

**Preparing Cross-Boundary Leaders:
A Study of the Education Policy Fellowship Program**
By Design



prepared for
Lumina Foundation for Education

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INTRODUCTION

The world in which we live and work is far different from the world of just a few years ago—it requires skillful, cross-boundary leadership to address the challenges we face. An international economic crisis is playing havoc in all quarters, from Wall Street to Main Street as well as from the statehouse to the schoolhouse. Our elected leaders struggle to reform our health care system, and leaders at all levels of the education system are challenged by the need to prepare all young people for successful postsecondary education, careers, and civic life. How our nation prepares and supports leaders for the public sector has both a current and a lasting impact on our collective future.

With support from Lumina Foundation for Education, the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) used its flagship leadership development activity, the Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP), as a learning laboratory to try and answer the question, “How do we get the leaders we need to improve results in education?” Through a two-year study of EPFP, IEL learned that the short, unvarnished answer to the question is, “We get the leaders for education we need by developing them.” In the process of answering the question, IEL captured lessons showing that effective leadership development programming prepares people to take the lead across the public sector, not just in education.

This brief reviews commonly used research-based leadership development strategies and tools and identifies six program elements necessary for designing successful leadership development programs for the public service sector. Each of the six elements is brought to life through an “In Practice” discussion, which provides an on-the-ground example illustrating its contribution in a specific leadership development program. These lessons—core considerations for those operating, funding, and studying leadership development opportunities—are a first step in the process of improving how public sector leaders are prepared. ❖

Education Policy Fellowship Program

The Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) is a leadership development program that provides job-embedded learning opportunities to individuals across the country who work in an array of public, non-profit, and private organizations serving children and youth. Its goal is to develop leaders for the contemporary policy environment through site-based, regional, and national learning activities focused on leadership, policy development, and networking. EPFP is a partnership between organizations in state capitals and/or major urban centers and the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL), a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC. The program currently operates in twelve program sites and has been in continuous operation since 1964. EPFP has more than 6,900 alumni.

About the Study

The study used a combination of research approaches, including a survey of EPFP alumni supplemented with a literature review, case studies of four program sites, and focus groups. IEL identified ways in which participation in EPFP benefits individuals and their employing organizations and how specific aspects of EPFP’s design and curriculum affect program outcomes. Additionally, one-on-one discussions held with senior staff from a wide range of leadership development programs, as well as staff from the fifteen EPFP program sites, confirmed these findings and led to a clearer understanding of key program elements that work best in mid-career leadership development programs designed to prepare individuals for public service.

“The [public] leadership dilemma in a democratic society results from a two-party system competing for political gains and short-term results.”

—Gov.Leaders.org 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) is indebted to Lumina Foundation for Education for supporting a study of the Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP). We are pleased to share what we learned from our research through three publications in IEL's Leadership Matters series.

This report, *Preparing Cross-Boundary Leaders: By Design*, identifies six program elements necessary to successful cross-boundary leadership development programs and translates what IEL learned into ideas for improvement to inform the work of leadership program staff. Other publications in the series include *Preparing Cross-Boundary Leaders: In Education*—a report summarizing the findings from a survey of EPFP alumni, the centerpiece of the EPFP study, and offering ideas for improvement to inform policy makers, the individuals whose decisions have an impact on leadership development and related capacity-building efforts—and *Preparing Cross-Boundary Leaders: EPFP in Action*, a report documenting how program sites adapt EPFP to their state's policy environment. The complete EPFP study is available at: www.iel.org.

