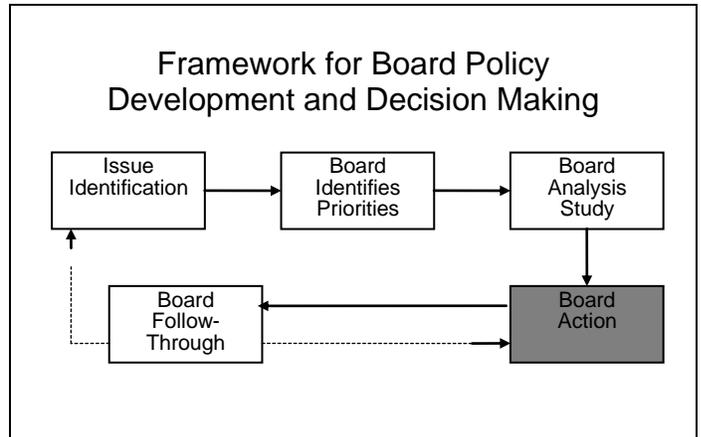


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

March 11, 2010



**Agenda Item:** The University of Iowa Superintendent Preparation Program

**Iowa Goal:** Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success.

**Equity Impact Statement:** These rules support the improvement of instructional practices and strengthen the quality of educator preparation and professional development programs to give educators at all levels the skills they need to improve teaching and learning.

**Presenter:** Matt Ludwig, Leadership Consultant  
Bureau of Accreditation and Improvement Services

**Attachments:** 1

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the State Board approve The University of Iowa superintendent preparation program through the state visit cycle scheduled for the 2010-2011 academic year.

**Background:** Iowa Code 256.7(3) grants authority to the State Board of Education to set standards and approve practitioner preparation programs based on those standards. The University of Iowa superintendent preparation program has met the program approval standards as approved by the State Board.

**Superintendent Preparation Program Approval**  
**University of Iowa**  
 (Under Chapter 79 of the Iowa Administrative Code)

March 11, 2010

**Introduction:**

The state of Iowa is committed to providing quality education to all students and to ensuring high levels of student performance across the state. This vision of excellence in education requires that each local, regional, and state education organization have effective leadership for student learning. Toward that end, the Iowa Legislature and State Board of Education have established new policies governing administrator preparation and professional development.

In September 2006, Judy Jeffrey, Director of the Iowa Department of Education, challenged administrator preparation programs to develop curricula that are bold and innovative. The Iowa Department of Education provided all administrator preparation institutions with guidance in preparing their application packets in December 2006, for review by a review panel. The Administrator Preparation Program Approval Panel conducted its initial review of all proposed programs in the winter of 2006-2007. Based upon the results of that review process, the State Board of Education denied The University of Iowa approval of their Superintendent Preparation Program. In September 2009, the University submitted a new superintendent preparation program proposal that was reviewed by the panel on November 4 and 5, 2009. During those two days, the panel read and critiqued the new proposal, met with University of Iowa representatives, and drafted statements of strengths, recommendations, and requests for more information. This document summarizes the panel's review of The University of Iowa's final proposal.

The proposal submitted by The University of Iowa articulates the conceptual framework of the program – Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Operational Leadership. The institution reached out to school/area education agency administrators, business managers, school attorneys, and representatives from business/industry across the state via surveys and focus groups to develop the attributes of an effective leadership program and communicate the conceptual framework for the program. The University of Iowa also connected with various educational organizations: School Administrators of Iowa, Iowa Association of School Boards, the Iowa State Education Association, the Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest, and other institutes of higher education, to continually build the foundation of the superintendent preparation program. The program developers identified university resources to enrich a potential candidate's leadership development and experiences, including the Iowa Testing Programs, the Belin and Blank International Center, the Center of Evaluation and Assessment, and the Center for Advanced Studies in Measurement and Assessment.

The University of Iowa Superintendent Preparation Program is comprised of core courses (e.g., Policy and Politics of Leadership, School Finance, Instructional Leadership: Curriculum & Assessment, etc.), two summits focused on social advocacy and legislation, multiple clinical experiences linked back to the program's conceptual framework, and a partnership with the Iowa Superintendent Finance Leadership Consortium (ISFLC). In an effort to promote this program as a statewide effort, the developers created a hybrid of distance education and face-to-face instruction to attract potential candidates and build a core of education leaders interested in pursuing the core values and philosophy of the program.

