

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

The 62nd Annual Meeting

2013-2014 Annual Report CT PRINCIPALS' CENTER BOARD OF CONTROL *Submitted by Brian Hendrickson, Chair*

The Connecticut Association of Schools established the Principals' Center to address the professional development and related needs of practicing principals and to support the professional development of aspiring principals. The Connecticut State Department of Education has been an important partner with CAS in promoting the Principals' Center by providing both technical and financial assistance. CAS Staff members, Everett Lyons and Michael Galluzzo, are co-directors of the Center. The Center is served by an advisory committee of experienced principals, superintendents, representatives of graduate and undergraduate educational leadership and education programs, and educational consultants.

In order to provide professional support for principals and advance the professional development of aspiring principals, the work of the Center has been organized into six strands of action:

- Strand #1 **Future School Leaders:** Development of future educational leaders
- Strand #2 **Career Principals:** Providing quality leadership development for beginning and veteran school leaders
- Strand #3 **Critical Issues:** Advancing the understanding and advocacy of issues relevant to educational leaders
- Strand #4 **Recognition:** Recognizing, celebrating and sharing examples of achievements and best practices

Each strand has its own committee of school administrators and consultants who plan and implement activities relevant to its focus. The existing committees have served hundreds of principals and aspiring principals throughout Connecticut this year in the provision of an impressive variety and depth of programs. In the interest of time, I will share with you here the primary activities of each committee.

STRAND #1: FUTURE SCHOOL LEADERS

□ Future Leaders Program and Future Leaders Academy

A ninth New Haven Future Leaders Program series was conducted successfully for the New Haven Public Schools. This five-day program is the first stop on a leadership trajectory designed to produce candidates for the district's administrative vacancies. The topics addressed included building capacity for leadership, managing change, instructional leadership in daily practice, creating and sustaining a positive climate for learning, best practices for supervising and evaluating staff, and creating and sustaining professional learning communities. Once again, Mike Buckley led this program.

In addition, a leadership academy based on the New Haven model was conducted for the third year in the Meriden School District. Twenty teacher leaders completed a five session sequence and demand within the district for this experience remains high. Mike Buckley and Ev Lyons led this program. A fourth cohort is scheduled for next year.

Next school year will see an expansion of the Future Leaders Academy into the East Hartford Public Schools and a separate cohort will be organized here at CAS for small districts that may not be able to support a district-specific program. We are currently in discussion with two additional districts who are awaiting budget ratification before committing formally to a Future Leaders Academy in their respective district.

□ Administrator Certification Program (UCAPP)

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) and the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Connecticut's NEAG School of Education (NSOE) have continued a partnership which aims to address an increasing shortage of qualified administrators to fill positions of leadership within Connecticut's schools. The Principals' Center has specific responsibilities for conducting the clinical component of the University of Connecticut Administrator Preparation Program (UCAPP), a nationally recognized series of courses and internships that prepares candidates for the 092 intermediate

administrator certification and leadership positions primarily at the school building and central office levels. As an active partner in this program, the Principals' Center brings its resources including aspiring administrator's program, administrator induction program, statewide network of seasoned mentors, and well-established relationships with schools throughout the state. CAS and NSOE, with their combined resources, believe that they have the capacity to address the critical issue of administrator shortages and, in the process, build the premier school leader preparation program in the nation.

As we complete our ninth year of experience with UCAPP, the Center successfully managed 5 cohorts with a total enrollment of 67 students, linking leadership students to experienced mentors, helping students develop leadership plans tied to program objectives, meeting regularly with students and their mentors, helping to develop authentic experiences linked to courses, translating these experiences into products and artifacts for inclusion in an electronic portfolio, becoming familiar with course content, and participating in the department-wide curriculum revision process to accommodate the CAS conditions for partnership and the demands of NCATE accreditation. This program is directed by Mike Buckley.

□ **New Leaders Academy**

Last year, the steering committee reorganized the format of the former Mentor-Mentee Program and its successful reception resulted in a continuation this past year of the same facilitated-discussions structure. Six sessions were held on such topics as surviving your first year as a leader, an update on critical legal issues, using technology in the instructional setting, designing effective professional learning for staff, practicing successful hiring practices, and conducting difficult conversations with staff. Following each large-group presentation, participants met in facilitated discussions around the session theme. Nineteen new administrators participated and additional activities to introduce new administrators to CAS and, specifically the NLA, will occur for next fall to increase this number. For the past six years, the Principals' Center has opened up its New Leaders Academy workshops to aspiring administrators participating in Southern Connecticut State University's Educational Leadership Program. Over 160 SCSU interns attended at least one of these workshops this year. Rosie Vojtek, principal of Ivy Drive Elementary School in Bristol, serves as the practitioner coordinator for this program.

STRAND #2: CAREER PRINCIPALS

□ **Career Principals**

The Principals' Center will again offer the popular **Summer Leadership Institute**. Supported by funding from the Connecticut State Department of Education, CASCD, SERC, and commercial sponsorships, the Summer Leadership Institute will be held on June 26th and 27th at the Heritage in Southbury with the theme around the six Connecticut School Leadership Standards. Nationally-known presenters, Jonathan Costa and Richard Lemons will be the keynoters during the two-day workshop. Additionally, exemplar practitioners from Connecticut will offer breakout sessions keyed to the implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards in the instructional setting.

