TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Education
Linda Tomlinson, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent

Agenda Topic: New Leaders Educational Unit Recognition and Program Approval

Staff Contact(s): Vicki Phillips, Division Administrator for Educator and School Development

Purpose of Agenda Item
The State Board of Education will decide whether to approve or deny the educational unit recognition of New Leaders and approval of the New Leaders Principal Preparation Program, so that New Leaders will then be able to offer a Principal Preparation Program in Illinois.

The State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board (SEPLB) voted to recognize New Leaders for unit recognition and approval of the New Leaders Principal Preparation Program on June 19, 2012.

Relationship to/Implications for the State Board’s Strategic Plan
This request is linked to State Board’s Strategic Plan goal that: “Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders.”

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item
The State Board will approve the SEPLB recommendations for recognition of New Leaders as an educational unit and approval of the Principal Preparation Program presented by New Leaders.

Background Information
In 2010, Illinois statute was amended to allow a not-for-profit entity to apply for educational unit recognition independent of any institution of higher education. A not-for-profit entity (or institution of higher education) desiring to provide any type of educator preparation program must first be approved by the Board of Higher education, then recommended by the SEPLB. The process by which this must be accomplished is outlined in Section 25.155 of Part 23 of the Illinois Administrative Rules. 23 Ill. Admin. Code 25.155.

New Leaders notified ISBE of its interest in having its educational unit receive initial recognition. New Leaders submitted a conceptual framework that was reviewed by ISBE staff to ensure that all required elements of the conceptual framework were met (Section 25.155 (d). New Leaders then submitted an institutional report incorporating an overview of the institution, an overview of the unit's conceptual framework, and evidence that it will meet the six National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards: (1) Candidate Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions; (2) Assessment System and Unit Evaluation; (3) Field
Experiences and Clinical Practice; (4) Diversity; (5) Faculty Qualifications, Performance and Development; and (6) Unit Governance and Resources.

The New Leaders institutional report stated: “Founded in 2000 by a team of social entrepreneurs consisting of former school administrators, teachers, business leaders and education policy experts, New Leaders is a national nonprofit that develops transformational school leaders and designs effective leadership policies and practices for school systems across the country”. New Leaders is driven by results-oriented leaders with an unwavering commitment to ensuring every child achieves academic excellence and reaches his or her full potential. To achieve this goal, we (New Leaders) have created a program that serves as a pathway for passionate and resourceful educators to become principals in low-income communities across the country.

Pursuant to Section 25.155(b), a review team was formulated to conduct an on-site review visit. The team, selected by ISBE staff, included trained reviewers from the PK-12 system and higher education institutions. The team chair was Norm Stahl (retired) of Northern Illinois University. An ISBE staff member accompanied the team on the visit to address procedural questions and provide guidance to the team on applicable statute and rules. The team visited New Leaders in Chicago on May 15-18, 2012. During the visit, the review team met with New Leaders unit, institutional and program personnel, interviewed program staff and candidates and visited sites utilized by New Leaders in Chicago Public Schools (Section 25.155(h)). A draft report was given to New Leaders before the team left the visit which summarized the team’s findings. (Section 25.155(j).

After the visit, the team chair finalized the report and sent it to New Leaders for review for factual errors. (Section 25.155(j)). The final report found that New Leaders had met all six NCATE standards but noted specific areas for improvement (“AFIs”).

**Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions**

Recommendation: Met
Area for Improvement: None

**Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation**

Recommendation: Met
Area for Improvement: None

**Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice**

Recommendation: Met
Areas for Improvement:
1. Candidates in programs for other school professionals participate in field experiences and clinical practice that require them to engage in structured activities related to the roles for which they are preparing.
Rationale:
There is no policy or plan for all candidates to participate in early field/pre-internship experiences.

Standard 4: Diversity

Recommendation: Met
Areas for Improvement:
1. Not all candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practices with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic/racial, gender, language, and socioeconomic groups

Rationale:
While diversity is clearly identified in the mission and vision of the unit, the field experiences for the preparation of educators do not prepare candidates to work effectively with diverse populations, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities. Not all candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practices with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic/racial, gender, language, and socioeconomic groups.

2. There are no structured field experiences or evident policies where field experiences and clinical practice support the development of educators who can apply their knowledge of diversity, including exceptionalities, to work in schools with all students.

Rationale:
While diversity is clearly identified in the mission and vision of the Unit, the field experiences for the preparation of educators do not prepare candidates to work effectively with diverse populations, including English language learners and students with exceptionalities. Not all candidates participate in field experiences or clinical practices with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic/racial, gender, language, and socioeconomic groups.