## CHAPTER 79

### STANDARDS FOR PRACTITIONER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

#### General Comments:

- The University of Iowa Superintendent Program was created and developed completely “from the ground up.” Core values and philosophy for programming and delivery were the first steps in developing a program with a solid foundation and purpose.
- The University of Iowa Superintendent Program was developed with the collaboration of statewide stakeholders. All superintendents in Iowa were invited to participate in a statewide survey regarding the design of a potential superintendent preparation program at The University of Iowa. Superintendents from urban, suburban, and rural districts were asked to participate in focus groups to garner the attributes of a highly effective leadership program at The University of Iowa. Potential students were also surveyed and participated in focus groups representing suburban/urban and rural school districts.
- Statewide organizations collaborated with The University of Iowa via focus groups to help develop the program. They include School Administrators of Iowa, Iowa Association of School Boards, and the Iowa State Education Association.
- Feedback from practitioners, stakeholders and statewide educational organizations were then analyzed by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest. This analysis drove both programming and delivery decisions.
- A newly formed superintendent advisory group provided input for the conceptual framework (Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Operational Leadership) for the superintendent program at The University of Iowa. Those professionals represented suburban and rural superintendents, business managers, school attorneys, and representatives from business/industry.
- Programmatically, The University of Iowa is unique in that they require a course in legislative advocacy and will hold a social advocacy summit. Unique is that the majority of clinical work is interwoven within courses to ensure practitioners connect theory and practice in a meaningful, authentic manner.
- The University of Iowa’s superintendent’s preparation program is based on student-achievement focused leadership connected to the program’s conceptual framework - instructional, transitional and operational leadership. This philosophy evolved from current research on educational preparation programming, feedback from practitioners and stakeholder groups, Chapter 79 of Iowa Code and the expertise of the faculty at The University of Iowa
- The University of Iowa’s delivery is a hybrid of distance education and face-to-face instruction. Students will come together on the campus at The University of Iowa for courses in the summer that include Orientation to the Superintendency, School Finance, and the Social Advocacy Summit. During the fall and spring semesters, students have the choice of taking classes via distance education or joining their cohort on campus.

**SECTION A: GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES**

<b>Met Or Met with Strength</b>	<b>Met Pending Conditions Noted Below</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
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**Strengths**

1. In the preparation of the superintendent's program, the institution conducted two statewide surveys of all acting Iowa superintendents and prospective students. The institution also facilitated seven focus groups with three statewide educational organizations (Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa, and the Iowa State Education Association) to enhance the development of the program. The central themes that emerged are represented in the conceptual framework, which includes instructional leadership, organizational leadership, and transformational leadership. This framework provides a sound foundation and framework for a superintendent preparation program.

**Concerns/Recommendations**

1. The conceptual framework noted as a strength above provides a foundation for a superintendent preparation program at The University of Iowa. The program should continue to build upon this foundation to operationalize the framework throughout the entire program.
2. Program delivery is essential to the success of the superintendent preparation program. The unit needs to articulate the delivery method (i.e., Iowa Communication Network (ICN), online, face-to-face, a hybrid, etc.) more clearly.
3. Candidates provide feedback for instructors through the Assessing the Classroom Environment (ACE) survey. Evaluations, such as from peers and supervisors, as well as about the program, need to be addressed. The evaluations provide the unit and the instructors an opportunity to reflect on and enrich instructional practices and content.
4. Through interviews with The University of Iowa representatives, it was apparent that the department chair, dean and provost are willing to provide the supports that are needed to implement and sustain a superintendent preparation program. The support of the program should be demonstrated by the addition of necessary faculty. The panel suggests recruiting instructors with actual superintendent experience to balance the strong theoretical base that currently exists with the present full-time faculty.

**Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**  
None

**SECTION B: DIVERSITY**

<b>Met Or Met with Strength</b>	<b>Met Pending Conditions Noted Below</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
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**Strengths**

1. The College of Education offers many initiatives to support diversity, including the Diversity Committee, a Community Educator Tuition Scholarship, a Multicultural Education Certificate Program, and the Yager Commitment to Diversity Conference.

- 2. The Educational Administration Program has supported four minority students with a Community Educator Tuition Scholarship since 2006, and a total of five awardees have come from the Educational Policy and Leadership Studies.

**Concerns/Recommendations**

- 1. Although the College of Education supports many initiatives focused on diversity, diversity concepts need to be woven throughout the superintendent preparation program to enhance student experiences.

**Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**

None

**SECTION C: FACULTY**

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions	Not Met
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**Strengths**

- 1. The faculty has taken a noted interest in becoming involved in statewide collaboration efforts in many areas (i.e., the Iowa Council of Professors of Educational Administration (ICPEA), area superintendent's meetings, conducting standards setting workshops for grades 3-11 with teams of teachers and school administrators in Reading and Mathematics for NCLB, etc.).
- 2. The panel's review of faculty vitas notes that unit personnel are engaged in many scholarly activities, research activities, publications, and conference presentations related to teaching, learning, and educator preparation.

