



**Making the
Investment
in
High Quality
Professional
Development**

**Illinois Administrators' Academy
Review Task Force
Recommendations**

**Submitted to
The Honorable Members
of the
95th Illinois General Assembly
July 1, 2007**

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Honorable Members of the 95th Illinois General Assembly:

The Illinois Administrators' Academy (IAA) Review Task Force is pleased to submit this recommendation report. This document reflects the work of the Task Force, formed in response to concern about aligning professional development for school administrators to the skills and behaviors that leaders need to improve student learning.

The IAA Review Task Force was created as part of P.A. 094-1039 to provide for an objective examination of the Illinois Administrators' Academy and to propose strategies that the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may adopt to improve professional development for Illinois school administrators.

In 2005, ISBE approved its *Comprehensive Strategic Plan*. In this plan, Goal 2 addresses improving educator quality for all children. A Goal 2 strategic objective is to "Work with higher education and other entities to develop school leaders who are successful in raising student achievement." One initiative for this objective is to "Review existing statutes regarding professional development, and collaborate with professional teacher and administrator organizations to create a professional development framework for dissemination to schools and districts which supports job-embedded learning and coaching strategies for teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators for sustained, ongoing instructional Improvement."

The recommendations in this report emerged over a period of several months, as Task Force members:

- Evaluated studies on leadership and professional development;
- Examined Illinois school leaders' perceptions of the IAA and its courses;
- Investigated external influences on quality professional development;
- Reviewed promising state and district professional development models and programs; and
- Developed recommendations for improving professional development for Illinois administrators.

The task force's work reaffirms the need to invest time and resources to further develop and support the professional development needs of Illinois school leaders, linking to proven practices for improving student achievement. In an era of high-stakes accountability, Task Force members are confident that the recommendations detailed in this report will strengthen the Illinois Administrators' Academy and link it more closely with other state initiatives to improve school leadership.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Making the Investment in High Quality Professional Development: Illinois Administrators Academy Review Task Force Recommendations

Introduction

In order to structure its work, the Illinois Administrators' Academy (IAA) Task Force worked with three basic principles, which form the foundation for this report:

Principle 1: School leaders have a significant impact on student learning, second only to the impact of teachers.

Principle 2: Quality professional development can improve student achievement.

Principle 3: The current Illinois Administrators' Academy (IAA) structure can serve as the foundation for a high-quality statewide professional development system for school administrators, with some necessary improvements.

Based on these three principles, the Task Force members take the position that high quality professional development for education leaders is important and worth the state's investment. The recommendations from this report are designed to build on the IAA's current strengths while alleviating weaker areas. Task Force members maintain that incorporating these recommendations into the existing IAA will remediate some deficiencies that prevent the IAA from being as effective a catalyst as it should be for improving school performance and student achievement.

The first section of this report explains the three underlying principles as stated above. Each sub-section includes, as appropriate, research findings from national studies and from Illinois, and historical information about the IAA. The second section of the report highlights current challenges to creating an effective statewide professional development system for education leaders. The third section relays the Task Force recommendations, suggesting how to incorporate both practical and research-based strategies within the existing IAA structure, to support administrators' continuous acquisition of essential leadership skills.

Part I: Principles, Research and History

In this section of the report, the Task Force reviews the three principles that guided its work, with related research and historical background.

Principle 1: School leaders have a significant impact on student learning, second only to the impact of teachers.

Over the past three decades, educational research on effective schools studied the relationships between student learning and specific aspects of teaching and school organization. This research identified school-based practices and structures that positively impacted student learning. These studies made it increasingly clear that student learning could be influenced by curriculum design, instruction, and assessment. Effective schools researchers routinely included *school leadership* in their lists of school factors that contribute to student learning.

More recent research confirms these findings and shows more clearly the impact of school leaders on student achievement. In fact, school leaders have a significant impact on student achievement, second only to the effects of teachers. The same research found that in difficult times and circumstances, leadership matters even more.

The growing complexity of today's schools requires an expanding circle of individuals that contribute to effective school leadership. Increasing accountability and other demands on schools require teams of individuals – from the superintendent to the principal to teacher leaders – to manage and lead high-performing schools. This is important to note, as one IAA course is required each year for recertification, not only for principals but for superintendents, school business officials, special education directors, assistant principals, athletic directors and other administrators who hold an Illinois administrative Type 75 or 77 certificate and are working in positions requiring that certificate.

Other studies have identified the effects of *specific* leadership skills on raising student achievement. Researchers at the Mid-Continent Regional Education Laboratory (McREL) have examined the effects of school leadership practices on student achievement and have identified research-based school leadership responsibilities and practices significantly associated with student achievement. (See Appendix A for the complete list of 21 responsibilities and practices.) According to the results of the study, a principal who improved his or her ability in each of these 21 responsibilities could improve student test scores.

A survey of 759 principals in Illinois, conducted by the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University, asked how well they thought their Type 75 certification program had prepared them for the 21 McREL competencies. The survey revealed average marks, with 30% to 49% responding that their preparation was average or below.

These results show that the professional development of administrators is on a continuum, for which the foundation is laid during preparation programs. It continues with support for new administrators in mentoring programs and with advanced development in the voluntary Master Principal Program. The IAA supports this professional growth continuum by providing additional growth opportunities for leaders at all stages of their careers. It also encompasses professional growth for administrators beyond principals and superintendents (such as assistant principals, assistant superintendents, special education directors, school business officials and others).

Principle Two: High Quality Professional Development Impacts Student Learning.

Research showing the impact of leadership on student achievement is compelling, but perhaps the most pertinent research supporting the work of the IAA Review Task Force is that which shows how high quality professional development positively affects student achievement.

