



Final Summary Report

Champions for Change: SAELP National Results Conference

December 2003



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I. INTRODUCTION

Effective school leadership is critical as we face turbulent times in our nation today. Schools are no longer being asked to provide simply access to education for all students. Instead, the demand is that all children reach proficiency in all core subjects. That is, it is no longer enough that children make it to school; schools must now educate *each one* of them to high levels. Yet, demographic, social, and technological changes are producing unparalleled challenges for states, school districts, schools, and higher education institutions and the individuals charged with managing them. Budget cuts, turnover in key leadership positions, and the immense challenge of implementing massive new federal requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act are colliding, adding to the challenge of school leadership.

This collision of these forces requires dynamic, well-trained, talented leaders willing to forge ahead in spite of the odds, and capable of inspiring the countless others working to educate this generation of children. It requires leaders who understand the social, economic and political forces that influence education; who are committed to fresh educational ideas and solutions and willing to take risks to implement them; and who have a 21st century view of the management of education. The impact of effective school leaders on improving student performance has been documented; the challenge before the country is to recruit, train, and retain excellent leaders capable of impacting student performance.

The State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) National Results

Conference that was held December 9-10, 2003 in Washington, DC, dealt with the challenges facing state and local education reform. At the conference, over 150 participants, representing the 15 current SAELP states, staff from The Wallace Foundation, SAELP National Consortium members, and others interested in strengthening educational leadership, were in attendance to celebrate *Champions for Change*. SAELP is part of The Wallace Foundation's larger educational leadership initiative designed to prepare, support and sustain a leadership cadre in each state that can transform schools and school systems to produce improved academic performance for low-

SAELP I states include: Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia

Through the Wallace Foundation's support, the National Consortium (NC) members provide assistance and support to 15 SAELP I states and their state decision makers. Principals for the NC are:

G. Thomas Houlihan, the Council of Chief State School Officers (www.ccsso.org),

Theodore Sanders, the Education Commission of the States (www.ecs.org),

Brenda Welburn, the National Association of State Boards of Education (www.nasbe.org),

Julie Davis Bell, the National Conference of State Legislatures (www.ncsl.org), and

Dane Linn, the National Governors Association (www.nga.org).

income youth. Through this project, state government and education leaders compete for grants to support research, analysis, and preparation of legislative and administrative actions that will prepare, support and sustain a group of education leaders (principals and superintendents) in each state. In the first phase of SAELP, fifteen states received significant funding to support their efforts in improving educational leadership.

Over the past several years, SAELP states have championed changes throughout their systems of education. At the National Results Conference, SAELP states shared lessons learned about school leadership during their first years of SAELP funding and began developing proposals for the second phase of funding with The Wallace Foundation. The practitioners discussed what it took to implement key initiatives in educational leadership, including the positive outcomes and the challenges and opportunities along the way.

The key message of the National Results Conference was that the effectiveness of school leaders – so critical to the success of educational improvements today – is influenced both by the knowledge and skills they possess and the conditions in which they work to apply their knowledge and skills. Leaders ill prepared to manage today's schools and school districts and/or conditions that stymie effective leadership practices could fatally weaken efforts to implement the rhetoric that "all kids can learn." The scope of the problem dictates that this initiative should be of no less intensity than reform efforts being undertaken to improve the education system in other ways.

II. BACKGROUND – LEADERSHIP IN TURBULENT TIMES

Conference participants discussed the core challenges that face education leaders and those trying to recruit, prepare, and retain them. John F. Jennings, Director and President of the Center on Education Policy, posed questions about the context in the states to a distinguished panel of national leaders representing the five organizations in the SAELP National Consortium. The panel addressed three factors that collide in the states to create tremendous turbulence in the systems. First, the economy has caused nearly every state to make dramatic changes in their budgets and budget trajectories. As one panelist stated, A National Conference of State Legislatures survey (for more information, please visit: www.ncsl.org) showed that thirty-one states cut their budgets, twenty-nine tapped new resources, and others reduced their workforce. At the same time, turnover in school and state leadership causes not only instability in efforts to make improvements at the local level, but also creates a situation where momentum to support and invest in hard education reforms is reduced, if not eliminated. Among the factors influencing this turnover are the challenges of the work demanded, the lack of resources, and term limits for elected officials.

Another major factor converging to create this perfect storm in the states is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). As the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, in many ways NCLB is not a huge departure from the 1994 reauthorization. However, what is different are some of the mechanisms for accountability, timelines, and sanctions. In NCLB, the reach of the federal government has been extended to dramatic proportions. Not only do state education leaders, but now also district and school leaders are feeling the pressure to change.

At the conference, a panel representing local education leaders also addressed the question of the context of education today. The panelists discussed from their perspectives why the pressures were so intense upon contemporary educational leaders.

The panel of representatives from local constituencies included:

- Anne L. Bryant, Executive Director of the National School Boards Association;
- Vincent L. Ferrandino, Executive Director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals;
- Paul D. Houston, Executive Director of the American Association of School Administrators; and
- Gerald N. Tirozzi, Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

How can states sustain a focus on and investment in school leadership, particularly when faced with budget crises, turnover in policy-making leadership, and the major new requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act?

A panel of National Consortium representatives addressed this question. The panel included:

- Alma A. Allen, member of the Texas State Board of Education and President of the National Association of State Boards of Education;
- Charles R. Coble, Vice President of Policy Studies and Programs, Education Commission of the States;
- John F. Jennings, Director and President, Center on Education Policy, *moderator*;
- Richard Laine, Director of Education Programs at The Wallace Foundation;
- John Hurson, Delegate in the Maryland House of Delegates and President-Elect of the National Conference of State Legislators; and
- Ted Stilwill, Iowa Director of Education and President of the Council of Chief State School Officers.

A key understanding shared by the panel is that, historically, the focus in public education has been on access and not quality. The relatively recent focus on high standards for *all* students represents a sea change in the underpinning of both the purposes and support of schooling. The financial resources that might be adequate for ensuring access are not adequate in ensuring academic proficiency for all students. Thus, ensuring that all children will be educated to a high level dramatically changes the context, expectations, and needs of schools, and, hence, school leadership.

