

FAQ 1: How much time will principal candidates be out of the classroom as a result of the proposed rules to P.A. 096-0903?

The proposed rules governing Public Act 096-0903 do not put an overall hour requirement on the internship but focus on the assessment of the candidate to acquire competencies and skills based on the quality (not quantity) of clinical experiences. There are three areas in which the proposed do put an hour requirement, which include:

- 1) A minimum of 20 hours of participation in meetings to develop individualized education programs.
- 2) A minimum of 40 hours of activities with special education teachers to address curricular needs of students with disabilities, which shall not include any time spent in meetings held to develop or modify IEPs or Section 504 plans.
- 3) A minimum of 40 hours of activities with teachers assigned to programs established under 23 Ill. Adm. Code 228 (Transitional Bilingual Education) to address the curricular needs of English language learners.

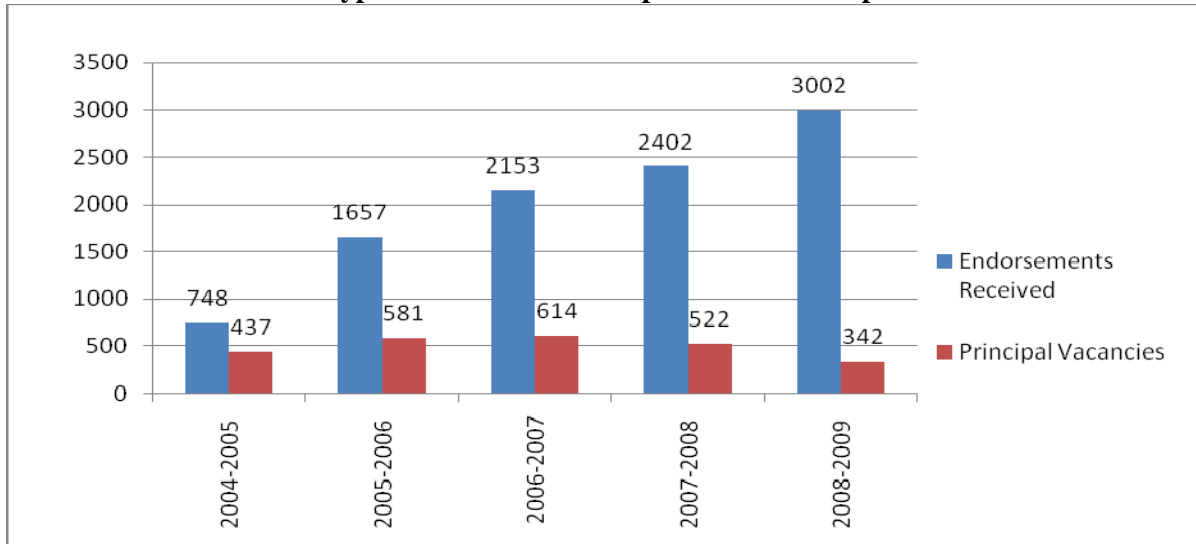
The proposed rules do not mandate when these experiences should occur so programs and districts have flexibility on how to design clinical experiences for candidates to assure that they can meet the required competencies. As defined in the proposed rules, the internship experience can be extended up to 24 months so as to spread out the opportunity for the candidate to engage in the experiences and leadership opportunities to demonstrate proficiencies in required competencies expected of a principal. The proposed rules also allow programs to charge a fee of candidates, in addition to tuition, to reimburse schools for the costs of employing substitute teachers for candidates who are full-time teachers and must be absent from their classrooms in order to complete internship activities.

The increased selectivity of new principal endorsement programs will also mean that fewer candidates from districts will be enrolled in these programs rather than the currently large number of candidates that pursue a Type 75 certificate, many of whom have no intention of going into an administrative position. Candidates now who enter the new principal endorsements will have to demonstrate the intention to pursue a principalship or assistant principalship and new principal endorsement programs will be targeted exclusively on preparing principals and assistant principals for Illinois schools.

FAQ 2: Is the intent of the proposed rules for P.A. 096-0903 to limit the number of candidates available for leadership positions?

While Illinois does have a large number of individuals certified to serve as principals and only about 400 available principal positions, the proposed rules are not about decreasing numbers. The proposed rules are about increasing quality. Table 1 shows the number of Type 75 completers versus principal vacancies.