Research shows that professional development is most likely to affect learning through its structure and content, as described in Table 1:

<i>Table 1: Characteristics of Effective Professional Development</i>	
<i>Structure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended over a period of time and integrated with other professional development • Team-based approach • Aligned with reform initiatives and state certification • Evaluation procedures to assess quality and impact
<i>Content</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing context-specific needs rather than general topics • Teaching consistent approaches to improving student learning • Using a collaborative, inquiry-based approach to learning

The current IAA structure does not prevent IAA courses from including the elements of high quality professional development listed in Table 2. However, in practice, the majority of current IAA courses are one-day courses tailored to the generalized needs of administrators. Multi-day courses offer opportunities for administrators to focus on a single theme or leadership issue, deepening their knowledge and understanding. These multi-day courses can better incorporate the quality characteristics displayed in Table 1. They also offer more opportunities for participants to apply their learning in their schools and districts.

The Task Force promotes the vision that the IAA should complement existing state and district preparation, training and development initiatives, as it was originally intended to do. Ideally, IAA courses should support a *leadership continuum* that begins with certification programs and continues through professional development and assessment throughout administrators’ careers (Figure 1, next page).

Principle Three: The Current IAA Can Serve As the Foundation for a System of High Quality Professional Development

The Illinois Administrators’ Academy was created in 1985 within P.A. 84-126, based on the model of the Harvard Principals’ Center. The IAA was intended to fill the gap between university courses and the practical leadership needs of school administrators. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) expanded the principals’ center concept to incorporate the training needs and interests of all practicing educational administrators, including superintendents, assistant principals, and special education directors.

The IAA was designed to provide meaningful training experiences to meet the varying needs and time constraints of administrators. Four strands of training were available to provide a flexible framework for participants:

- *A required strand* addressing the evaluation of certified staff, which an administrator was required to complete once every two years;
- *A selective strand* based on a single theme over a relatively short time period (voluntary);
- *A designation strand* that allowed administrators to earn designation as an associate, member, or master of the Academy depending on level of involvement within a skill area (voluntary); and

- A *clinical strand* that provided customized assessment to administrators interested in receiving confidential, objective, constructive feedback about their instructional leadership skills (voluntary).

The Academy was initially funded with \$800,000 used by ISBE to contract with training developers through a Request-for-Proposals (RFP) process. Proposals were developed primarily by higher education institutions and regional laboratories. A state advisory committee of administrators, teachers, professional associations, and higher education provided recommendations for developing and implementing Academy activities.

The 1985 legislation also created Educational Service Centers (ESCs) to provide professional development for teachers and administrators. Administrators’ Academy programs were delivered through the ESCs and local Academy committees were put into place to assure that training activities responded to the needs of administrators in each service area. Eventually the ESCs developed trainings of their own – mostly addressing teacher and principal evaluation, which at first were

approved by the statewide advisory committee and later by ISBE staff.

The Educational Service Centers were disbanded in August 1995 by P.A. 089-335, and their responsibilities were moved to the Regional Offices of Education (ROEs) and, in Cook County, to Intermediate Service Centers (ISCs). The ROEs began developing and delivering IAA programs with approval by ISBE staff. Most recently, the Continuous Improvement Partnership (CIP) group, with representatives from ROEs and practitioner organizations, advises the Illinois State Board of Education on the Academy.

Today, the Illinois School Code requires administrators to participate in a minimum of 130 hours of continuing professional development (30 hours of IAA courses—at least one course during each fiscal year—and five Continuous Professional Development activities totaling 100 hours) over five years to renew their administrative Type 75 or 77 certificate (105 ILCS 5/21-7.1). Public school administrators planning to evaluate certified staff must complete a two-day evaluation course in addition to the IAA requirement.

Figure 1: Administrator Professional Development Continuum



Part 2: Challenges

In this section of the report, the Task Force describes four specific challenges to creating a structure to support high quality professional development for educational leaders.

Throughout its work, IAA Review Task Force members heard from various voices in the field related to the challenges that exist within the current Illinois Administrators' Academy – many of the same challenges which led to the mandated creation of the Task Force. This report highlights four challenges that are of primary importance to address in order to strengthen the IAA. The goals and recommendations at the end of this report align with the identified challenges.

Challenge One: Communication is inconsistent regarding the submission and approval process for IAA professional development course proposals.

As the Task Force gathered information, it became apparent that confusion existed on the part of many school districts, universities, and other entities around the state regarding the procedures for submission and approval of IAA courses. Different stakeholders had different perceptions about several issues:

- what types of activities counted for academy credit;
- to whom proposals could be submitted for approval;
- timelines for submission and approval; and,
- who was eligible to provide academy courses.

This confusion has been attributed to the decentralized process by which IAA course proposals are submitted through the 45 Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), which may provide varying levels of service and communication within and across regions. In addition, no centralized site houses all of the information regarding the IAA, potentially hindering consistent and timely communication

about the process for submitting and approving courses. There is no central clearinghouse where all IAA courses currently offered can be accessed by educators.

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) houses a website that lists professional development activities across the state. However, the website does not include information for potential outside providers about the process to submit course proposals and receive approval to offer IAA credit for their professional development courses. The IARSS website may be accessed at <http://www.iarss.org/Development.asp>.

The State Board of Education has lacked funding to provide informational sessions to interested providers regarding the submission process, including which forms to use, what evidence to provide to demonstrate quality in a IAA course submission, timelines for submission, to whom to submit the application, and the appeal process for courses that are rejected. This funding deficit is explained further in Challenge Two.

Challenge Two: Lack of state funding is a barrier to high quality professional development.

Members of the Task Force believe that high quality professional development is critical to improving Illinois schools, especially high-need schools, and is a necessary investment for the state if the state is truly committed to providing a high quality education for all of its students. A recent national study examined eight exemplary professional development programs, chosen because they provided evidence of strong outcomes of improved principal leadership

practices. The study identified three features that characterized exemplary professional development programs:

- A learning continuum that spans from preparation programs through induction and continuing careers;
- Learning that is organized around a model of leadership and grounded in practice; and,
- Collegial learning networks that offer communities of practice and support for problem solving.