While the resources to teach every child are scarce, scarce also is the sheer belief that every child can learn, let alone the knowledge and skills to bring those children to proficiency. The heightened focus on proficiency for all creates

conditions where school leaders must ask teachers and other school personnel to change not just simple, easy to change aspects of their work and their jobs. Rather, it asks them to challenge what they know and can do and what they fundamentally believe and care so deeply about in their work.

In the past decade, the major shift in focus related to school leadership has been one toward instructional leadership. Education reformers agreed that principals and superintendents must be concerned not only with the school calendar, sporting events, ancillary services, and the myriad other management challenges one finds in running a large scale organization involving large numbers of young people and adults. Principals, in particular, must also be instructional leaders, ensuring high quality teaching throughout their buildings. The message of the National Results Conference was that this shift in understanding of the principal's job, though critical, did not go far enough. The principal's job today requires much more than just instructional leadership. The changes called for in these turbulent times require principals to manage *change*, very difficult change that causes tremendous stress on stakeholders within the education system. Tim Waters and Brian McNulty, of Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, or McREL, call these changes "second order" changes. Second order changes require a break with the past; challenge established norms, values, and expectations; require new knowledge or skills; and are implemented by the stakeholders themselves rather than "experts." Education reformers have tended to underestimate the complex ramifications of school change and acknowledge the difficulty states would face if they were to take on the daunting challenge of changing locally rooted educational leadership practices.

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) executive director Tim Waters and vice president for field services Brian McNulty suggest that principals today face *second order* changes – and that they must be prepared to address the challenges of second order change.

Second order changes share many of the following characteristics:

- require a break with the past;
- challenge established norms, values, and expectations;
- require new knowledge or skills; and
- are implemented by the stakeholders themselves rather than "experts."

All this matters because school leaders do impact student performance. Waters and McNulty shared at the conference their meta-analysis¹ of 30 years of research on leadership throughout the years, and their finding that on numerous counts, effective principals have a significant, demonstrable impact on student performance. Yet only 25% or so of the certified principals opt to apply for or accept the position. This has created a growing shortage, in some states, of quality candidates and a shrinking executive pipeline at a time when large percentages of principals are reaching retirement age or leaving the position

¹ To review this meta-analysis, please visit:
http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/LeadershipOrganizationDevelopment/5031RR_BalancedLeadership.pdf

because of their view that current expectations of the job are impossible to fulfill and the rewards inadequate as the position is currently structured. Given the crucial nature of school leadership on student performance and standards-based reform, and the shortage of effective principals in the pipeline in some states, conference participants were challenged to hone their efforts on core areas in the coming years, namely the preparation of leadership and the conditions of practice.

III. APPROACHING THE CHALLENGE – PREPARATION AND CONDITIONS

Preparation

The convergence of forces on school leadership today is driving changes in the preparation of our school leaders. Today's state and district education leaders are products of training programs and licensing requirements that are inadequate for the future. Excellence is achieved by only a limited number of people who receive traditional training as education administrators, and they are too few in number to meet the needs at all levels of the system.

There are growing national trends that reflect this widespread dissatisfaction with existing administrator preparatory programs. For example, more school districts are developing and implementing their own principal preparation programs. They are beginning to pay attention to long-neglected needs like planning for executive succession as they initiate efforts to “grow” their own educational leaders within the district. Alternative certification programs are burgeoning. They are being developed on-line, for example, by a host of private and public sector service providers. The view that traditional certification practices and preparatory programs are irrelevant or focused on an old model of educational leadership has prompted this vast expansion of alternative certification programs – many, if not most, of which are not provided in traditional higher education settings.

A recent Public Agenda study², funded by The Wallace Foundation, documented the fact that the great majority of practicing educational administrators believe that their preparatory programs lacked sufficient clinical emphasis and were not particularly relevant to the realities they faced in the “real” world of schools. These findings reinforce the notion held by growing numbers of people that traditional higher education based administrator preparatory programs may well be bypassed in the years ahead unless there is rapid and dramatic change in their offerings.

In recognition, panelists at the National Results Conference called for a redefinition of effective education leadership and a redesign of how we prepare and develop education leaders, particularly for the states, whose decisions affect all schools, and the urban districts, where student needs are the greatest and a

² To review this study, please visit: <http://www.publicagenda.org>.

huge proportion of American students reside. They suggested that the place to start creating a new generation of education leaders is in the recruitment of able persons into top-quality training programs. To attract such people, state leaders must push for more competitive salaries and career benefits, and changes in terms and conditions of practice. Training programs must be created to deal with the problems we face today, not those of yesterday; focus on practical experience; and give candidates the leadership and management skills they need to be successful in today's world.

As Waters and McNulty discussed, preparation programs must help principals to identify, appreciate, and manage second order change. Not only does this mean that leaders must understand the normative behavior and working environment in schools that must change over time, they must also be able to identify which changes they ask for will cause second order stress for which stakeholders. Changes will impact different members of the school community in different ways. Leadership preparation programs must help burgeoning leaders to identify what those changes and impacts might be.

Waters and McNulty further suggest that as leaders take the next step to manage change, they must necessarily rely on distributed or "balanced" leadership to get the job done. School leaders must develop the collective leadership capacities of individuals in school buildings. Principals will have to divide their roles among numerous people assuming responsibility for the managerial and instructional components of the position. These differential roles play out in diverse ways with different titles. For example, the increasingly common practice of lead or mentor teachers taking responsibility for instructional leadership provides one way to balance the professional development needs of teachers with the stresses they will face in implementing instructional change. These alternate ways of organizing school leadership are predicated upon growing cognizance that some responsibilities must come off the plate if the contemporary principal is not to become an "endangered species" and if the job is to become more doable and attractive to talented candidates. They also represent a demand of school leadership for which scant few preparation programs are currently organized to meet.

For persons already in the process of entering the education management field, panelists at the conference called for induction and mentoring programs to prepare them for what they will find in today's schools. Panelists acknowledged, too, that it is not only principals and school superintendents who need induction and mentoring. Indeed, chief state school officers, district superintendents, school principals, and school board members need continuous professional development just as do teachers. In short, the entire system of recruiting, preparing and sustaining quality leadership in the education system must be overhauled if we are to develop our capacity to help all children learn.