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

Recommendation: Met
Area for Improvement: None

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

Recommendation: Met
Areas for Improvement:
1. The facilities do not support candidate use of information technology.

Rationale:
The unit does not ensure that all candidates have access to the same technologies during the internship experience. Candidates are only able to use the technology available at the school to which they are assigned. There is an informal process that allows interns to seek out opportunities to use technologies at other schools.

2. Candidates do not have access to sufficient library resources and electronic information.

   **Rationale:**
   The unit does not have a plan to ensure that all candidates will have access to sufficient library and electronic information once the current partnership with the entitling university expires.

New Leaders accepted the team report as written (Section 25.155(k)). On June 19, 2012, the SEPLB reviewed the ISBE institutional review team’s report, and all other relevant documentation. The SEPLB recommended acceptance of the team’s findings with two changes for Areas for Improvement in Standard 6. The SEPLB revised the first Area of Improvement to read: The unit does not have a plan to ensure that all candidates have access to sufficient technology and resources with the rationale that “this clarifies the expectations of the SEPLB.” Further, SEPLB believed that because candidates would have access to virtual libraries they removed the second Area for Improvement. The SEPLB voted to recommend that New Leaders be provided unit recognition.

New Leaders brought one program before the Licensure Board on June 19, 2012 for review. The New Leader Principal Preparation Program has been reviewed by the Principal Preparation Program Review Panel (Section 30.80) and was recommended to make some revisions for program improvement prior to submitting to the Licensure Board. New Leaders made those revisions and submitted the program to SEPLB. The New Leaders program proposal states:

*New Leaders (formerly New Leaders for New Schools) has developed the Aspiring Principals Program (APP), a nationally recognized recruitment, admissions, training and support program that is designed to prepare outstanding principals who can effectively lead schools and drive high academic achievement for every child. To date, we have recruited, selected and trained over 800 school leaders—160 in Chicago Public Schools alone—serving almost a quarter of a million students across the country, including 100,000 in Chicago. Our program’s main activities include recruitment and admissions, training and development and ongoing support.*

*National Recruitment Strategy. Candidates undergo an intensive recruitment and admissions process based on best practices from the education and business worlds. We aggressively recruit current and former educators who possess K–12 instructional expertise, exceptional adult leadership and management skills and an unyielding belief that all students can and will achieve at high levels. We assess candidates using research-based Selection Criteria and rubrics. Our rigorous admissions process includes an extensive online application, a first-round assessment and a finalist selection day that features interviews, casebased scenarios and group observations that test the finalists’ responses to leadership challenges. To date, we have screened more than 12,000 applicants and selectively admitted only the top 6 percent.*
Local Recruitment Strategy. New Leaders’ ongoing assessment of the recruitment and admissions process led to the development of the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) —a program launched in SY2011–12 that identifies high-potential school-based teacher leaders, faculty supervisors and assistant principals within our partner school systems, provides them with additional leadership development to improve student achievement and puts them on a pathway to our Aspiring Principals Program. ELP seeks to strengthen leadership across our partner school systems by building a corps of well-trained, highly effective leaders in a variety of positions. ELP participants will serve as a pipeline of instructional leaders that have honed their leadership skills to become better prepared to assume the principalship in the future. At the same time, ELP serves as a yearlong “interview” for our Aspiring Principals Program.

Once selected into APP, candidates make a six-year contractual commitment to serve in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and enter a yearlong phase called the “foundational year,” which is designed to develop the skills and knowledge needed by outstanding principals. The foundational year consists of several components, ensuring well-rounded support:

Coursework. Candidates participate in rigorous academic coursework and leadership skill development trainings throughout their foundational year.

Yearlong internship (residency) placement in a high-need public school where candidates work alongside a successful mentor principal, receive ongoing coaching and attend meetings with fellow candidates.

Professional development workshops that build on additional coursework during the internship.

Assessment of candidate learning based on standards that are aligned to our Urban Excellence Framework, which is aligned to Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and Chicago Public Schools Principal Competencies.

The SEPLB reviewed the New Leader Principal Preparation Program and voted to recommend approval of the program.

Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications

Budget Implications: N/A

Legislative Action: N/A

Communication: Please see the Next Steps section below.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

I recommend that the following motion be adopted:

The State Board hereby recognizes New Leaders as an educational unit and approves New Leaders to provide their Principal Preparation Program in accordance with Section 25.65 of Part 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code.
Next Steps
Upon approval of the educational unit the State Superintendent will notify New Leaders of Recognition of the Institution and Unit and approval of the Principal Preparation Program.