Citing these features, these researchers recommend to policymakers that significant resources are needed, especially human resources, to support high quality professional development.

A newly-published study of state and district mentoring programs, conducted by the Wallace Foundation, found that underfunding by many states and districts has led to mentoring for too brief a period, weak or nonexistent mentor training, and a failure to collect sufficient or appropriate data to validate effectiveness.

In 1999, the Illinois State Board of Education contracted for an external evaluation of the IAA. Many recommendations from that evaluation were not enacted due to funding. These included developing statewide IAA courses that provide a continuum of experiences incorporating the most current research-based content and practice, and establishing a central on-line clearinghouse for information about IAA courses and the course approval process.

Given the strong, research-based links between administrators, professional development and student achievement, as described in Part I of this report, Task Force members strongly encourage the state to prevent funding shortfalls from serving as a key barrier to providing all Illinois administrators with the professional development training and support they need to improve student achievement and school performance.

Challenge Three: Need for a statewide culture to set expectations for high quality professional development, consistent statewide.

In 1996, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Policy Board of Education Administration (NPBEA) developed the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. These six standards define what educational leaders should know and be able to do to be effective in their positions. As in many states, Illinois developed and adopted its own set of core professional standards, the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards, which are based on the ISLLC Standards. The state also adopted four more specific sets of standards: Superintendent Standards, Chief School Business Official Standards, Principal Standards, and Director of Special Education Standards. Illinois Administrator Academy courses are aligned with the Illinois standards.

Other organizations and districts have also developed standards or competencies that identify the crucial leadership knowledge and skills for highly effective leaders. Chicago Public Schools (CPS) developed its own set of competencies, which align with the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards but have been expanded. The CPS competencies guide hiring decisions and professional development activities.

The 21 McREL leader competencies were described in Part I of this report. The Task Force compared the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards and the specific administrator standards with the 21 McREL competencies (see Appendix B). The McREL competencies identify the same areas as the Illinois standards, but are more focused and detailed. Based on this comparison, the Task Force determined that the Illinois standards should be updated to provide more rigorous expectations and guidance for the content of IAA courses.

Challenge Four: Need for stronger accountability, ensuring consistent quality and relevance of IAA courses.

Many Task Force members expressed concern regarding inconsistent quality of IAA courses across the state. Because 2000 was the last year the IAA was evaluated, and little follow-up data has been collected on the overall performance of the IAA, administrators cannot be informed consumers of professional development. They do not have information on course quality in order to make choices aligned with their leadership needs. The Task Force would like to see the state create a clearinghouse to publicize IAA course descriptions and quality ratings. This would create a market-driven system that would raise the quality of course offerings. It would also establish an evaluative mechanism to report publicly on the performance of the IAA and its impact on leadership development.

As referenced earlier, in 2000 the Illinois State Board of Education contracted to conduct the first formal evaluation of the Administrators’

Academy since its creation in 1985. The findings focused on the content of IAA courses as well as the state structure for supporting the IAA. At that time, evaluators found that most administrators were taking only the required strand and not consistently participating in the three voluntary strands. A resulting recommendation was to improve the rigor and relevance of IAA courses. (See Appendix C for results of the 2000 evaluation).

The Illinois General Assembly made some legislated changes in the IAA based on the 1999 evaluation. In 2003, P.A. 92-796 required administrators to write individual professional development plans addressing issues of accountability, developing skills aligned with the Illinois standards, and practicing continuous growth. Also, in 2003, legislation (P.A. 92-796) made criteria for IAA courses more stringent. In 2004, additional legislation (P.A.93-679) changed the hour requirement and eliminated the mandated individual professional development plans.

Making the Investment in High Quality Professional Development

FOUR CHALLENGES

<p>CHALLENGE 1</p> <p>Communication is inconsistent regarding the submission and approval process for IAA professional development course proposals.</p>	<p>CHALLENGE 2</p> <p>Lack of state funding is a barrier to high quality professional development.</p>
<p>CHALLENGE 3</p> <p>Need for a statewide culture to set expectations for high quality professional development, consistent statewide.</p>	<p>CHALLENGE 4</p> <p>Need for stronger accountability, ensuring consistent quality and relevance of IAA courses.</p>

Part III: Recommendations

In this section of the report, the Task Force presents its recommendations to strengthen the Illinois Administrators' Academy.

Illinois needs a statewide system of high quality professional development that aligns with preparation and mentoring programs for administrators. Such a system will provide necessary professional development opportunities for experienced administrators in all leadership roles, accessible and available to all administrators throughout the state. The critical role of leadership in relation to student achievement is more important than ever before, as an increasing number of Illinois schools are not meeting annual progress requirements according to the federal No Child Left Behind Act and Illinois' state accountability mandates. Illinois has the ability to establish this system, but only with significant state resources and a commitment on the part of both the state and professional development providers to support it. The Task Force has identified specific recommendations for establishing this system.

The recommendations are presented within four overarching goals, which parallel the challenges described in Part II of this report:

- **Support a statewide mechanism to educate the field on professional development expectations and communicate available courses and the process for approving new courses.**
- **Support a statewide system that adequately funds high quality professional development for educational leaders.**
- **Create a statewide expectation for high quality professional development for all administrators.**
- **Develop an accountability system that ties course offerings to characteristics of high quality professional development.**

Making the Investment in High Quality Professional Development

FOUR GOALS

<p>GOAL 1</p> <p>Support a statewide mechanism to educate the field on professional development expectations and communicate available courses and the process for approving new courses.</p>	<p>GOAL 2</p> <p>Support a statewide system that adequately funds high quality professional development for educational leaders.</p>
<p>GOAL 3</p> <p>Create a statewide expectation for high quality professional development for all administrators.</p>	<p>GOAL 4</p> <p>Develop an accountability system that ties course offerings to characteristics of high quality professional development.</p>

Goal One: Support a statewide mechanism to educate the field on professional development expectations and communicate available courses and the process for approving new courses.