State policymakers can play an important role in improving these preparation programs by demanding a more rigorous and relevant curriculum aligned with state administrator licensure requirements and focused on the enhancement of student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

Conditions

Conference participants recognized that, as important as the preparation of excellent leaders may be, high quality preparation programs will not alone fix the problems of our education system. Systems that fail to provide the right conditions in which leaders exercise their knowledge and skills will neither attract nor retain the kinds of school leaders necessary to champion change. Ensuring effective leadership in our schools and school systems requires not only enhancing the knowledge and skills of leaders but also improving the working conditions and systems in which they work. Conditions of work can constrain leaders or they can create incentives to support effective leadership.

At the state level, the conditions that impact leadership include, but are not limited to:

- state standards for all children and the alignment of resources to achieve them;
- assessments used to measure progress against standards;
- the data to which leaders have access in order to make decisions;
- the incentives created and capacity built through the resources allocated;
- the processes by which leaders are held accountable; and
- the political will to bring about change.

At the district level, the conditions that affect leadership include, but are not limited to:

- governance structures;
- resources allocated;
- school and district leaders' job descriptions, actual responsibilities, terms of employment and authority to do the job;
- labor contracts;
- incentives;
- organizational supports; and
- adults' expectations of all children.

Conference participants reflected on the promise of and the challenges to a strategy to change the working conditions for school leaders. For example, in Rhode Island, the state started their leadership initiatives with a campaign to alter the governance structures at the local school level, shifting authority between principals and site-based councils. Peter McWalters, chief state school officers in Rhode Island, reflected on how they implemented that strategy ill-prepared to address the natural reaction one faces when proposing to remove authority for

vested interests. The reflections shared from Rhode Island suggest that states must be quite strategic in determining how to bring about changes in conditions. Each state context will vary; deciding what conditions can be addressed is a critical responsibility of education policy makers and activists.

Given the increased expectation of school leaders, many of which are outlined in NCLB, the difficult working conditions need to be addressed so that our educational leaders may do their job effectively and appropriately. One of the first issues that must be tackled is the question about whether a single individual can possibly handle all the dimensions of being a school principal. The likelihood is that the answer is “no,” suggesting that the expectations and design of the principalship is a core factor in the conversation around the conditions of practice. If not addressed, the growing shortage of quality candidates and the shrinking executive pipeline at a time when large percentages of principals are reaching retirement age or leaving the position, will be exacerbated because current expectations of the job are impossible to fulfill and the rewards inadequate as the position is currently structured.

A panel of practitioners shared lessons learned and challenges from SAELP I.

Panelists included:

Andrew M. Cole, Director, Office of Employee Performance and Development, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA, and Director of LEAD FAIRFAX

Nancy Cooley, Acting Executive Director and Director of Academic Affairs and Planning, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Howard Crawford, Chair House Education Committee, Vermont

Maud Dahme, Member, New Jersey State Board of Education

Lucille Davy, Special Counsel to the Governor, New Jersey

Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Education, Rhode Island

IV. PUTTING IT TOGETHER – BREAKTHROUGH IDEAS AND THE STRATEGIC THROUGHLINE

In creating a framework for SAELP II, The Wallace Foundation is first encouraging applicants to focus on the areas of changing leadership preparation and conditions³. Next, each participating state must identify, and propose strategies for, two to three “breakthrough ideas” that integrate both leader development and conditions that improve education leaders’ development and change the conditions that would enable them to improve student achievement. Each breakthrough idea must then be placed in the context of a “strategic through-line.” The through-line identifies strategies that connect leader development with condition changes at each level. These strategies, when undertaken together, combine in a systematic way to connect changes in state policies to changes in district, school and classroom practices to improve student achievement.

³ To review the RFP that states are responding to for SAELP II, please visit: <http://ntserver.wallacefoundation.org/SAELPRFP/currentstates/>.

The “breakthrough” ideas as envisioned by The Wallace Foundation would challenge the existing modus operandi and tackle the toughest issues in educational leadership, focused on major substantive changes designed to improve the development of leaders and the conditions of leadership such as authority, governance, and resources. The enormous contextual differences among the states suggest that each state may develop a dramatically different breakthrough idea. Indeed, an idea that is “breakthrough” in one state may be unnecessary, ill suited, or simply too much for another state to consider. As states develop their breakthrough ideas, then, they should be careful to craft a foundational breakthrough idea that is truly breakthrough in their context. The idea must support the development of school leaders capable of carrying out the functions needed to impact student performance. It must help to create or sustain conditions of practice necessary to assure all children learn to high levels. To determine whether, in their context, an idea is truly “breakthrough,” education reformers should ask of each breakthrough idea questions such as:

- What is the connection of the idea to improving student performance?
- What is the connection between this change in state policy or practice and student achievement?
- What evidence exists to suggest that the idea does impact student performance?
- How does the proposed breakthrough idea align with current state strategies (state context in narrative)? How would this idea require a change in conditions of practice?
- What is the theory of change behind the idea?

To help states prepare their responses to the SAELP II request for proposals, staff of The Wallace Foundation and the National Consortium spent a great deal of time at the National Results Conference to share definitions, expectations, and ideas for the next round of work on leadership.

The Wallace Foundation:

Richard Laine, Director of Education Programs
 Jody Spiro, Senior Program Officer
 Sabrina Hope King, Senior Program Officer
 Kimberly Jinnett, Senior Evaluation Officer
 Jessica Schwartz, Senior Communications Officer

The National Consortium:

Lois Adams-Rodgers, SAELP Director, Council of Chief State School Officers
 Melissa Zack Johnston, Senior Project Associate, Council of Chief State School Officers
 Amy Mast, Assistant SAELP Project Director, Council of Chief State School Officers
 Katy Anthes, Policy Analyst and Project Manager, Education Commission of the States
 Mariana C. Haynes, Director of Research, National Association of State Boards of Education
 Frances Groff, Senior Policy Specialist, National Conference of State Legislatures
 Liam Goldrick, Senior Policy Analyst, Education Division, National Governors Association
 Christopher Mazzeo, Senior Policy Analyst, National Governors Association

- Why is this a stretch for a state?
- How does this relate to the context within states? What is the significant result that would come out of the implementation of a strategy aligned to this idea? What is your state's capacity to support the breakthrough idea?
- What research would you need to support the selection of this as a breakthrough idea?