Table 1
Number of Type 75 Certificates Compared with Principal Vacancies



Understanding that the Type 75 is not just required for the principalship, an analysis from the ISBE 2008 Supply and Demand report still shows an overabundance of Type 75 certificates versus the demand in the field.

Table 3: Supply and Demand of Administrative Positions in Illinois
2008 ISBE Supply and Demand Report

Administrator Type	Average New Hires	Needed Through 2012
Elem Principal/Asst	272	1088
Middle Principal/Jr. High/Asst	115	460
HS Principal/Asst	125	501
Director/Asst	100	401
Other Administrator	209	836
Total	821	3,286

According to data, between 2009 and 2012, there is a projected need for 3,286 administrators. Averaging that by three to estimate the demand in Type 75 certificate positions each year for the next three years, still only shows a projected need of 1,095 administrators each year. Even considering other administrative positions, there is still an overabundance of candidates with Type 75 certificates being issued at the expense of teachers taking advanced coursework in their content areas.

The proposed rules for Public Act 96-0903 will focus university preparation programs on the preparing of highly effective assistant principals and principals. While the quantity of candidates prepared for leadership positions will be less, according to these estimated supply/demand data, there will still be an adequate support of candidates who hold Type 75 certificates and new principal endorsements to fill vacancies. The requirement for universities to partner with school districts will also help districts in hard-to-fill geographic areas grow their own pipeline of candidates.

FAQ 3: How much additional time will our bookkeeper have to spend to monitor substitutes for aspiring principals completing internship requirements?

The proposed rules governing Public Act 096-0903 do not put an hour requirement on the internship, with the exception of the three required hour-based activities (see FAQ #1) but focus on the assessment of the candidate to acquire competencies and skills based on the quality (not quantity) of clinical experiences. The proposed rules do not mandate when these experiences should occur so programs and districts will have flexibility on how to design clinical experiences for candidates to be assure that they can meet the required competencies. As defined in the proposed rules, the internship experience can be extended up to 24 months so as to spread out the opportunity for the candidate to engage in the experiences and leadership opportunities to demonstrate proficiencies in required competencies expected of a principal and to allow districts the flexibility to design experiences that do not take candidates out of the classroom. Additionally, with fewer candidates pursuing a principal endorsement in the district, the time spent monitoring substitutes should be decreased. The amount of time for a bookkeeper to process an absence is a minor period of time and should not change due to the proposed rules for this legislation.

FAQ 4: How much time will principals have to spend with intern candidates?

One of the benefits of a university-district partnership is to collaborate with districts on determining their needs for training, developing, and hiring educational leaders. School district partners will assist in determining the amount of time and types of experiences they can provide to assist the principal candidate with mastering the competencies required in the principal preparation program. Many times, school districts feel that they have little control or input on the content of principal preparation programs. With these partnerships, a district can have input on what they would like to see in their future administrators that will directly benefit their district.

While supervising principals will need to spend more time with intern candidates, the benefits that this will produce are largely recognized by the field. A recent survey conducted by Learning Point Associates (August, 2010) explored Illinois superintendents' perspectives on the new school leader certification legislation. According to survey results, more than half (63.5 percent) of the superintendents indicated that a structured internship/residency experience with supervision from an experienced principal with a proven track record of improving student learning is a very important element of principal preparation programs. An even larger percentage of superintendents (65.7%) indicated that clinical experiences that apply course content in school settings is very important.

FAQ 5: What are the costs to districts associated with these proposed requirements? Is this a violation of the State Mandates Act?

The additional costs will be to the student and university implementing the new program and not the school district. The proposed rules allow programs to charge a fee of candidates, in addition to tuition, to reimburse districts for the costs of employing substitute teachers for candidates who are full-time teachers and must be absent from their classrooms in order to complete internship activities. There will be an additional time commitment by district personnel involved with partnership agreements that can positively affect the district by being involved with the preparation of future principals on the front end and possibly save district professional development resources once principals with the new principal endorsement are hired by the district.

FAQ 6: What will be the paperwork load and burden for the district to establish the university-district partnership?