Many people made significant contributions to the EPFP study. Karen Seashore Louis, Rodney S. Wallace Professor of Teaching and Learning, Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota, took the lead in designing the five-part research project and in analysing and reporting the survey results. She was ably assisted by Taryn McKenzie Williams, the EPFP Research Associate who had the task of conducting the literature review and writing first drafts of all reports to the Foundation, including this report. Douglas Brattebo, EPFP Director, 2005–2008, oversaw the project and orchestrated the work of the EPFP Coordinators who helped conceptualize the study, reviewed drafts, and participated in focus group discussions. At the four case study sites, the EPFP Coordinators helped arrange on-site interviews with various program stakeholders. Stefani Wilcox, EPFP Program Associate, provided technical assistance over the life of the project. Finally, many EPFP participants responded to the Alumni Survey and offered suggestions through various focus group discussions. In essence, the EPFP study is their story.

IEL is both a leadership source and resource. We are a hub—or what the sociologists call a “third place”—for boundary-crossing leaders, and we are a research and action center, helping and leading people to proven solutions. IEL's history of achievement—working through networks to support reform agendas such as creating and sustaining community schools, ensuring the education of young people with disabilities, and improving school leadership—has given us immediate access to layers of perspectives on leadership for education. We are pleased to share both our access and those perspectives with you.



Martin J. Blank
President, IEL

MID-CAREER LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR

While there is much promising research in the field of leadership development, relatively few studies address leadership programs designed to provide participants with fluency in the norms and cultures of policy making processes. As a part of the EPFP study, IEL identified and reviewed seventeen such programs (see Table 1 in Appendix on page 14). The selected programs are not intended to provide an exhaustive list; rather, they provide a roadmap of the immediate leadership development “terrain” in which EPFP operates. Each program was identified through an analysis of descriptive, self-reported, and public information, including the program’s Web sites, brochures, and published materials. A select number of staff members from these programs were interviewed.

To describe the programs, the study used a modified version of frameworks devised by Professor Lee Teitel of Harvard University and by library science consultants Florence Mason and Louella Wetherbee (Mason and Wetherbee 2004, 203; Teitel 2005, 3). Combining data obtained from these seventeen programs with information gathered from the fifteen EPFP program sites (see Table 2 in Appendix on page 15), IEL developed the following framework to describe these policy-oriented leadership programs using three specific dimensions: (1) program configuration, (2) content and pedagogy, and (3) funding.

1. Program Configuration

► Program Venue, Length, and Training Format

Many of the leadership development programs explored through the EPFP study are residential in nature. Conducted over periods varying from two months to two years, participants engage in workshops and seminars that last for days or a week at a time. Often, the venues for these training events are remote or resort settings distant from the participants’ professional environments. Some programs, such as The Blandin Community Leadership and the American Leadership Forum Fellows programs, take participants into the wilderness to engage in week-long trust-building exercises.

► Participant Selection

These programs are selective about participants. Although they use different terms to describe desired candidates, common descriptors are “emerging,” “mid-career,” and “established professionals.” The programs identify potential participants through common selection criteria such as undergraduate or graduate degree or commensurate work experience, experience in a particular field of study, and some supervisory or managerial experience. Final selection of participants varies. Some choose participants through a closed nomination process, but more frequently participants are selected through an open application process.

► Number of Participants

The number of participants in each individual program’s cohort is relatively small, ranging from eight to forty-five participants. EPFP is the exception in that it serves about 220 fellows annually, however, it does so through program sites spread out across twelve to fourteen state sites and the District of Columbia. The number of participants at each EPFP site typically ranges from ten to thirty.

2. Content and Pedagogy: Curricula and Delivery Strategies

Many programs emphasize increased understanding of public policy content and process as a critical outcome. Some, like EPFP, also embed leadership development and professional networking into their program goals, while other programs choose to weave this focus into their formal program design.

All leadership development programs employ a variety of teaching and learning strategies, and the programs considered in the EPFP study are no exception. Common strategies employed across most of the programs are described next.

► Feedback Instruments

Tools for multi-source feedback (MSF) or multi-source assessments are often used. These instruments, also known as 360-degree feedback instruments, provide a method of “systematically collecting perceptions of an individual’s performance from the entire circle of relevant viewpoints” (Day 2001, 587). Feedback sources generally include superiors, peers, and subordinates. Advocates for these assessments cite their use as a developmental tool for personal knowledge and awareness; such tools also have been shown to be effective in capturing an individual’s behaviors across different constituencies. Critics cite a person’s willingness to change behavior as a significant factor that bears upon the tool’s effectiveness.

