Urban Education Leadership Program

Creating effective leaders. Transforming urban schools.
Urban Education: Then & Now

The national conversation on Urban Education has changed over the past 40 years, from what schools cannot do to what schools can do—and how.
Urban Education: Then & Now

- **1960s:** SES is prime contributor to student learning outcomes; there’s little that schools can do
- **1970s:** “Effective Schools” research: successful schools have successful leaders
- **1980s:** *A Nation at Risk* launches 30 years of teacher education reform
- **1990s:** *What Matters Most* and the quality of classroom instruction
- **2000s:** From *No Child Left Behind* to a new recognition of the impact of school leadership on student learning
The Recent “Discovery” of School Leadership

- School principals matter because quality of teaching depends on it
- Most teacher learning takes place after initial certification
- Schools that succeed with low-income students are sites of successful adult learning
How Principals Matter

• Strong school leadership is the surest route to strong instruction in each classroom

• Wallace Foundation: No examples of school “turnaround” absent strong school leadership

• Our working hypothesis: School leadership is the single most cost effective way to improve student learning at scale
If some principals transform schools . . .

- Can such principals be produced as a rule, rather than as a rare exception to the rule?
- Three “pioneering” programs (EDC)
  - UIC Ed.D. in Urban Education Leadership
  - New Leaders for New Schools
  - NYC Leadership Academy
The scholarship of demonstration

“The UIC program serves as a model that can be adapted to Chicago's twenty other colleges and universities. Our investment in the UIC Ed.D. Program in Urban School Leadership is one of the most cost-effective we can make.”

Arne Duncan, CEO, Chicago Public Schools (now U.S. Secretary of Education)
The UIC model: Part 1

- Inquiry stance: what does it take to prepare transformative principals?

- Close partnership with CPS to meet district needs ($1M annually in paid internships)

- Integration of high-performing practitioners with nationally recognized research faculty

- Highly selective admissions and frequent assessment
The UIC model: Part 2

- Intensive integration of year-long residency, 2 years additional coaching, and 3 years of coursework
- Outcomes-based data collection to assess candidates and improve program
- Doctoral degree structure to ensure multi-year commitment and provide future leadership of the field
Forty-seven schools and counting . . .

- UIC principals are hired in the most resource-challenged schools in CPS
- > 10% of CPS high schools
- Majority of principals are Black and Latino
- Foundations invested >$6M
UIC principals transform schools

- UIC principals lead transformation in 47 urban schools
- 23 UIC candidates are assistant principals or working in CPS central administration
- Combined student enrollment of 32,000 students across all schools with UIC leaders
- Impact on CPS Policy
UIC principals’ impact in their first 4 years

In the highest-need Chicago Public Schools:

- Improved test scores at elementary and secondary levels
- Improved attendance in elementary and secondary schools
- Improved freshman-on-track in large and small high schools
- Reduced drop-out rates and increased graduation rates
The results: ISAT composite score

- ISAT test trends for all UIC elementary schools in 2009 vs. non-UIC CPS elementary schools
- Metric: percentage of students (grades 3-8) who meet or exceed state standards on these tests
- UIC-led schools show an increasing lead in composite scores over the non-UIC schools that meet the same demographic

Table X. Trends in School-Wide ISAT Composite ME (%), 2004-2009: UIC-led ES and Non-UIC ES

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<tr>
<td>Non-UIC</td>
<td>39.55</td>
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8th Grade Reading at National Teachers Academy

Illinois Percentiles

Illinois Quartiles

[Graph showing Illinois Percentiles for 8th Grade Reading at NTA]

The results: F-O-T

- Freshman on track: the percent of students who complete 9th grade with no more than one semester ‘F’ and five full credits in core courses – high predictors of HS graduation
- School lines represent nine UIC-led CPS non-selective high schools with data from Sp. 2009 vs. 107 other non-selective CPS high schools
The results: HS graduation rates

UIC high schools increase graduation rates, with potentially significant economic consequences for Illinois (Belfield & Levin)
UIC transforming higher education

- UIC led state Legislative Task Force to replace all current principal cert programs by 2014 (SB 226: June 2010)
- UIC model used in Illinois Race to the Top federal application for improving struggling schools
- UIC faculty contributed leadership provisions for renewal of No Child Left Behind
- UIC faculty serve on multiple national commissions
“UIC’s urban education leadership program is a state and national model for how to transform struggling schools. It matches schools with the greatest challenges with the most highly qualified school leaders.”

Judy Erwin
Executive Director, IBHE
The challenge to higher education

- Higher education historically resistant to change; viewed by too many as part of the problem, not part of the solution.
- Close historical analogue: the change in medical education 1910-1920.
- Like medical education, transformative principal preparation is labor-intensive on the part of candidates and faculty: it cannot be done through mass production “on the cheap”.
Why higher education must change

- It is now clear that student learning in low-income schools can be dramatically improved—and in a relatively short time period
- We have no more promising theory for cost-effective improvement of low-income schools at scale than through preparation of capable school leaders
- Although districts, not-for-profits, and for-profits would like to take over this responsibility from IHEs—and are currently taking the lead—they can never do so at scale
- If higher education does not do this at scale, there is little reason to believe it will be done; and higher education has the resources to do it: the Chicago example
If we are serious about improving public schools . . .

. . . then we have to be serious about improving school leadership programs.

UIC impact resides in the work of principals who are improving the life chances of urban youth--transforming schools as a rule, not as an exception to the rule.
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