The procedural requirement of the university-district partnership is the development of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the university and its district partner. A sample MOU with supporting

information is available at:

http://www.illinoischoolleader.org/principal_preparation/documents/SampleMOU-Final.pdf

On November 1, 2010, the Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project (IL-SAELP) is providing training to universities and their district partners on Developing Collaborative University-District Partnerships to comply with the new legislation. Kathy O'Neill, from the Southern Region Education Board, will be sharing example MOU's to assist universities in the development of their own. The materials from this training will be available on-line at: www.illinoischoolleader.org. In addition, the Illinois State Board of Education is developing support and example materials as well as templates to assist the universities in their Principal Preparation Program application process.

FAQ 7: Why are the proposed rules requiring teachers to have four years experience before they can begin a new principal endorsement program?

The recommendation for teachers to have four years of teaching experience before they can be admitted to a Principal Endorsement program was made by the Illinois Teacher Certification Board after reviewing the draft rules. Their recommendation was based on research that shows that instructional experience for principals does matter with teacher perceptions of principal quality (Ballou and Podgursky, 1995); hiring teachers with stronger academic backgrounds (Baker and Cooper, 2005); and as an overall predictive feature of effective principal preparation (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, 2007). Understanding that teacher effectiveness goes beyond years of experience, Public Act 096-0903 permits the State Board of Education to allow, by rules, for fewer than 4 years of teaching experience based on "meeting standards set forth in such rules, including without limitation a review of performance evaluations or other evidence of demonstrated qualifications". State work done by the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) in response to new legislation regarding mandatory performance based evaluation for teachers and leaders will assist with the development of valid and reliability assessments on teacher performance.

FAQ 8: Do the proposed rules take away the opportunities for practicing administrators to serve as adjunct professors?

The proposed rules do not prohibit programs from using practicing administrators as adjunct professors but do set limits for principal preparation programs to use primarily adjunct faculty for program coursework. This is written into the proposed rules through the following requirements:

- Requiring two full-time faculty members if 100 candidates or fewer are enrolled in the program and one full-time faculty member for each increment of 50 or fewer candidates
- Requiring that no more than one-third of program coursework can be taught from the same instructor
- Require that no more than one-third of the coursework in a program can be taught by adjunct faculty.

FAQ 9: Why do the proposed rules limit the number of interns that a practicing principal can supervise?

The proposed rules state that "no mentor shall have more than two candidates assigned to him or her at any period during the internship, except that the State Teacher Certification Board (STCB) may make an exception for a third candidate if the STCB finds the explanation and accompanying documentation submitted by the program supports granting of the exception (i.e., there is only one qualified mentor available in sparsely populated areas of the State)". With the intended outcome of the internship to provide purposeful "hands on" experiences that prepare aspiring principals to lead the essential work of the principalship prior to being hired in a school, it is important for mentor principals to have the expertise and the time to work and assess aspiring candidates in a meaningful way.

FAQ 10: Will the districts have to release personnel information about our teachers to universities for program enrollment?

Districts and universities have the same federal and state requirements on personnel information privacy. These proposed rules do not change any of those limitations and if they did, the proposed rules would not be valid.

FAQ 11: Why are the proposed rules requiring supervising principals to have four years experience to be a mentor?

The recommendation to increase the number of years of experience to be a mentor was made at the Teacher Certification Board meeting in response to the first review of the draft rules. The reason behind this recommendation is the belief that practicing principals who mentor aspiring principals should not only have a proven record for school improvement but also enough experience in the job in which to satisfactorily provide mentor/guidance to aspiring candidates.

FAQ 12: Why do out of state universities that prepare administrative candidates for Illinois' school not have to follow these set of rules?

Proposed rules have been written for Part 25 (see section 25.115), which apply to out of state institutions that offer programs in Illinois. According to the proposed rules, these out of state institutions that offer programs in Illinois must be recognized by ISBE in consultation with the Teacher Certification Board in order to offer one or more program that prepare professional educators. In recognizing these programs, they will be required to follow the same approval criteria as in-state universities that prepare candidates. The rules do not address out of state institutions offering programs outside of Illinois and this is something that the State Board of Education has asked the Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Committee of the P-20 Council to research and make recommendation. The rules can be accessed at: <http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/default.htm> and are open for public comment until November 29, 2010.