**Concerns/Recommendations**

- 1. The panel noted a limited amount of actual superintendent experience among unit faculty. Only two unit faculty members have experience as superintendents (less than ten years). When hiring additional unit and/or adjunct faculty positions, the panel recommends the unit place priority on individuals with actual, recent experience in the superintendency and define how the faculty will become involved in the program implementation.

**Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**

None

**SECTION D: ASSESSMENT**

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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**Strengths**

- 1. The matrix "Iowa Standards for School Leader (ISSL) Assessment by Course" (Appendix M) outlines requirements for candidates as well as providing the framework for candidate assessment. When complete, this view of the program will be valuable and once program assessment has occurred, it will provide the unit a means to adjust the program in response to new information.

- The “eportfolio<sup>TM</sup>” system provides candidates an opportunity to reflect on their learning and practice and informs the unit faculty about student progress and supports the continuous improvement model. The technical assistance is in place to support the system “eportfolio<sup>TM</sup>” system.

#### **Concerns/Recommendations**

- The program might want to consider/clarify the inclusion of the identified program standards within the ISSL Standards that form the framework for the program.
- The instrument used by candidates to self-assess dispositions is a valuable tool. The panel recommends that the program include, within this self-assessment, the specific dispositions identified in the program standards as important for educational leaders. The program might consider including these specific leadership characteristics in the evaluations completed by faculty, mentors, and supervisors.
- The alumni survey will be more useful to the program once individual items are identified as reflective of each of the specific standards.
- The program should develop guidance for candidates to facilitate their use of the “eportfolio<sup>TM</sup>”. This guidance should extend beyond the mechanics of the system and focus on attention to ISSL and the Conceptual Framework.

#### **Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**

None

#### **SECTION E: ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION CLINICAL**

Met Or Met with Strength	Met Pending Conditions Noted Below	Not Met
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#### **Strengths**

- The program design is innovative and allows candidates to integrate coursework and clinical experiences.
- Past history of placement sites suggests the opportunity for diverse clinical experiences.

#### **Concerns/Recommendations**

- The expectation that the classroom professor will assess the clinical experiences needs to be articulated more clearly. How will this happen and how will those activities and assessments link to the Conceptual Framework of the program?
- The program must ensure that all candidates encounter the area education agency (AEA) and school-based administrative experiences since the endorsement includes the superintendent and AEA administrator certification.

#### **Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**

None

#### **SECTION F: ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM (Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions)**

Met Or	Met Pending Conditions	Not Met
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<b>Met with Strength</b>	<b>Noted Below</b>	
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### **Strengths**

1. The alignment of the Conceptual Framework with ISSL is well done and will allow candidates and faculty to link program activities/assignments with those critical demonstrations of student outcomes.

### **Concerns/Recommendations**

1. The Review Panel had the following initial concerns and recommendation that were addressed by the institution prior to submitting for board approval:
  - Some assessment activities appeared appropriate for the leadership expectations for principals, but may not be appropriate for candidates at the superintendent level. The University of Iowa Superintendent Program provided the Department an updated matrix delineating the key assignments linked to key actions/work of district superintendents/AEA administrators.
  - The superintendent preparation program needed to address “Each administrator candidate demonstrates acquisition of knowledge about and skill in interpersonal and intergroup relations....” [79.17(4)]. The institution provided the Department a chart that shows – Integration of Human Relations and Cultural Competency Issues within the Program’s Coursework.
  - In Appendix M: ISSL Standards Assessment by Courses – School Finance (ISFLC), Operational Leadership & Management Clinical Internship, Social Advocacy Summit, Educational Leadership Technology, and Legislative Summit – appeared to be a part of the superintendent’s preparation program but the necessary syllabi were not available. The program provided complete syllabi for all coursework and clinical experiences to the Department.
  - All Iowa administrators need to complete Evaluator Training Level I prior to completing Evaluator Training Level II. As requested, the program defined the entry requirements for students into the superintendent preparation program and determined how the program will address students from out of state that have not completed Evaluator Training Level I. The program also worked with the Department to ensure that the instructor for Evaluator Training Level II has completed the necessary training and approved by the Department.
  - The panel requested more clarification regarding coursework in school finance. The program developed the necessary syllabus, provided sample assessments and projects which candidates will complete, and articulate the clinical expectations for school finance.

### **Items that Must Be Addressed Prior to State Board Action:**

**None**

**All standards have been met. The University of Iowa Superintendent Preparation Program is recommended for approval.**