The Illinois State Board of Education should implement clear channels of communication to all Illinois Administrators' Academy stakeholders. At the forefront should be communicating consistent expectations about characteristics of high quality professional development and a process for ensuring that all IAA courses are held to these high standards. The second type of communication channel involves a transparent and clearly communicated process for submitting and approving IAA courses, widely distributed to all prospective providers through informational sessions held throughout the state.

Recommendation 1A

The Illinois State Board of Education should communicate the vision, mission, purpose, and goals of the IAA, as well as characteristics of high quality professional development.

- Education organizations (e.g., professional organizations, ROEs, ISCs, districts) should also publicize the IAA vision, mission, purpose and goals and characteristics of quality to inform stakeholders of the IAA and its expectation of high quality professional development.

Recommendation IB

Clearly communicate in a transparent way the process for submitting course applications and the approval criteria to all interested providers. This information should be published on a clearinghouse website, educational organization websites, in a handbook or manual, and in newsletters.

- This information should be communicated in language accessible to all interested applicants. Applicants should know what forms to use, what evidence is needed to demonstrate quality, timelines, and to whom they submit their applications. The quality criteria used to review applications should be disseminated and applied consistently.
- The State Board of Education, or its designee, should facilitate training and other informational sessions for school districts to communicate the available professional development options.
- IAA course providers should make it a practice to collaborate with each other to discuss and align planned course offerings so as not to duplicate efforts.
- The Illinois State Board of Education or its designee should hold training on developing an IAA course and submitting a successful proposal for interested IAA course providers. If an entity has completed this training, it is eligible to submit its course proposals directly to ISBE for a fee set by the State Board of Education.
- The State Board of Education or its designee should facilitate frequent informational sessions for regional ROE, ISC, other third-party providers, and school districts to share the most current IAA regulations, policies, practices and procedures.

Implementation costs:

- \$50,000 annually for posters and wallet cards
- \$700,000 one-time cost for clearinghouse website and tutorial development
- \$250,000 annually for website maintenance

Goal Two: Support a statewide system that adequately funds high quality professional development for educational leaders.

A statewide high quality professional development system cannot exist without significant state resources and commitment by the state and professional development providers to support such a system.

During its early years, the Illinois Administrators' Academy received \$800,000 in state funding for course development. Since 2003, the IAA has not received any state funding; however, the Illinois State Board of Education, Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers continue to have statutory responsibility to provide IAA courses for continuing certification and development of administrators.

Furthermore, the external evaluation of the IAA in 1999 found that the lack of funding was a barrier to providing a high quality system of administrator professional development for the state. Many of the recommendations from that evaluation report to improve the IAA could not be carried out due to lack of funds.

It is with this concern for the quality of the IAA that the Task Force recommends that the state commit to the professional growth of administrators by allocating adequate funding to make the IAA a consistently high quality professional development system.

Recommendation 2A

The Illinois General Assembly should allocate funds to the Illinois State Board of Education and to local agencies in order to develop and manage the IAA as a quality system.

- Employ an appropriate number of staff (or contract with another entity) to properly manage the IAA, provide timely approval of new courses, monitor course quality, and provide timely technical assistance to providers.
- Fund course and strand development, in which a strand is a series of courses that allows participants to focus on a single leadership issue or theme (e.g., data-based decision-making) building deeper knowledge in that issue over time.
- Establish a realistic fee structure for third-party providers.

Implementation costs:

- \$150,000 annually for two additional Illinois State Board of Education staff
- \$200,000 annually for the development of four new IAA courses per year

Goal Three: Create a statewide expectation for high quality professional development for all administrators.

The state should foster a shared vision that professional development is valued and high quality is expected. Doing so will send the message that continuous professional development is a value embraced at the state level and expected throughout the state. Without high state expectations, school districts cannot be expected to embrace and seek quality professional development opportunities for administrators. Everyone in the educational system has responsibility when it comes to student learning. Administrators such as assistant principals, athletic directors, special education directors, and school financial officers may not see this connection clearly. Courses designed for these groups should clarify the link between their roles and impact on student achievement.

Recommendation 3A

The State Board of Education should conduct a gap analysis to identify areas in which the IAA course offerings do not address the needs of all administrators, including special education directors, school business officials, athletic directors, etc.

- This gap analysis will lead to higher quality professional development by promoting courses that are embedded in the contextual needs of administrators.
- To fill these gaps, the State Board should encourage outside entities to develop courses and strands that address the needs of these groups of administrators and link their roles and responsibilities to improving student learning in schools.

Recommendation 3B

The Illinois State Board of Education should review the “Introduction to Evaluation of Certified Staff” course every two years. The course should be revised as needed to incorporate current research and best practices.

Recommendation 3C:

New administrators or those new to the state

who have responsibility for evaluating principals should be required to complete a course in principal evaluation. These administrators may take the course two years prior to taking a position.

- Aligned with the new state requirement for mandatory evaluation of all principals (P.A. 094-1039), the Illinois State Board of Education should solicit proposals for development of this principal evaluation course, based on the most current research and best practices related to principal evaluation, and reviewed and revised every two years to remain current. This will require a change in current state law.

Recommendation 3D:

It is the recommendation of some Task Force members that administrators participating in doctoral or Certificate of Advance Study programs should receive IAA credit for courses taken in the program. However, there was not consensus among the entire Task Force on this recommendation. To grant such credit would require a change in state law; therefore, this recommendation should undergo further discussion by the State Board of Education.

Recommendation 3E:

The State Board should review and update the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards and those for Chief School Business Officials, Superintendents and Directors of Special Education, aligned with skills and behaviors shown by research to improve student achievement.

- Providers should show evidence of how their courses align to these revised standards.