The CAS **Executive Coaching Program** is evolving in new and differing ways in response to state funding issues that impact both the school districts and CAS as a program provider. This year, the CAS Executive Coaching Program has coaches in 15 schools in seven districts. CAS executive coaches are also serving as project coaches in the 12 schools participating in the League of Innovative Schools. In response to the demands of SEED, one district hired coaches to serve as complementary school managers in six schools to allow principals the time to complete the teacher evaluation process.

As a partner in LEAD CT, the statewide leadership initiative, CAS executive coaches are serving as the coaches in 16 schools in the Alliance districts. Susan Kennedy and Tim Breslin serve as the CAS coordinators for these programs.

STRAND #3: CRITICAL ISSUES

□ **Legislative Committee**

The Critical Issues Committee merged last year with the Legislative Committee due to the overlap in functions and purposes as well as to highlight the more activist role that CAS has played in Hartford. The Legislative Committee focused on issues pertaining to the achievement gap and some of the challenges that urban schools experience in meeting the needs of educationally challenged students. A meeting of members generated some initial topics for discussion with legislators – shortage of Bilingual and TESOL teachers and over-age and under-credited high school students. Members of the committee along with thirty invited urban administrators met with the members of the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus of the CT State Legislature at the LOB in February. The dialogue raised issues of policy effectiveness, such as problems with Alliance District funding, the need for comprehensive services for select high school students and the need to engage higher

education in solving the teacher shortages affecting for non-English speakers. The discussion prompted interest among legislators for future meetings to discuss how policies are being enacted in the schools and local communities. Currently, we are exploring ways to facilitate these meetings.

STRAND #4: RECOGNITION

Recognition ceremonies were held for various grade levels under the auspices of the Principals' Center. Among these celebrations were the following:

High School Arts Banquet
Governor's Scholars Luncheon
Principal/Assistant Principal of the Year
Middle Level Scholar Leader Recognition
Elementary Arts Festival
School Volunteer Recognition
Elementary Program Recognition

Other Activities of Note:

The Center was charged by the Connecticut State Department of Education with the continued training of school and district leaders on the **administrative SEED** model piloted in ten pilot districts during school year 2012-13. Ev Lyons and Mike Galluzzo served as lead trainers supported by a team of five retired principals. In all, over forty presentations/trainings were conducted. Further proficiency and calibration work will be managed by the Center on behalf of the Connecticut State Department of Education. In addition to the administrative workshops, CAS has been called upon by several districts to present the teacher evaluation model as well.

CAS is engaged as one of the partners in **Lead CT**, a state leadership initiative, with various staff members assigned to a number of committees active under the LEAD CT umbrella. These activities include:

1. Development of a Policy Fellows Program
2. Implementation of a Residency Program to develop future school leaders
3. The implementation of a Turnaround Principals' PLC
4. Creation of additional tools for the administrator evaluation model

Funded by the Connecticut Department of Education, the **CCS Leadership Community of Practice** was a nine session series developed by CAS this past year and devoted to leadership issues related to the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (in CT referred to as Connecticut Core Standards). Each session featured a keynote speaker on the selected topic, followed by an implementers' panel which was comprised of Connecticut practitioners who shared their experiences in successfully developed/implemented some aspect of the topic under discussion. These activities were followed by facilitated breakout sessions in which the participants discuss the presentations, share their own experiences, seek support and assistance from other members, and express their needs for further discussion topics. This year the Summer Leadership Institute will serve as the capstone event for this Community of Practice by extending the conversation on the CCS to the annual two day retreat at the Heritage Inn. A continuation of this activity for next school year is planned.

Deeper Dimensions of Leadership is a small and growing group of educational leaders, consisting primarily of principals, who meet monthly and focus on the person as leader. In an unstructured setting, principals engage in personal dialogues on their inner life as leaders. Their personal and professional roles and goals are explored as they search together to find integration and balance in their lives. The process facilitates principals learning and practicing skills of listening, reflection, questioning and feedback in a safe environment of self-reflection. Pat Howley facilitates this group.

The Center sponsored two sessions of **The Breakthrough Coach** (TBC) this year in response to the managerial needs of principals in conjunction with teacher evaluation. To date the Center has sponsored twelve sessions with over 400 teams participating. We will be looking to schedule another session for the 2014-1015 school year.

Tom Mooney was a featured presenter again this year to update school leaders on school law in a special legal issues workshop. Discussions are ongoing with Tom regarding a special "Holidays and the Law" presentation next November in addition to his annual update tom practitioners.

The Center continued its involvement with the **Connecticut - Shandong Province (China) Exchange Program** by hosting several delegations of Chinese educators. The lack of state funding and the increased demands on school leaders precluded the usual exchange trips for Connecticut educators to visit China and form partnerships with their Chinese counterparts.

I am proud to share with you the accomplishments of the Center for this year. Particular thanks are in order for all the practitioners who have supported the Center's work for their dedication and voluntary efforts. Special thanks go also to the 67 administrators who volunteered as mentors in the UCAPP program who are supporting the next generation of school leaders. Special recognition for their contributions is also extended to: CSDE staff members, Robert Pitocco, Attorney Thomas Mooney of the UCONN Neag School of Education and Shipman and Goodwin; CAS administrative assistants Erin Guarino, Anna Simeonidis, Noreen Liberopoulos, and Barbara O'Connor; our CAS Executive Director Karissa Niehoff; CAS Assistant Executive Directors Michael Buckley, Tim Breslin, Regina Birdsell, Earl Bidwell, and Susan Kennedy; and, Principals' Center Co-Directors Everett Lyons and Mike Galluzzo.

Respectfully Submitted,
Brian Hendrickson, Chair
Connecticut Principals' Center Board