Some of the EPFP sites, for example, use the Executive Development Program assessment. Grounded in the work of the National Defense University, this battery of instruments provides participants with feedback on how their superiors, peers, and subordinates rate them in a number of competency areas.

► Executive Coaching

Executive coaching is one-on-one learning designed to yield individual change or to resolve a particular organizational issue (Day 2001, 590–91). Coaching often combines multi-source feedback with planning that enables one or more users to implement strategies to address areas of concern. Little research documents the empirical value of executive coaching in enhancing development beyond improvement in performance (Day 2001, 590–91).

► Mentoring

A growing body of research is demonstrating the value of mentoring in leadership development. Formal mentoring involves pairing entry-level individuals with veterans outside their direct reporting line (Day 2001, 594). Effective mentoring relationships help mentees “increase self-esteem and satisfaction with their work and the progress of their career” (Bass 1990, 835). Mentors may also “provide mentees with counseling, protection, friendship, and challenging assignments” (Bass 1990, 835). Mentoring has demonstrated positive impact on both the mentee and mentor, but certain conditions are necessary to expand the impact of these efforts. Effective mentors are predisposed to a

“relations orientation—even temperament, tolerance for ambiguity, valuing the organization, liking the [mentee], and respect for the [mentee’s] intelligence” (Bass 1990, 836). Effective matching is critical to the success of mentoring as a leadership development tool.

► Networking

“Networking is essential to effective leadership in today’s organizations. Leaders who are skilled networkers have access to people, information, and resources to help solve problems and create opportunities. Leaders who neglect their networks are missing out on a critical component of their role as leaders” (Grayson and Baldwin 2007). Networking is about expanding one’s definition of what and how, through exposure to others’ thinking, which can challenge basic assumptions about what we think we know (Day 2001, 597). The effectiveness of networking as a developmental activity is closely linked to the extent to which the networks provide the user with access to knowledge and individuals that positively influence the participant’s leadership development. “By seeing networking as an integral part of your role as a leader and by taking action to develop and nurture related skills, you begin to create benefits for yourself, your team, and your organization” (Grayson and Baldwin 2007).

The leadership development programs studied have a significant focus on the development of sustained professional networks. The programs’ descriptive literature and activities stress the importance of cohort members interacting and building relationships that extend beyond the structural boundaries of the program. Typically, socialization between cohort members is considered a part of the learning experience and the activities facilitate sustained interactions between group members. Many of the programs physically convene members from multiple cohorts in alumni gatherings and annual conferences. Newer technologies—such as Wikis, Facebook, Linked-In groups—are used to sustain the networks; alumni databases are used to maintain contacts among members.

► Job Assignments

Job assignments are highly effective leadership development activities. Participants are typically exposed to unfamiliar and challenging situations (Day 2001, 599–600; Ohlott 2004, 155). “Job assignments [are] helpful to managers in learning about building teams, how to be better strategic thinkers, and how to gain valuable persuasion and influence skills” (Day 2001, 598). Assignments that emphasize development tend to have a higher degree of responsibility and put the individual in situations that require change and the possibility of failure. The host organization’s climate must be willing to view failures as developmental opportunities in order to enhance the individual’s learning.

► Action Learning

Action learning refers to “a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues, with a corresponding emphasis on getting things done” (Day 2001, 601). This is an evolving technique and there are little existing data to describe the impact on participants. Embedded in theories of adult learning, action learning engages participants in work that includes “delivering measurable results in service of an organization’s work, learning and communicating lessons specific to a particular context, and developing individual and collective capacities for learning and leadership more generally” (McCauley and Van Velsor 2004, 461).

