



NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

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Patrick Riccards
riccards@woodrow.org | (703) 298-8283

WOODROW WILSON FOUNDATION TO CCSSO: IMPROVED SCHOOL LEADER STANDARDS DEMAND NEW APPROACHES TO PROSPECTIVE LEADER EDUCATION

Levine and Buntrock: "We Must Begin to Redesign Our Approach to Effective Education Leadership Preparation"

PRINCETON, N.J. (October 6, 2014) –In response to release of draft 2014 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Leadership Standards from the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, and LeAnn Buntrock, director of the Woodrow Wilson MBA Fellowship in Education Leadership, issued the following joint statement:

The Council of Chief State School Officers and its partners in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Leadership Standards Refresh Project should be commended for their efforts to strengthen national expectations and standards for school leaders. The ISLLC Public Comment draft rightly notes that the 'understanding of effective educational leadership has grown significantly over the last 20 years.'

By expanding the ISLLC goals, CCSSO is focusing on the correct topics for today's school leaders: Instructional capacity, instruction, curriculum and assessment, communities of care for students, professional culture for teachers and staff, communities of engagement for families, operations and management, ethical principles and professional norms, equity and cultural responsiveness, and continuous school improvement.

As we lay out these new standards for educational leaders, it is important we recognize that the knowledge, skills, and experiences demanded in these areas are not gained simply with the award of a 'principal' or 'administrator' title. They demand the proper preparation, particularly as educators make the transition to school or district leadership.

To meet such a demand, we must begin to redesign our approach to effective education leadership preparation. We need new, more rigorous terminal degrees to prepare school leaders. We should be looking at best practices across higher education, drawing on available research and practical expertise to prepare school leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to improve system, schools, and, ultimately, student achievement. And we should have school districts working with universities to identify and establish the conditions that will enhance the effectiveness of the future of such programs, while driving sustainable gains in student achievement.

To do this, we should think beyond the traditional M.Ed., finding ideas and best practices from other academic pursuits, particularly those found in business administration. By blending the best our education schools and our business schools can offer, we can construct leadership

preparation programs that provide the knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to more effectively execute the types of actions laid out in these draft standards.

Through the integration of clinical and academic instruction, prospective leaders can draw on the most innovative thinking on leadership preparation and development today. They can gain a meaningful immersion experience, either in a strong high-need school domestically, through a residency at a high-performing school in another country, or in an organization that helps develop necessary expertise in specifically identified areas.

This is no longer an issue of what we could do or what would be nice to do. The role of a school leader will continue to grow more complex and more demanding. ISLLC standards will be harder to reach as instructional environments continue to change. And the preparation programs of old will grow more and more inadequate with the start of each new school year.

To ensure that all educational leaders are prepared and equipped to meet these standards, we as a nation must develop new, more effective approaches for preparing future school leaders. It is the only way to ensure these standards have their intended impact on students, on learning, and on the community at large.

The draft ISLLC standards are available for public comment through October 10. For more information on the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, please contact Patrick Riccards at 703-298-8283 or riccards@woodrow.org.

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Founded in 1945, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (www.woodrow.org) identifies and develops the nation's best minds to meet its most critical challenges. The Foundation supports its Fellows as the next generation of leaders shaping American society.