Implementation costs:

- \$83,000 one-time introductory evaluation course revision and trainings for trainers
- \$68,000 one-time cost for principal evaluation course development
- \$15,000 one-time cost for standards review
- Other costs are covered in Goal 2 (Funding) recommendations.

Goal Four: Develop an accountability system that ties course offerings to characteristics of high quality professional development.

The state should collect and continuously assess administrator ratings of quality for all IAA courses. Data should also be made publicly available to allow transparent information on perceptions of course quality and applicability. Such a database can also serve as a clearinghouse to post all available IAA courses in the state.

Recommendation 4A:

The State Board should develop a web-based, centralized clearinghouse that publicizes all IAA courses being offered across the state. These courses may be publicized up to one year in advance when possible with continuous updates as more courses become available. This clearinghouse will be accessible to all stakeholders.

- The state should develop or use an existing common evaluation system in which course completers evaluate the course on multiple criteria including quality and relevancy of course content and quality of presenter, among others. The results of these evaluations should be made public in the clearinghouse.
- The submission and approval process should be simplified and forms should be user-friendly. The submission and approval process should be transparent to all interested providers and the approval time should be shortened.

- The process should be focused on approving courses that fit the characteristics of high quality professional development.
- An appeals process should be available for providers who do not get their courses approved.

Recommendation 4B:

The state should post evaluation results for both courses and presenters on the statewide centralized clearinghouse.

- The clearinghouse should include clear descriptions of the course including course content and anticipated learning outcomes.
- For each course, the clearinghouse should also publish past evaluation results (when applicable) presenting ratings on multiple measures of quality (e.g., relevancy, research-based, applicability, and presenter performance).

Recommendation 4C:

The State Board of Education should make revisions to the requirements for recertification to allow an IAA course to only count once for academy credit in an administrator's recertification cycle.

Implementation costs:

- Costs for these recommendations are included under cost estimates for Goal Two.

Summary of Implementation Cost for IAA Task Force Recommendations

First Year:	\$1,566,500
Total Annual Cost After First Year:	\$ 600,000
Total Bi-Annual Cost After First Year	\$ 851,000

Conclusion

In an era of increasing complexity and accountability, strong educational leaders are essential to student success. Illinois has made a recent important commitment to strengthen school leadership by requiring mentoring for new principals, offering the opportunity for school leaders to attain the Master Principal designation, and developing a teacher leader endorsement.

The same legislation required convening a Task Force to examine the Illinois Administrators' Academy (IAA), first established in 1985, and to make recommendations to strengthen it. The IAA has the potential to provide relevant and timely professional development throughout administrators' careers.

The Task Force based its work on **three principles**: (1) Recent research shows that school administrators have an important influence on student achievement, second only to teachers, (2) research also shows that professional development for educators can improve student outcomes, and (3) the existing IAA can provide the foundation for future improvements.

The Task Force identified **four challenges** to creating a high quality professional development structure for educational leaders:

- Inconsistent communication regarding academy credits and how courses are submitted and approved;
- Lack of sufficient state funding;
- The need for a statewide culture of high expectations for consistent high quality professional development; and
- The need for stronger accountability.

Task Force recommendations address each of the four challenges, setting **four goals with specific recommendations** for achieving each goal:

- Establishing a statewide IAA clearinghouse and communication channels;
- Supporting the system with adequate state funding;
- Infusing high expectations through updated state standards and revised IAA courses; and
- Creating an accountability system with course approval criteria and publicly available course evaluations.

Highly effective educational leaders are crucial to school and student success. High quality professional development, delivered through an updated, relevant and accountable Illinois Administrators' Academy, is essential for leaders to update and maintain their knowledge and skills. The IAA Task Force strongly urges the General Assembly to consider its recommendations in light of the needs of students and schools in every district of the state.

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Appendix A

Principal Leadership Responsibilities and Associated Practices¹

Responsibilities	Practices Associated with Responsibilities
1. Affirmation	Systematically and fairly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes and celebrates accomplishments of teachers and staff • Recognizes and celebrates accomplishments of students • Acknowledges failures and celebrates accomplishments of school
2. Change Agent	Consciously challenges the status quo Is comfortable leading change initiatives with uncertain outcomes Systematically considers new and better ways of doing things
3. Communication	Is easily accessible to teachers and staff Develops effective means for teachers and staff to communicate with one another Maintains open and effective lines of communication with teachers and staff
4. Contingent rewards	Recognizes individuals who excel Uses performance vs. seniority as the primary criterion for reward and advancement Uses hard work and results as the basis for reward and recognition
5. Culture	Promotes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation and cohesion among teachers and staff • A sense of well-being Develops a shared vision and understanding of purpose
6. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	Is involved with teachers in designing curricular activities and addressing instructional issues in their classrooms Is involved with teachers to address assessment issues
7. Discipline	Protects instructional time from interruptions Protects/shelters teachers from distractions
8. Flexibility	Is comfortable with major changes in how things are done Encourages people to express opinions that may be contrary to those held by individuals in positions of authority Adapts leadership style to needs of specific situations Can be directive or non-directive as the situation warrants
9. Focus	Establishes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High, concrete goals and the expectation that all students will meet them • High, concrete goals for curriculum, instruction and assessment • High, concrete goals for the general functioning of the school Keeps everyone's attention focused on established goals
10. Ideals/beliefs	Holds strong professional ideals and beliefs about schooling, teaching and learning Shares ideals and beliefs with teachers, staff and parents Demonstrates behaviors that are consistent with ideals and beliefs
11. Input	Provides opportunities for input from teachers and staff on all important decisions Provides opportunities for teachers and staff to be involved in policy development Involves the school leadership team in decision-making

¹ *Balanced Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells Us About the Effect of Leadership on Student Achievement*, 2003, by T. Waters, R. J. Marzano, and B. McNulty. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Appendix A

Principal Leadership Responsibilities and Associated Practices (continued)