► Other Teaching and Learning Strategies

The leadership programs also used other strategies, such as lectures, case studies, skill-building experiences, and discussions to deliver program content. For instance, the California Agricultural Leadership Program includes readings by noted leadership experts, presentations, and group discussions led by its university partners. In the Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowship Program, fellows are given opportunities to draft legislation and regulations related to health sciences.

Additional program delivery methods include role play with feedback from cohort members and simulations. For example, the North Carolina EPFP site’s annual “Budget Busters” session led by the state’s fiscal expert is grounded in experiential learning.

“Budget Busters” Exercise

Fellows are divided into three groups: a House Ways and Means Committee—a hybrid of North Carolina’s Finance and Appropriations Committees, a Senate Ways and Means Committee—another hybrid, and a group of special interest lobbyists. After an in-depth review of North Carolina’s fiscal regulations, Fellows are responsible for developing a balanced budget over a period of one week while the lobbyists work furiously to advance their own causes. The expert is adamant about the impact of this exercise on participants. “Experiential education is how you teach (budget); the didactic stuff won’t work on this topic...the activity really teaches them about the constraints on lawmakers; they are forced to work together.”

Both the CORO Leadership NY and one of the EPFP sites utilize adaptive leadership case techniques modeled on the work of Ronald Heifetz, a professor at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government. In these cases, fellows share an adaptive challenge they face in working with their peers. In turn, cohort members ask questions designed to formulate solutions to the various challenges. This learning strategy emphasizes diagnosis and problem solving in an effort to prepare leaders to address the challenges they will face in complex policy environments.

Another skill-building example is “Congressional Insight,” a fast-paced simulation used by EPFP at its annual plenary gathering of fellows in Washington, DC. The activity allows participants to experience being a member of the U.S. Congress by immersing them in the real world of the federal legislator.

“Congressional Insight” Exercise

Facilitators from the John C. Stennis Institute of Government at Mississippi State University lead teams of Fellows through eleven rounds of computer-generated activity. During each round, teams must make decisions about the legislation they will support; the Congressional Committee posts they will seek; the amount of time to devote to fund-raising; and the trade-offs they will make in light of pressure from constituents, political parties, interest groups, and the media. All of the decisions must be made under ever-increasing time deadlines. Instant feedback is given on the results of these tough choices to show how the Team’s decisions helped—or hurt—their chances for reelection.

► **Engaging Expertise of Presenters/Participants**

The facilitators and faculty for the leadership development programs are diverse and vary widely. Some programs, such as the California Agricultural Leadership Program, rely on faculty from their university partners. Other programs rely on consultants or use established practitioners to work with participants. Still other programs employ a self-driven curriculum in which participants are encouraged early in the program to develop their own learning standards and to make use of their cohort's expertise to advance understanding about selected topics.

► **Addressing Challenges in Content and Pedagogy**

Irrespective of the strategies employed, program staff noted that careful consideration must be given to balancing several factors when developing program content and pedagogy.

Breadth versus Depth of Curriculum

Leadership development program staff often cited the challenge of addressing “breadth versus depth” in their curricula. Programming issues that highlight the breadth–depth tension include determining the amount of time needed to explore individual leadership and the leadership practices of others; specific policy issues and the overall context of governance; and relationship building to facilitate peer learning. Figuring out the appropriate amount of time to devote to each of these issues has an impact on program outcomes. In order to make the best decision, program staff must be able to assess the skills, interests and needs of participants, and then tailor program activities in ways that meet particular needs, but also serve the entire cohort.

Frequency and Length of Participation

Some leadership development programs offer credentialing through universities or state agencies. The time requirements in these programs are

determined by the credentialing organizations. Other programs must select learning formats and schedules that accommodate geographical boundaries and the professional demands of participants. In fact, the need for release time for travel and other program activities are often a disincentive to participating in the program. To counteract this, some programs conduct virtual programs that make it possible to serve participants from a broader geographic region.