Once a breakthrough idea is clarified, SAELP II state applicants must outline a “through-line” strategy that aligns breakthrough ideas with strategies across classroom, building, district and state levels to improve student achievement. SAELP strategies, activities, timelines, product and relationships are expected to be aligned to the existing leadership reform activities transpiring in the state.

The Wallace Foundation stressed how critical it will be for top political leaders in the state to champion the kinds of changes that will be called for in SAELP II. Sometimes policy and opinion leaders such as governors or key state legislators can force debate on seemingly intractable issues. Anytime changes ought to occur in practice and policy, state leaders

Members of the National Conference of State Legislatures Task Force on School Leaders joined the National Results Conference to discuss how and why state legislators across the country have become engaged in promoting education leadership.

A listing of Task Force members may be found at:

<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/NCSLTaskForceParticipantList2.pdf>.

certainly will need to fund initiatives, change policies, and/or drive the public commitment necessary to sustain reform through its toughest moments. Public education needs more political clout and advocates (both lay and professional) who can provide the collaborative cross-boundary leadership, which is so essential if the requisite public will and commitment is to be achieved. State and local educational leaders must work in synergy in the political process both through their various organizations (principals, teachers, school boards) and individually. Public understanding of the saliency of the leadership issue is of greater urgency in the current context because the leadership issue – so preeminent on the state policy agenda only a few years ago – has been preempted by concerns about No Child Left Behind, the war in Iraq, the pervasive budget crisis, and the political and economic consequences of 9/11. The commitment, therefore, of the governor to the work of SAELP II will be a critical element to demonstrate in state proposals for SAELP II grants.

Similarly, representatives of local constituents offered some cautions to states as they went about formulating their breakthrough ideas and throughline strategies. Just as the top-level political leadership is critical to the success of reforms in the preparation and conditions of school leadership, so is the bottom-up leadership necessary to the success of any effort. State leaders should not get caught in the common trap of thinking that they, because of their particular vantage point, know all there is to know about changing school leadership and the particular contexts of their states. Rather, states would benefit from a partnership with

local leaders, who have their own well-developed ideas about leadership in their schools, school districts, and state. Participants at the conference roundly agreed that the national education reform movement has failed egregiously to develop appropriate mechanisms to bridge the chasm which commonly persists between the top-down business and political leaders who have driven standards, assessments, and accountability reforms at the national and state levels and the practicing teachers and administrators who must implement change at the building and district level – and who have their own ideas and priorities related to improving practice. As state leaders continue to champion change in school leadership, they must engage as partners with the practitioners who champion change in their own classrooms, buildings, and districts.

This is the essence of the throughline strategy; that every level of the system has a unique and complementary role to play in carrying through a breakthrough idea from conceptualization to actualization in student performance gains. The existing SAELP–LEAD⁴ demonstration district structure, if appropriately capitalized upon, can be the vehicle through which powerful “through-line” strategies can serve as vanguards for state and national prototypes for generating more effective “top-down – bottom-up” bridging and synergy in reforming not only leadership development specifically but also in implementing educational improvement in general.

SAELP II proposals must address the multiple interactions among the state, district, school, and classroom levels, and how leaders at every level of the system can become more sensitive to the priorities, concerns, strengths, and responsibilities of their counterparts throughout the system. The National Results Conference provided one opportunity for state reformers to think together about how state and local systems can be aligned and coordinated to affect and sustain the changes needed to strengthen leadership for learning.

V. NEXT STEPS FOR SAELP

Current SAELP states shared with each other their reflections on the unique power of the SAELP efforts and what the added resources allowed them to do in the first phase of the project. One image that resonated with many state participants was that the resources provided by The Wallace Foundation acted as “lubricating grease” for beleaguered state education agencies as they strive to keep the leadership issue on the radar screen of both the general public and policymakers. In SAELP II, resources will not be used to create stand-alone programs or fund terminal projects or events. Rather, SAELP II resources should help to push forward ongoing efforts to improve this critical aspect of education reform, effective school leadership.

⁴ LEAD (Leadership for Educational Achievement in Districts) is a major Wallace Foundation-funded initiative being conducted in 12 high-need districts that have demonstrated willingness and capacity to reform their leadership practices to improved student learning. Eleven of the 12 districts are located in SAELP I states.

In assessing proposals for SAELP II, The Wallace Foundation will stress the sustainability of the initiative after its investment is concluded. In other words, state proposal developers should also pay great attention to the sustainability issue and strive to create longer-range instrumentalities or vehicles that will maximize chances for institutionalizing projects.

In SAELP II proposals, states will have the opportunity to share artifacts that demonstrate the likelihood of their projects overall success, such as workplan implementation strategies and activities, public engagement and communications plans, and plans for engaging key districts, groups, and stakeholders. The identification of these areas for inclusion in the proposal speaks to their importance in the work of any education reform strategy.

VI. CONCLUSION

Research demonstrates that effective school leadership has a positive impact on student performance. An analysis of the forces colliding to squeeze schools and school leaders, coming at a time when the call for a *quality* education for *each* child is in our hands, creates an urgency felt by all school systems to grow, recruit, prepare, and retain highly effective leaders. Yet, the recognition that there is not a sufficient pool of candidates eager to enter the profession of education leadership, that the demands of school leaders may be more than one person can reasonably meet, and that the changes school leaders must manage are so complex that assuring effective leadership in every school. The good news is that current leadership preparation programs might be altered to prepare leaders for the challenges of second order change implicit in and all kids, high standards agenda. Non-traditional leadership candidates might be recruited to enter the profession were the path to school leadership and the conditions of employment deemed manageable.

Much of the early work related to improving education already has been done, and the decisions that need to be made in the near term are the ones most likely to generate controversy and conflict. It has become clear that without excellent leaders, we will not have excellent education institutions. The imperative is clear and the challenge is obvious – to champion change in our schools we must champion change among our school leaders. The December 2003 National Results Conference celebrated those who are driving change, shared the lessons learned, and laid out an agenda for the next wave of education leadership in our country.