Responsibilities	Practices Associated with Responsibilities
12. Intellectual Stimulation	<p>Stays informed about current research and theory regarding effective schooling</p> <p>Continually exposes teachers and staff to cutting-edge ideas about how to be effective</p> <p>Systematically engages teachers and staff in discussions about current research and theory</p> <p>Continually involves teachers and staff in reading articles and books about effective practices</p>
13. Knowledge of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	<p>Is knowledgeable about the curriculum and instructional practices</p> <p>Is knowledgeable about assessment practices</p> <p>Provides conceptual guidance for teachers regarding effective classroom practice</p>
14. Monitoring/Evaluation	<p>Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum, instruction and assessment</p>
15. Optimizer	<p>Inspires teachers and staff to accomplish things that might seem beyond their grasp</p> <p>Portrays a positive attitude about the ability of teachers and staff to accomplish substantial things</p> <p>Is a driving force behind major initiatives</p>
16. Order	<p>Provides and enforces clear structures, rules and procedures for teachers, staff and students</p> <p>Establishes routines regarding the running of the school that teachers and staff understand and follow</p>
17. Outreach	<p>Ensures that the school is in compliance with district and state mandates</p> <p>Advocates on behalf of the school in the community</p> <p>Interacts with parents in ways that enhance their support for the school</p> <p>Ensures that the central office is aware of the school's accomplishments</p>
18. Relationships	<p>Remains aware of personal needs of teachers and staff</p> <p>Maintains personal relationships with teachers and staff</p> <p>Is information about significant personal issues in the lives of teachers and staff</p> <p>Acknowledges significant events in the lives of teachers and staff</p>
19. Resources	<p>Ensures that teachers and staff have necessary materials and equipment</p> <p>Ensures that teachers have necessary professional development opportunities that directly enhance their teaching</p>
20. Situational Awareness	<p>Is aware of informal groups and relationships among teachers and staff</p> <p>Is aware of issues in the school that have not surfaced but could create discord</p> <p>Can predict what could go wrong from day to day</p>
21. Visibility	<p>Makes systematic and frequent visits to classrooms</p> <p>Is highly visible around the school</p> <p>Has frequent contact with students</p>

Appendix B

Crosswalk: McREL Responsibilities/Practices with Illinois Leadership Standards²

Principals	Superintendent	Director of Special Education	Chief School Business Official	McREL
<p>Standard 1: Promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.</p>	<p>Standard 1: Promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of educational excellence that is shared and supported by the school community.</p>	<p>Standard 1: Promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of educational excellence that is shared and supported by the school community.</p>	<p>Standard 1: Is knowledgeable about the educational foundations of schools.</p>	<p>9. Focus: Establishes clear goals and keeps them at the forefront of attention</p> <p>10. Ideals/Beliefs: Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling</p>
<p>Standard 2: Promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to students' learning and staff's professional growth.</p>	<p>Standard 2: Promotes the success of all students by advocating and nurturing a constantly improving learning environment and an instructional program based upon educationally sound principles of curriculum development, learning and teaching theory, and professional development.</p>	<p>Standard 2: Promotes the success of all students by advocating and nurturing a constantly improving learning environment and an instructional program based upon educationally sound principles of curriculum development and modifications, learning and teaching theory, and professional development.</p>	<p>Standard 2: Understands and demonstrates various organizational leadership models.</p> <p>Standard 9: Understands factors involved in formulating policies and procedures related to the management of non-instructional personnel.</p> <p>Standard 10: Understands and implements staff development procedures for non-instructional personnel.</p> <p>Standard 18: Understands and implements appropriate program evaluation procedures for non-instructional programs.</p>	<p>1. Affirmation: Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.</p> <p>5. Culture: Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation</p> <p>18. Relationships: Demonstrates an awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff</p> <p>12. Intellectual Stimulation: Ensures that faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture</p> <p>14. Monitoring/Evaluation: Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student achievement</p>

² Illinois School Code Part 29

Appendix B
Crosswalk: McREL Responsibilities/Practices
with Illinois Leadership Standards (continued)

Principals	Superintendent	Director of Special Education	Chief School Business Official	McREL
<p>Standard 3: Promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.</p>	<p>Standard 3: Promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.</p>	<p>Standard 6: Promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, effective and least restrictive learning environment.</p>	<p>Standard 11: Understands and addresses labor relations/collective bargaining issues.</p> <p>Standard 12: Understands and implements appropriate facility planning and construction procedures.</p> <p>Standard 13: Understands and implements appropriate maintenance and operations procedures.</p> <p>Standard 14: Understands and implements appropriate purchasing procedures.</p> <p>Standard 15: Understands and implements appropriate supply and fixed asset management procedures.</p> <p>Standard 16: Understands and implements appropriate real estate management procedures.</p> <p>Standard 17: Understands and implements strategic planning procedures.</p> <p>Standard 19: Understands and demonstrates communications procedures.</p> <p>Standard 20: Understands and utilizes management information systems.</p> <p>Standard 22: Understands and implements transportation procedures.</p> <p>Standard 23: Understands and implements food service procedures.</p> <p>Standard 24: Understands and implements health and safety procedures.</p>	<p>7. Discipline: Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their focus or teaching time</p> <p>16. Order: Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines</p> <p>19. Resources: Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for successful practice</p>

Appendix B
Crosswalk: McREL Responsibilities/Practices
with Illinois Leadership Standards (continued)

