

Creating Administrator Excellence

The Iowa Story:
A Decade of Work-A Long Way to Go

Dr. Troyce Fisher, director Cohesive Leadership Systems
School Administrators of Iowa

Background

- * Wallace grant awarded to the Iowa Department of Education which asked the School Administrators of Iowa to administer it. The Iowa DE was extremely instrumental in policy development, political cover, etc.
- * Having the professional association take the lead on the work decreased resistance to the initiatives.
- * Having SAI be an approved provider of the mentoring and induction program is a plus.
- * A broad-based coalition of literally hundreds of administrators helped to develop all aspects of the educator quality work.

Development of Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL)

- * Started with Superintendents in 2001-02
- * Next added Principals in 2002-03
- * Added central office functions in 2008
- * Based on ISLLC; cross-walked through the process to other salient research (e.g. McREL, LPPW, revised ISLLC)
- * Standards and Criteria are the same for all; descriptors are different
- * ISSL officially adopted by State Board in 2007

Standards are the Through-Line

- * All administrators must be evaluated upon the standards.
- * All administrators are required to have annual performance improvement plans linked to the standards and to building and district goals.
- * All preparation programs were sunsetted in 2007 and required to resubmit for approval. Nine programs originally; five programs remained after the initial process.
- * A one-year mentoring and induction program for all new principals and those new to the superintendency is required; must be linked to the standards as must recommendation for professional license.
- * All administrators are required to take a four credit hour “Evaluator Training” course linked either to the teaching standards or the ISSL every five years.

Supportive Resources

- * Model Evaluation Resource Guides were developed for principals, superintendents, central office staff. They contain guiding principles, suggested timelines, standards, criteria, descriptors, sample artifacts, model professional development plans, and for board members, sample questions that could be asked to ascertain proficiency in the standards.
- * Mentoring and Induction program was developed and is administered through SAI.
- * DVD and training guide for superintendents explaining how to evaluate the superintendent was created.

Supportive Resources, continued

- * Evaluator Training requirement is now in its third round. The first round focused on data-informed decision-making and the standards. Round 2 focused on asking ORID questions and more on the leadership standards. The third round, which is about to begin requires that two of the 4 hours focus on assessing rigor in the classroom for two of the four hours. One of the optional training modules will be Fierce Conversations.
- * Workshops, trainings, and technical assistance is provided by the administrators professional association, the school board association and by Iowa's intermediate service agencies.

Challenges

- * Linking student achievement to administrator effectiveness.
- * Insuring a robust process that includes formative coaching.
- * Three dissertations recently completed in Iowa show:
 - * Teachers see little connection between the evaluation process, their professional growth plans, and their PD.
 - * Principals rate the process higher than teachers do.
 - * Superintendents' job descriptions emphasize managerial responsibilities twice as much as leadership for student achievement.
 - * Boards abdicate their responsibilities for the evaluation of superintendents on the ISSL to the superintendents.

The Big Questions

- * How do we insure a fair process as we link student growth measures to administrator effectiveness?
- * What is the role of 360° surveys?
- * How do we develop accurate performance rubrics to distinguish levels of performance?
- * How do we emphasize formative coaching conversations as the link to increased performance?
- * What if we're misguided on the role evaluation plays in improved performance?

Links to Access

- * www.sai-iowa.org for model evaluation resource guides (look on the left side under resources, then under leadership standards and evaluation)
- * http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2075&Itemid=2685 for an explanation of the Evaluator Training requirement
- * troyce@sai-iowa.org for questions about this presentation
- * kevin.fangman@iowa.gov and matt.ludwig@iowa.gov for questions about Iowa's requirements as overseen by the Department of Education