More information for each state was posted during the conference, and is available in the following appendix. Information and meeting materials prepared for the SAELP Results Conference may be reviewed at [http://www.ccsso.org/projects/State Action for Education Leadership/Meetings/3614.cfm](http://www.ccsso.org/projects/State_Action_for_Education_Leadership/Meetings/3614.cfm).

Appendix: SAELP State Descriptions and Accomplishments

(Collected and compiled 12/03)

Connecticut

Based, in part, on the work of the Future of School Leadership in Connecticut Committee (2000), three key areas were identified as being central to expanding the quality of school leadership in Connecticut: governance, roles, and responsibilities; the induction of new school leaders; and the ongoing professional development of veteran administrators.

Accomplishments:

1. Governance-Distributed Leadership: Connecticut's Superintendents (CAPPS) and Boards of Education (CABE) jointly published a Statement of Roles and Responsibilities that serves to clarify and describe board-district governance, collaboration, and "best practices." Two distributed leadership demonstration sites were established, one involving a large urban district involving six schools, and one a regional collaborative involving three urban school districts. A Distributed Leadership Readiness Scale (DLRS) was developed, and early results support the hypothesis that schools characterized by shared decision making tend to be higher performing schools (based on standardized measures of student academic performance) compared to transitioning schools. Connecticut has recognized the necessity of establishing a statewide induction program for beginning administrators. The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) was funded through SAELP to conduct focus groups and gather data regarding administrator opinions about induction practices and best practices as available both within and out of Connecticut. CAS has provided a report along with recommendations that will be used as we design and pilot a statewide induction program.
2. Induction: Connecticut SAELP has examined the research and promising practices in Administrator Induction Programs. The study has yielded a variety of approaches related to mentorship, support teams, mentor training, orientation supervisory training, various forms of visitation and shadowing, and opportunities for self-assessment and feedback. Results of this study will be used to design a statewide pilot of a beginning administrator induction program. The Urban Leadership Academy demonstration site allowed Connecticut the chance to investigate the feasibility and effectiveness of addressing the unique and context-specific needs of practicing principals.
3. Urban Leadership Academy: An Urban Leadership Academy (ULA) was piloted as Connecticut's third demonstration site. The ULA approach consists in part of a "school improvement-based" coaching model involving 22 urban schools. This demonstration site, still in progress, has the flexibility to offer school leader support in the context of the unique professional development needs of each administrator and school.

Delaware

Delaware's state plan for strengthening education leadership is centered on five areas of strategic policy leverage. They include 1) developing a new induction program for beginning principals and assistant principals; 2) creating a professional development program for experienced school leaders; 3) creating an environment within the educational community that supports instructional leadership; 4) re-designing

preparation and pre-service programs; and 5) enhancing the recruitment of potential school leaders. SAELP coupled with the Delaware Accountability Legislation has provided the impetus for change in strengthening education leadership throughout the state. Progress has been made on all five areas of strategic policy leverage.

Accomplishments:

1. Delaware completed Phase I of the evaluation of school leader preparation programs with all three universities providing either a masters, doctorate in educational leadership, or coursework for certification as a school administrator. The "Critical Friends" process included a self-assessment of existing programs based on a rubric designed around the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards scored by a team of two consultants and two practicing Delaware Administrators. Onsite visits resulted in a discussion of how university programs could be redesigned to better prepare school leaders to become leaders of teaching and learning. As a result of the review, all three Delaware Institutions of Higher Learning are currently making substantial changes to their existing programs so as to be aligned to both the ISLLC Standards and Delaware Educator Accountability legislation.
2. Delaware hosted a two-day First Annual Policy and Practice Institute in June 2003 in the state's capital. Over 275 educators, policy-makers, and representatives from higher education attended the event including 67 aspiring school leaders. During the institute, stakeholders discussed the 19 policy recommendations that were developed by the Task Force for Recruitment and Retention of School Leaders and the Task Force for Enhancing Working Conditions for School Leaders. Participants were provided the opportunity to prioritize the five most important issues.
3. Delaware provided a new School Leader Induction Program for all new administrators throughout 2002-2003. The new three-tiered licensure system provided mentoring during the first three years while the educator is working on an initial license. Experienced school leaders were trained by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to provide mentoring to their assigned protégés. New school leaders were also able to participate in the Assessment Center which provided feedback to the novice administrators on strengths and areas of needed improvement and supported by a professional development plan.

Georgia

The SAELP I vision for education leadership in Georgia is based on two primary goals: 1) to develop and implement a coherent career development and succession model (recruitment, preparation, development, mentoring, support and retention) for educational leadership in Georgia that will result in all PK-12 students learning and achieving at high levels; and 2) to develop and implement changed policies that will make the practice of educational leadership a more satisfying career choice for highly talented and diverse individuals.

Accomplishments:

1. Georgia's State Leadership Institute was created and has deeply engaged school and district leaders from at least 25 districts across the state. The Institute

- focuses on leadership research development, state policy influence, and professional development.
2. Georgia's SAELP project has conducted a comprehensive preparation program review of all accredited administrator preparation programs. The review has generated partnerships with higher education institutions in redesigning their program curriculums for school leaders.
 3. Georgia, in partnership with their LEAD⁵ district (Atlanta Public Schools) has started a district /state partnership on recruiting, preparing, and licensing aspiring leaders from the Atlanta school district.

Illinois

The Illinois Consortium for Education Leadership, formed in 2002, has provided leadership to SAELP's efforts and accomplishments in Illinois. This 30-person consortium, comprised of leaders from business, education, the Office of the Governor, the legislature, and universities, has produced an Action Plan of 40 issues important to education leaders. The 27 issues on which consortium action has been taken have been incorporated into a book of 10 chapters. Two chapters on the principalship and the superintendency include numerous topics specific to these education leaders, and they are major accomplishments of Illinois SAELP.