Principals	Superintendent	Director of Special Education	Chief School Business Official	McREL
<p>Standard 4: Promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.</p>	<p>Standard 4: Promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources.</p>	<p>Standard 7: Promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.</p>		<p>3. Communication: Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among stakeholders</p> <p>11. Input: Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies</p> <p>17. Outreach: Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders; interacts with parents to enhance school support</p> <p>21. Visibility: Quality contact and interactions with teachers and students</p>
<p>Standard 5: Promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.</p>	<p>Standard 5: Promotes the success of all students by understanding and applying knowledge of laws, regulations, and professional ethics related to schools and children.</p>	<p>Standard 3: Has a thorough knowledge of federal and State statutes affecting the education of students with disabilities.</p>	<p>Standard 3: Understands and applies theories of public policy and intergovernmental relations.</p> <p>Standard 4: Understands and applies the legal aspects of educational leadership.</p>	<p>17. Outreach: Ensures that the school is in compliance with district and state mandates</p>
<p>Standard 6: Promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.</p>				<p>8. Flexibility: Adapts leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent</p> <p>20. Situational Awareness: Aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems</p>

Appendix B
Crosswalk: McREL Responsibilities/Practices
with Illinois Leadership Standards (continued)

Principals	Superintendent	Director of Special Education	Chief School Business Official	McREL
No parallel standards.	No parallel standards.	No parallel standards.	No parallel standards.	<p>2. Change Agent: Willing to actively challenge the status quo</p> <p>4. Contingent Rewards: Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishment</p> <p>6. Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment: Involved in the design of curriculum, instruction, and assessment</p> <p>13. Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment: Knowledgeable about curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices</p> <p>15. Optimizer: Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations</p>

Appendix C
External Evaluation (2000) of the Illinois Administrators' Academy
Contractor: MGT of America

Findings	Recommendations	Action
<p>MGT of America, in their independent evaluation of the Administrators' Academy, concludes that the Academy offers many quality courses, but has limited courses in the skill development category. MGT did not find formal processes in place to ensure the transfer of information and skills to the school site. MGT believes that learning is occurring in Academy courses, but questions whether sufficient learning is occurring to have a systemic impact on schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make available a continuum of professional development experiences. • Incorporate the latest knowledge in skill development. • Model programs after those of national organizations. • Use distance learning or web-based instruction. 	<p>Collaboration with the CIP, ROEs, ISCs, and professional organizations identified needs for additional state-sponsored courses.</p> <p>Contracts for the design and delivery of courses could not be issued due to a lack of funding.</p>
<p>MGT concludes that the current level of state funding for the Academy does not lead to the development and consistent delivery of high quality courses for Illinois school administrators. Limited state funding for the Academy is the main reason why full-time coordinators are rare in Illinois. In all regions, except the City of Chicago, administrators pay a fee to attend Academy courses. This fee is to recover the cost of the instructor, course materials, and any food or beverages served. Chicago Public School District funds the cost of Academy participation by its administrators. The annual state funding of the Illinois Administrators' Academy for 1999-2000 amounts to only \$114.89 per administrator.</p> <p>MGT researchers found that other states in comparison support professional development for administrators as follows: 1) California: \$5.5 million or \$1,375 per administrator; 2) Georgia: \$1.3 million or \$2,167 per academy participant; 3) Missouri: \$750,000; and 4) Florida: \$3.3 million annually until 1994 when it was merged with funds for professional development for teachers.</p>	<p>ISBE should seek increased funding for the Administrators' Academy for the purpose of implementing the recommended changes. Current FY01 funding provides for a base amount plus additional funding based on student enrollment. This ranges from a low of \$4,224 in ROE #27 to a high of \$32,885 in ROE 19. The City of Chicago receives \$84,200.</p>	<p>A budget request was submitted by the State Board for an increase in the Illinois Administrators' Academy budget from the current average of \$114.89 per administrator to \$500 per administrator.</p> <p>The line item was removed completely in 2003 and no funding has been provided for the Academy.</p>
<p>MGT found that most local school administrators view the Illinois Administrators' Academy as a vehicle for meeting the state's requirement for professional development and for keeping current with information. Administrators, however, could not pinpoint the "major role" that they believe ISBE should have regarding the Academy. The Continuous Improvement Partnership Committee (CIP) has also recognized that "elements" of the Academy are not aligned, that courses are not always taken because they contribute to a set of goals or long-range outcomes tied to the Illinois School Leaders Standards. In fact, all interested parties, including the Ad Hoc Committee of IASA, have indicated the need to tie the Administrators' Academy program more closely to the Standards.</p>	<p>ISBE should work with Academy stakeholders to develop and communicate a comprehensive vision and strategic plan for the Academy. The CIP has initiated discussions directed toward this purpose, but the activity is still a "work-in-progress."</p>	<p>The Certificate Renewal Division, in collaboration with the CIP, ROEs and ISCs, created and communicate a vision statement for the Illinois Administrators' Academy.</p> <p>All courses align directly to the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards.</p>

Appendix C
External Evaluation (2000) of the Illinois Administrators Academy
Contractor: MGT of America (continued)

