

University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign
Department of Educational Organization and Leadership
EOL 544 -----School District Improvement
Fall 2008 Oakbrook

Wednesdays: August 28 – November 12, 2008

Instructor: Mary B. Herrmann, PhD
Phone: (847) 602-2554
Email: Herrmannm@winnetka36.org

Required Textbooks:

1. Heifetz, Ronald A., Linsky Marty (2002) *Leadership on the Line; Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*, Boston, MA, Harvard Business School Press.
2. Collins, Jim (2005) *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: Why Business Thinking is Not the Answer*
3. Kouzes, James M., Posner, Barry Z. (2007) *The Leadership Challenge* – 4th Edition, Jossey – Bass

Online Resources:

1. Marzano, Robert, Waters, J. Timothy (2006) *School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement. A Working Paper*. McREL.
<http://www.mcrel.org/product/244>
2. Bransford, J.D., Brown, A.L., & Cocking, R.R. (Eds.) (2000) *How People Learn*. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press.
http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9853
3. The Wallace Foundation: www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledgecenter/
Effective Superintendents, Effective Boards: Finding the Right Fit, (2003)
Leading for Learning: Reflective Tools for School and District Leaders (2003)
Education Leadership: A Bridge to School Reform (2007)

General Description/Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to introduce students to literature related to District/Organizational leadership and the role of the superintendent in improving the quality of education in public schools.

Readings, lectures, class discussions, student research presentations, and writing assignments covering administrative theories, research, and practice will help to develop the knowledge and skills needed for educational leaders to successfully lead organizations that benefit all children.

***Prerequisite:** Students must be admitted to an EOL program and, if seeking the Superintendent Endorsement must hold a type 75 Administrative Certificated with General Administrative Endorsement.*

Expectations/Assignments:

Students are expected to fully participate in class discussions.

***Common Assessment Portfolio – Component #8 – Reflection on Content Area Standards #1, Facilitating a Vision of Educational Excellence, and #2 Learning Environment and Instructional Program.** Each student will write a research based, concise analysis of his/her own current School District Improvement Plan and Process. Including a systems analysis. Attention will be particularly focused on leadership (teacher and administrator) to improve teaching and learning within the school context. This analysis should be typed 5-8 pages, double-space document that follows all applicable conventions presented in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. In preparing this assignment for inclusion in the Common Assessment Portfolio, each student also must add a reflective statement on how this assignment improved his/her understanding of the superintendent's role in constructing a district vision of educational excellence and in improving the district learning environment and instructional program.*

***Strategic Plan Design: Group Project – Field research, report and presentation.** Student Groups will be expected to develop and present a school district strategic/long range plan. The plan should be based (in part) on information obtained from the District's report card/annual report. Groups will be expected to spend one hour presenting and leading discussion of their plan. Written summaries of the strategic plans should be distributed to students, and the instructor will receive a complete copy of all relevant documents.*

***Interview and Reflective Memo:** Each student will interview a superintendent regarding his/her role and responsibilities. The interview should be formally conducted following research protocol. The paper should include a summary of*

the interview and a reflective memo with comments about both the interview process and product.

Reading Journal:

Reading is essential for educational leaders. Each student is required to complete a reading journal in which he/she will write a short response to each article read. The written response should include highlights and the implications of the reading for the educational leadership role. Each article should also contain a proper citation to the source of the article.

During each class session students will be randomly selected to provide an oral report to the class on one of their readings. The reading journal (containing a total of 10 entries) will be collected for review and assessment in November.

Leadership Project Reflection Paper:

Each student will select a real world leadership project that represents a significant challenge. The project should meet 5 basic criteria:

1. The project involves change. (Starting something new or changing the way something is being done)
2. The student is the leader.
3. The project has an identifiable starting and stopping point.
4. The project has a specific objective that it's intended to accomplish.
5. The project involves other people.

The student will reflect and write about his/her personal leadership experience. The paper should integrate leadership concepts from texts, readings and class discussions.

Course Outline & Overview:

Reading and Assignment Listing:

Aug. 27 – Introduction and Course Requirements

Leadership That Works (September Sessions)

Sept. 3: *Bring School District Improvement Plan*

READINGS: How People Learn, Sections 1 - 3
Kouzes & Posner, Part 1

Sept. 7:

READINGS: How People Learn, Sections 4, 5
Kouzes & Posner, Part 2

Sept 10:

READINGS: How People Learn, sections 5,6,8
Marzano article
Kouzes & Posner, Part 3

Sept. 17: DUE: Interview Summary and Reflection Memo

READINGS: Kouzes & Posner, Part 4

Sept. 24:

READINGS: Wallace Foundation Articles
Kouzes & Posner, Part 5

The Courage to Lead (October Sessions)

Oct. 1:

READINGS: Kouzes & Posner, Parts 6 &7

Oct. 8:

READINGS: Good to Great and the Social Sectors

Oct. 15: DUE: CAP paper

READINGS: Heifetz & Linsky, Part 1

Oct. 22:

READINGS: Heifetz & Linsky, Part 2

Oct 29:

READINGS: Heifetz & Linsky, Part 3

Creating Meaning: Leadership that Matters (November Sessions)

Nov. 5:

DUE: Reading Journal

Nov. 12:

DUE: Group Presentation

DUE: Leadership Project Reflection Paper