Accomplishments:

1. Leaders from the Illinois Principals Association and the Illinois Association of School Administrators have been active on the consortium and helpful in SAELP's study of the roles, responsibilities, and accountability of each of these major education leaders. In the book, *Leadership for Learning: Strengthening Policies on Education Leadership on Behalf of Illinois Schools*, written by Illinois SAELP staff and the consortium, the chapter, "The Principal as Education Leader," includes topics on roles and demographics, the adequacy of principal preparation programs in Illinois universities, years of teaching experience for principals, principals serving dual roles as superintendents, alternative certification, and standards-based evaluation of principals.
2. A major focus of Illinois SAELP has been a study of the superintendency. In a chapter on superintendents, topics explored include the superintendent's role as education leader, demographics of the superintendency, alternative certification, superintendents' continuing professional development, and certification requirements for out-of-state superintendents.
3. Another major accomplishment of Illinois SAELP is the upcoming statewide conference in February 2004 to be held in Chicago. Presentations will be featured by nationally-recognized leaders including Betty Hale, Institute for Education Leadership, and Charles Coble, Education Commission of the States. Also among the presenters will be the Illinois SAELP staff, SAELP Consortium members, and education leaders in the LEAD District, the demonstration districts, and the Chicago Public Schools.

Indiana

The Indiana Promise Consortium has collaborated over the past several years in providing much needed work and support in the area of school leadership. The

⁵ Leadership for Educational Achievement in Districts

collaboration has included all key stakeholders throughout the state, thus resulting in the following accomplishments through this project. For more information, visit <http://www.doe.state.in.us/ipla/welcome.html> (click on the "Indiana Promise" icon, type "promise" for both user name and password). Upcoming: *Minority Awareness Summit* - Scheduled for March 5, 2003, this event is designed to bring together key stakeholders who desire to address the issue of diversity in school leadership. The summit arose from the collaboration of Fort Wayne Community Schools (LEAD district) and the Indiana Promise Consortium (SAELP).

Accomplishments:

1. Building on progress made to-date and consistent with actions called for in P.L. 146-1999, P.L. 221-1999, and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Education Roundtable's P-16 "Plan for Improving Student Achievement" provides a comprehensive blueprint for aligning policies, resources, and strategies to improve academic achievement for all Hoosier students. Deb Lecklider and Brad Balch presented to the Education Roundtable in December 2002 to address the works of the Indiana Promise Consortium and the importance of School Leadership in our schools. The results of this presentation and the work of the consortium have brought the issue to the forefront of the Education Roundtable. Therefore, one section of the P-16 plan is now dedicated to school and district leadership.
2. The Indiana SAELP Legislative Action Group is finalizing legislative recommendations for the 2004 session of the General Assembly focusing on incentives and professional development for school and classroom leaders in highest need schools. The legislation will encourage exemplary and/or highly qualified building level and classroom leaders to accept long-term assignments to "high priority/academic watch" schools as defined by Indiana Public Law 221. Incentives will include extended student instructional days and/or extended days for teachers and building-level principals to participate in professional development aligned with the technical assistance efforts through the Department of Education, and professional development funds.
3. Monograph: *A Promise for Indiana's School Leaders: Recruitment, Retention, and Professional Development Needs*, edited by Brad Balch, is a summary of a comprehensive review of the literature on the recruitment, retention, and professional development of building and district administrators. The literature review was designed to inform the Indiana SAELP Consortium members as they recommend state policy changes in school leadership. Themes that emerged from the literature are highlighted, as well as policy implications. The monograph includes literature and policy reviews written by researchers from various universities throughout the State of Indiana, and position papers by the Superintendents' and Principals' Associations.

Iowa

Iowa's plan to strengthen education leadership is tied closely to the six SAELP strategies necessary for policy change. Iowa will focus their SAELP efforts on 1) making support for educational leadership related to student achievement a high priority; 2) creating a sufficient pool of diverse, talented, and motivated candidates for school leadership positions; 3) creating effective pre-service and professional development programs; 4) ensuring effective licensing and re-certification processes for school leaders; 5) creating practices and programs of employment that serve as incentives for keeping strong leaders and attracting new leaders to the field; and 6) improving the political and governance settings that affect the climate for school leaders.

Accomplishments:

1. The National Review Panel accreditation review of all Educational Administrator Preparation Programs was completed and recommendations were shared with the Iowa State Board of Education in September of 2003. The work of the panel will continue as colleges and universities complete conditional requirements.
2. Licensure barriers were removed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners to allow PK-12 licensure for school administrators.
3. The creation of the Iowa Leadership Academy is moving forward with a collaboration of the Iowa Department of Education, School Administrators of Iowa, Area Education Agencies, LEA practitioners, higher education and other Iowa education partners. The academy will work toward attracting, retaining, and sustaining effective school leaders across the state.

Kentucky

The Kentucky SAELP Consortium members, comprised of key stakeholders in the Commonwealth, have been working for the past two years to align strategies to strengthen educational leadership to the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). Through research and collaboration designed to determine what would make the principals job "do-able" and allow a focus on instructional leadership, Kentucky SAELP has built the capacity to field test a new approach to school leadership.

Accomplishments:

1. Determined true status of Kentucky's pool of principals and superintendents. A collaborative research team from the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville surveyed individuals pursuing certification as principals or superintendents, practicing principals and superintendents, certified but not practicing principals and superintendents, and teacher leaders. The data addresses issues facing practitioners, professional preparation faculty, and policy makers in Kentucky, including problems of practice, career paths, barriers to improving diversity and gender, recruitment and retention strategies, job satisfaction, job expectations, hiring experiences, strengths and weaknesses of professional development, self-assessment of readiness to serve as school or district leader, and working relationships with school councils and school boards. Analysis of data confirms that there is not a shortage of candidates for principal or superintendent positions overall in the state. Studies created a comprehensive database on the status, context, and leadership needs of Kentucky schools.
2. Developed alternative distributed leadership models to make the job of principal "do-able." Eleven districts throughout the state, including the Jefferson County LEAD district, were selected to serve as demonstration sites. A variety of new leadership models were developed that incorporated teacher leaders in different roles, most with a strong focus on the instructional program. The LEAD district is piloting a School Administrative Manager as a support position to the principal to separate the managerial functions from those of instructional leadership. Lessons learned from a formal study of these demonstration projects is being used to inform development of a new school leadership model and policy implications for implementing and sustaining the new model.
3. Conducted analysis of principals' work in context. An in-depth study of how principals spend their time was conducted in schools at different levels. The

study examined how principals are affected by the time constraints within their day and how much difference exists between how principals in successful schools spent their time compared to principals in low achieving schools. This study provides data for determining the time barriers that prevent principals from spending more time on instruction and helps to identify organizational and policy changes that will support changing the conditions of the principal's job to enable effective school instructional leadership.