Findings	Recommendations	Action
<p>MGT finds that the content of the course “Introduction to Evaluation of Certified Staff” is consistent in all regions visited. Three areas for improvement were suggested from respondents. These are the need to 1) have more case studies; 2) provide advanced levels of the course; and 3) update the content. MGT found varying quality in the presenters who deliver the course across the state. All observed instructors of the course reported having attended training, but shared they were not trained on instructional delivery techniques, have the opportunity to present material, or receive feedback on their skills. MGT concludes that the quality of the course is highly dependent upon the skills of the instructor.</p> <p>Many administrators complained about the redundancy of the material and the lack of Academy course credit given for university courses at the graduate level. MGT did not observe any attempt by instructors to determine administrators’ current levels of knowledge on the topic of evaluation prior to delivering the training.</p>	<p>Use Chicago Public Schools courses as a model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign the course content to include a series of sessions on evaluation and supervision using the list of courses adopted in the Chicago Public Schools as a model. The course should be designed around a minimum of six sessions to be delivered over a period of one or two years. • Upgrade visuals for the course by using presentation software to create colorful and interesting visuals. 	<p>A contract was issued (RFSP) for a revision of the “Introduction to Evaluation of Certified Staff.” The Trainer of Trainers Model includes a segment on delivery techniques for adult training.</p> <p>The course was revised in 2002 at a cost of \$31,046.</p>
<p>Current policy permits administrators to move through four levels or “strands” of training: Required, Associate, Member, and Master. The strands are supposed to represent different levels of achievement and recognition for local school administrators. MGT found that the local use of the four levels of Academy “certificates” provided by the state is not widespread. In the majority of regional sites visited by MGT, Coordinators now issue only the Certificate for the Required Strand (i.e., for training that is required by state law). There is not much emphasis placed on the different levels by administrators, and administrators have no incentive to reach the top levels.</p> <p>Administrators attend Administrators Academy courses because of the timeliness of the topics, to keep up-to-date, to network with other administrators, and because of the convenience of location of Academy offerings. The CIP endorses the idea of providing a continuum of courses or professional development experiences that are job-embedded, but that also provide for continuous growth and development. The IASA Ad Hoc Committee is also advancing the idea of different levels of offerings, one for new administrators and one for experienced administrators.</p>	<p>ISBE should redefine the meaning of “program” in the current requirement that administrators complete one Administrators’ Academy “program” every two year phase, to incorporate a continuum of professional development experiences that promote and document growth. Such experiences must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be directly related to the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards • Recognize and incorporate levels of growth, with a particular focus on the needs of entry level administrators • Have the effect of substantially increasing the requirements for certificate renewal for administrators • Require that the professional development experiences incorporate skill development and transfer to the local setting. 	<p>The Certificate Renewal Division, in collaboration with the CIP, ROEs and ISCs developed a continuum of professional development courses reflecting different levels of offerings for new and experienced administrators.</p> <p>The new Administrator recertification process changed the requirements and the continuum was not instituted because there was a concern for the capacity of providers.</p>

Appendix C
External Evaluation (2000) of the Illinois Administrators Academy
Contractor: MGT of America (continued)

Findings	Recommendations	Action
<p>MGT, the CIP, the IASA Ad Hoc Committee, and a subcommittee of Administrators Academy Coordinators all recognize that the current system of monitoring compliance with requirements for administrator certificate renewal is primarily a “self-report” system. Accountability is present at the regional level where ROEs monitor participation in Administrators’ Academy courses, but there is no external means of determining whether administrators participate in local district Continuing Professional Development Plans. In addition, there is no evidence of transfer and application of what is learned in such courses. MGT concluded that most Administrators’ Academy courses focus on providing knowledge, but there is a lack of emphasis on transfer and application to the local site.</p>	<p>Administrators should be required to write individual professional development plans (as opposed to having the district write a plan, as is currently done). The individual professional development plans must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for accountability • Be focused on the achievement of the Illinois Professional School Leader Standards • Provide for continuous growth and levels of achievement • Provide for the transfer and application of what is learned. 	<p>New rules on recertification required each administrator to create a professional development plan that addressed the IL Professional leader Standards and the needs of the local school district. This requirement was removed in a revision of the rules.</p> <p>The application/ dissemination component attempts to address the transfer and application of what was learned and appears successful when done properly.</p> <p>The idea of an assessment for each course was rejected.</p>
<p>MGT of America concludes that there is a need for more job embedded Administrators’ Academy courses, and that more “state sponsored courses” should be developed that help administrators understand and acquire skills in areas of state initiatives. A subcommittee of Administrators’ Academy Coordinators concurs, but also recommends the periodic review and updating of courses to better meet the needs of all local administrators. Both groups, as well as the CIP, support “building the capacity of regional Academy offices to design courses that provide for the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the administrators’ current assignments in schools or school districts.”</p>	<p>ISBE, in consultation with Administrators’ Academy stakeholders, should revise its policies on Administrators’ Academy course development to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a wider variety of courses that are job embedded and focus more on skill development • Build the capacity of regional Academy offices to design courses that provide for the transfer of new knowledge and skills to the administrators’ current assignments in schools or school districts • Provide a series of entry-level courses for new administrators • Develop more courses at the state level • Collaborate with professional organizations for business managers to develop and/or provide courses to meet the needs of this group of administrators • Require periodic evaluation and updating of courses. 	<p>Criteria were reviewed and revised for the approval of IAA courses. There is more flexibility to allow job-embedded learning.</p> <p>Lack of funding to develop courses has prevented increasing capacity of providers to design new relevant courses.</p> <p>The original concept of developing entry level courses for new administrators was dropped by providers prior to rule writing.</p> <p>No funds are available to develop more courses at the state level.</p> <p>Current policy is to review all approved IAA courses every three years and recommend updating as necessary.</p>

Appendix C
External Evaluation (2000) of the Illinois Administrators Academy
Contractor: MGT of America (continued)

Findings	Recommendations	Action
<p>While MGT concludes that the availability and variety of Illinois Administrators' Academy courses correlates with the number of administrators served in ROE/ISC service areas (the greater the number of administrators, the greater the number and variety of courses), the CIP and the Subcommittee of Administrators' Academy Coordinators have recommended policies to improve the accessibility and consistent delivery of courses statewide.</p>	<p>ISBE should work with the Regional Offices of Education and the Intermediate Service Centers to develop policies on the delivery of courses and other professional development activities to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The availability of courses and activities statewide • The accessibility of courses and activities statewide • That courses and professional development activities be delivered in a consistent manner • That needed resources are available for the delivery of courses and professional development activities 	<p>Regular meetings with the ROEs, ISCs CIP, and IAA Coordinators help identify needs for each region. There is a focus on consistency of delivery and procedures.</p> <p>IAAMS has been updated to provide more accurate record-keeping and easy of entering data.</p> <p>Fees for recording course data are now consistent.</p> <p>Procedures for offering courses in other regions are specific.</p>

**Illinois State Board of Education
and
Center for the Study of Education Policy
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