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**\*\*NEW WORKGROUP OPPORTUNITY\*\***

**Aspiring Principal Pre- and Post- Assessment for Principal Preparation Programs**

**Purpose**: To develop a pre-and post-assessment tool that can measure principal preparation program’s value added to the dispositions, skills, and behaviors specific to Illinois’ new P-12 principal endorsement and evaluation requirements.

**Overview:** In meetings with the university principal preparation programs that are partnering with CSEP for the Continuous Improvement Process project, several program faculty have expressed the need for a standardized assessment to evaluate principal candidates’ leadership knowledge, skills, and dispositions that could be used as both a pre-test (upon enrollment to the program) and a post-test (upon program completion). The Illinois State Board of Education requires them to have assessments that measure knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Thus, programs are developing assessments over the course of the program at several different points in course-taking and course embedded field-based learning experiences. The programs are also required to use the state mandated outcomes assessment rubrics during the internships.

As this point, the assessments that are being developed by programs align with the internship assessments but do not expand into a framework that aligns with the skills and behaviors in which principals will be evaluated once they are hired. Development of a pre- and post- assessment tool would provide programs with a baseline measure at program entrance and then a post-test to measure gains (or no gains) at program completion. Development of such a tool would help principal preparation programs determine their “value-added” as well as provide a tool that includes in its ‘line of sight’ the reality of expectations that principals will face once they are in the field. Currently, the state has a certification exam that will be used at program completion to determine if a candidate received the principal endorsement, but there is no pre-test that would allow a program to determine whether they had any impact on the candidates. The pre-/post-test assessment would be a better measure for ISBE, IBHE, program faculty, local school districts, and other interested stakeholders to monitor the effectiveness of these programs as a tool for program review and continuous improvement. The pre-/post-test assessment would also serve as a useful tool with any evaluation or study that wanted to look at what is the impact of the new P-12 principal programs.

Through conversations with principal preparation networks, CSEP staff have identified a couple of efforts to develop similar tools. American Institute for Research (AIR) is in the process of developing a set of pre-service principal candidate selection tools to be used by program staff to select candidates into pre-service programs. While this may be useful for the pre-assessment work, this set of tools will not include a post-assessment tool. As part of the U.S. DOE School Leadership Grant, faculty at California State University in Dominguez Hills have been working on the development of a pre and post assessment tool for principal candidates dispositions. Similarly, this tool has limitations as it only measures dispositions and not skills and behaviors. A final tool, called the Leadership Planning and Performance Worksheet (LPPW), was developed by the New York City Leadership Academy in partnership with several states, including Illinois. This tool was developed as a guide for principal mentoring to develop new principals’ skills and behaviors. It can be used with principal preparation but will need to be adapted and it was never developed as an assessment tool, but rather a guide. Without the existing development of a tool that can be used by Illinois’ principal preparation faculty, we propose funding by the McCormick Foundation for the development of a tool that may be used by principal preparation faculty in Illinois.

To do this, CSEP staff will convene a workgroup consisting of preparation program faculty and other program stakeholders working in conjunction with experts in assessment development and validation to develop this standard assessment that could be used in principal preparation programs across the state. To begin this work, the group will explore and examine existing assessments and tools geared toward assessing principal leadership skills and dispositions (such as New York Leadership Academy, American Institutes for Research, and California State University).

After examining the assessment tools these groups have developed, the team will work to develop an assessment that fits the needs and requirements of Illinois standards for principals and principal preparation programs (including knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to effectively lead early childhood programs and classrooms and aligned P-12 systems).

The end product of this work will be the development of a pre-and post-assessment tool customized for Illinois’ P-12 principal endorsement. In customizing this for Illinois’ specific requirements, we will include the LINC outcomes assessments for Early Childhood, ELL, and Special Education developed by the LINC principal preparation programs. Including these components can ascertain that attention continues to be paid to developing principals with the skills and behaviors to work with special populations of students – early childhood, ELL, special education, gifted – not just within their internship but throughout the program.

This workgroup will begin convening in Fall 2014.

If you are interested in participating in this workgroup: please contact Lisa Hood at lhood@ilstu.edu.