Massachusetts

For the past two years, a partnership of the Department of Education, legislators from the Massachusetts House and Senate, the Board of Education, the Board of Higher Education, education associations, the business community, Springfield Public Schools, and other stakeholders have worked together under the auspices of the Commonwealth School Leadership Project. The focus of this work has been on leadership recruitment; training and licensure; and, support and retention. For more information, visit:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eq/cslp/>.

Accomplishments:

1. **Recruitment:** The Department sponsored a series of nine regional Aspiring Leader meetings to help prospective administrator candidates understand the various leadership opportunities within districts; almost 1,000 prospective administrators have attended. Springfield Public Schools has been successful at increasing the numbers of minority candidates who apply for leadership positions in the district.
2. **Training and Licensure:** The Board of Education approved new *Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval* that clarifies alternative ways in which prospective administrators can be prepared. The Department of Education has worked closely with Springfield Public Schools and other districts and collaboratives, to launch and approve eight district-based licensure programs for administrators. In addition, the department has worked with districts and collaboratives to pilot two cohorts of aspiring principal/assistant principal candidates through the administrator apprenticeship/internship route. Based on this work, the department developed guidelines documents that are available to individuals and districts interested in developing an approved preparation program or an apprenticeship/internship for administrators.
Training and Licensure: The Massachusetts Legislature approved, Chapter 416 of the Acts of 2002, a law requiring 8 hours of mandatory orientation and training for new school committee members. The training must be conducted by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees or another provider approved by the Department of Education. The training shall include, but not be limited to school finance, the open meeting law, public records law, conflict of interest law, special education law, collective bargaining, school leadership standards and evaluations, and the roles and responsibilities of school committee members.
3. **Support and Retention:** In partnership with Future Management Systems, the department has piloted a succession planning and leadership development program to help 10 demonstration districts grow their own leaders and distribute the various roles and responsibilities of school leaders. Five districts are continuing this work. Based on this work, the Department has developed a succession planning tool kit for other districts to use.

Missouri

Missouri was one of the original states to adopt the ISLLC Standards. The standards have been used to align higher education program approval, administrator preparation, assessment, certification, professional development, and performance evaluation. This work is implemented through our network of nine Regional Professional Development Centers, higher education, and the associations. Relationships developed among practitioners, associations, higher education, the state department, and our major policymakers remain the significant catalyst for Missouri's work to positively impact student performance by inspiring and developing highly effective school leaders.

Accomplishments:

1. **Induction:** House Bill 1711 was passed containing wording, which statutorily requires mentoring for administrators in Missouri's schools of concern. Out of this bill came the development of our Mentoring Program Standards (5CSR 80-850.045) to be used statewide for all new staff. The Mentoring Program Standards will be included in the next cycle of the Missouri School Improvement Process creating a new rigor in school district accreditation.
2. **Training, Induction, and Conditions of Practice:** The Missouri Professors of Educational Administration (MPEA) collaborated with SAELP and initiated an extensive literature and research review on four topics of Missouri and national interest. The topics were: alternative preparation/accreditation, the internship, mentoring, and cultural changes impacting leadership in our schools. These topics were taken to regional focused forums across the state to inform and to be informed by our stakeholders. The information was then edited into four (4) white papers. The documents are currently being distilled into a brochure format that will be used to engage and educate our major policymakers around these pertinent topics.
3. **SAELP/LEAD Collaboration:** In April 2003, an Urban Summit was held in Jefferson City, Missouri. The superintendents of the Kansas City Public Schools and the LEAD Project, St. Louis City, convened the summit. Attending the morning session were school, state, board, and community members. The purpose of the summit was to foster the collaboration of the two largest school districts in Missouri with the administrative preparation institutions. During the afternoon session, all colleges and universities preparing leadership for urban districts joined the summit to listen and then to collaboratively create strategies to improve the quality and quantity of aspiring leaders coming out of the institutions of higher education.

Montana

After a three-year focus on leadership and student achievement, Montana remains committed to the vision of high standards for all students through improved school and district leadership. To that end, the Montana SAELP consortium launched an ambitious work agenda in 2000 around seven initiatives that aligned with the SAELP goals. Substantial progress was made in all seven initiatives and, with only two minor exceptions, the initiatives will be fully implemented. As important, however has been the change in belief about the importance of leadership expressed by key policy makers and communities. Not only has Montana successfully implemented their plan of action, they have changed the value structure for school leadership. Quality leadership is now

recognized as one of the key strategies for improving student achievement. The Montana SAELP consortium recently reflected on their progress with great pride of accomplishment. With the help of Wallace Foundation, major state policies and procedures were changed which has and will continue to have lasting impact on school leadership and student achievement.

Accomplishments:

1. Montana has fully aligned administrator preparation program standards, certification standards, and administrator evaluation with ISLLC standards for a seamless system of training, licensure, and practice that focuses on leadership and student achievement.
2. Montana has created alternative certification for principals and superintendents that include a three-year supervised internship which allow candidates to serve as principals and superintendents while they receive mentoring and complete required courses and seminars. Mentor training has been expanded and improved.
3. Montana is addressing the administrative shortage through legislation that allows high need districts to hire retired administrators without loss of retirement benefits and an expanded process for recruitment of aspiring leaders through a state-district partnership.

New Jersey

Over the past three years, New Jersey SAELP has broken new ground in the development of policies in support of educational leadership focused on teaching and learning. Through adoption of statutes and regulations, New Jersey will put in place a comprehensive standards-based policy framework to support the recruitment, induction, licensure, and development of New Jersey's school leaders this winter. An active state SAELP consortium comprised of key policy constituents including the Governor's Office, the State Board of Education, the school leader associations, higher education and the business community have formed a powerful coalition in the service of strengthening school leadership. The vision of educational leadership shared by the consortium members so clearly transcends partisan interests that it has drawn together leaders in the educational community who have worked to forge meaningful relationships in the service of school improvement through improved school leadership.

Accomplishments:

1. New regulations will be adopted by the State Board of Education in January instituting school leadership standards that redefine school leadership around learning, teaching, and school improvement and that serve as the basis for reculturing school administration throughout the state. These standards will serve as the foundation of the preparation, licensure, induction and development of school leaders in New Jersey.
2. New regulations will be adopted by the State Board of Education in January creating a new framework of team-based collaborative professional development for principals and superintendents anchored in the concept of leadership for learning.

3. New draft legislation has been proposed to enhance conditions of work for school leaders by redefining governance arrangements between school boards and superintendents and between superintendents and principals.

Oregon

The Oregon SAELP project has successfully implemented the SAELP goals through three strategic initiatives 1) improving data-based decision making; 2) developing a coherent policy structure; and 3) building capacity for professional learning.

Accomplishments:

1. Improving data-based decision making
 - Continued development of the Oregon Educator Information Repository to monitor and study administrative demographics
 - Developed research findings, studies and surveys available at the Oregon SAELP web page <http://www.ous.edu/aca/SAELP/>
2. Developing a coherent policy structure
 - Completed state policy audit
 - Established priority for school administrators in NCLB's Title IIA Teacher and Principal Training and Recruitment under the University/School Partnership Program
3. Building capacity for professional learning
 - Utilized published research report, *Best Practices in Education Leadership Preparation Programs*, to guide policy recommendations for administrator licensing programs
 - Established multiple urban and rural university – school district partnerships as SAELP demonstration projects
 - Increased planning, coordination and goal setting among all administrative licensure program directors

Rhode Island

The focus of Rhode Island's work is to link leadership with the state agenda to improve student performance. Through the efforts of Rhode Island state leaders and policy makers and the SAELP Steering Committee working in concert with the state's LEAD district, subcommittees, and local demonstration sites, the following highlight SAELP accomplishments.

Accomplishments:

1. RI has passed legislation as a result of SAELP. State law reference 16-7.1-8. includes funding support for the design and implementation of leadership development for the teacher to assume leadership roles or ultimately prepare for an administrator role. Also included is funding support for the development of a plan for formal training of school leaders in standards based instruction, school improvement planning, effective use of data in the decision-making process, community involvement, and creation of governance structures. Work also continues with higher education administrative preparation programs to enhance capacity of new administrators/school leaders by focusing on improved student achievement.

2. After an extensive review and discussion around governance policy in Rhode Island, the SAELP Governance Sub-Committee has made three recommendations to the SAELP Steering Committee. These recommendations require action to specifically develop leadership and governance standards and assessment for school committees, principals, superintendents, and the Commissioner of Education/Board of Regents that outline roles and responsibilities; to seek broad consensus to authorize the increased involvement of principals in the assignment of teachers within the building based on accountability, equity, and student need; and to publicly endorse school committee certification.
3. The SAELP project team works in concert with the LEAD district as well as funds eight demonstration sites that are connecting school improvement and accountability to leadership development. The focus is on professional development, linkages with higher education in the preparation of school leaders, and adoption of performance standards for administrators, particularly principals. The network of demonstration sites informs the SAELP Steering Committee recommendations for policies regarding issues such as alternate certifications, preparation program approval, licensure portability, and governance.

Vermont

Vermont's vision to improve educational leadership has focused on the following policy initiatives designed to 1) promote collaboration with all other Vermont leadership initiatives and professional organizations in order to advance and sustain educational leadership capacity in Vermont; 2) publish research based reports on the principalship in Vermont that will inform the public and guide the development of policies regarding school leadership; 3) establish a culture and the structures that will promote and support collaborative, reflective, and active use of professional knowledge to improve conditions of practice for principals and other school leaders; 4) establish the work conditions for administrators that will both attract and retain highly qualified leaders to all Vermont schools; and 5) to field test Vermont SAELP policy.

Accomplishments:

1. Formation of the Vermont Education Leadership Collaborative (VELC): VELC includes the Executive Directors of Vermont SAELP, the Vermont Education Leadership Alliance, the Vermont Institutes, the Vermont Principals' Association, the Vermont Superintendents' Association, the Vermont Schools Boards' Association, and the Snelling Leadership Project who work together to advance and sustain educational leadership capacity and to create a common language across organizations in order to leverage and shape public policy specific to educational leadership and improving conditions for educational leaders.
2. Alignment of Professional Development Opportunities for Principals and Superintendents: Through the creation of strategic partnerships with Vermont's major leadership programs and initiatives, leadership opportunities are aligned with each other and are accessible to more of Vermont's school leaders.
3. The selection and support of demonstration sites that have field-tested important policy initiatives: One supervisory union has examined leadership roles and responsibilities in order to improve the work conditions of the principals and increase their capacity for instructional leadership. A large rural, low socio-economic region of the state has built their capacity to develop programs to support aspiring and current school leaders. A small supervisory union has

begun the process of streamlining its governance structure by consolidating local boards into one unified board structure.

Virginia

SAELP's focus on school leadership led to a fortuitous "next step" in Virginia policy and practice, building on an existing substantive state policy context—including standards of learning, an accountability program, and professional performance guidelines. SAELP-Virginia produced extensive policy analyses, commissioned inquiries in leadership, strengthened broad support for school leadership development, and began public engagement activities emphasizing leadership focused on student learning throughout Virginia.

Accomplishments:

1. At the "festive finale" of the *LEADERS Count in Virginia Schools Conference*, Dr. Jo Lynne DeMary, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, presented awards to SAELP demonstration sites—Fairfax (Project LEAD), Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, and Roanoke City Public Schools—for their exemplary leadership development.
2. After extensive discussion, a statewide Task Force on school leader preparation (the LEAD-Fairfax director, 4 other educators, 5 university representatives, and a school board member and businessman) forwarded 12 recommendations to the Joint Legislative Commission. Commissioned papers are 1) *Barriers and Gaps: Improving the Preparation of School Leaders in an Era of Accountability*; 2) *Report on the Virginia Administrative Licensure Graduate Professional Preparation Survey*, and 3) *Report on the Virginia Superintendents' Professional Development Survey*.
3. On November 17, 2003, a Joint Legislative Commission (composed of 12 policymakers and 9 educators) approved all 12 Task Force recommendations and outlined a final report of all its far-reaching deliberations since January 2002, including follow-up actions. Commissioned paper is *School Leadership in an Age of Accountability*.