Identifying and Maintaining Expert Resources

A leadership development program's professional networks and partnerships play a decisive role in participants' accumulation of knowledge and have an impact on participants' overall program experience. EPFP alumni often cite particular speakers as “making or breaking” a particular session or program year. Program staff must cultivate and maintain diverse relationships with consultants and other resource persons that can give participants opportunities to engage deeply with experts on key public policy issues affecting their field.

3. Funding

The leadership development programs in the EPFP study are characterized by a variety of funding models. Some programs, such as EPFP and the CCL Leadership Development Program, require participants or their sponsoring organizations to pay tuition and fees to cover the cost of the program. Other programs, particularly those that include job assignments, give participants a stipend or salary while they engage in their leadership development activities. The range of developmental activities and the time span of the program significantly influence the cost. Depending on what the program offers, fees can range from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars for all associated expenses (e.g., materials, travel, stipends). ❖

“Contrary to the opinion of many people, leaders are not born. Leaders are made, and they are made by effort and hard work.”

—Vince Lombardi, Legendary Football Coach

SIX PROGRAM ELEMENTS THAT MATTER THE MOST

All of the leadership development programs reviewed in the EPFP study share several attributes beyond an emphasis on policy processes. All emphasize “cross-boundary” or “interdisciplinary” cohorts of individuals. Many stress the use of mentoring, networking, and job assignments as primary developmental activities. There is diversity, however, in the funding models employed and in the configuration of the programming.

As a result of the EPFP study, six program elements emerged as critical to the success of programs focused on the development of public sector leaders. Successful leadership development programs require:

- ◀ Clearly articulated leadership outcomes
- ◀ Participant diversity
- ◀ Cross-boundary curriculum
- ◀ Safe space and time to learn
- ◀ Funding partnerships
- ◀ Strong staff and institutional support.

1. Clearly Articulated Leadership Outcomes

Successful leadership development programs can define the kind of leader the program will produce. They also can describe how the program will go about developing the appropriate leadership capacities. While the literature describing and debating leadership theories and traits is vast, staff from the programs in the EPFP study share the belief that the leaders and leadership skills developed within their programs must be linked closely to the changing needs of the public sector in which they operate. Staff use well-known leadership readings and lecturers in the conduct of their programs, but many pointed out that continually communicating with individuals in the field was crucial to the development and refinement of their curricula. Engaging in environmental scanning and stakeholder assessment helps program staff identify the leadership challenges within their sector, makes it possible to make curricular changes as needed, and provides valuable feedback on program activities.

IN PRACTICE

California Agricultural Leadership Program

California Agricultural Leadership Program (AgLeadership) is an intensive two-year program for individuals working in the California agricultural industry. The program works with universities to provide professionals with seventy days of experience exploring the current social, political, science, organizational, and economic issues that influence the industry. The program focuses on individual learning and experience, intentionally introducing participants to frequently unfamiliar and at times uncomfortable situations. As a result, participants develop close relationships and, most importantly, a profound appreciation for the ability to listen to and learn from others and their environments.

The experiential program curriculum is designed to increase fellows’ confidence and competence while providing them with a better understanding of the contextual challenges of contemporary agriculture. Staff at the California Agricultural Leadership Foundation plays an important role in shaping and implementing the program’s curriculum, but they rely on program stakeholders to regularly inform this process. The program’s priorities are embedded within the curriculum. These content areas, which are designated “Global Ends,” define the needs of the sector and the individual skills required by the leaders to affect change. Having a clear understanding of the leadership needs of their sector enables program staff to identify the activities and exercises that will best develop their program participants.

2. Participant Diversity

All the study participants agree that the diversity of participants offers the greatest opportunities for learning. Having participants with different backgrounds ensures that divergent perspectives will be explored as the curriculum delves into complex and controversial policy content. Diversity in terms of ideology, organizational position, experience level, race, ethnicity, and gender is key to participant learning.

Many of the programs in the EPFP study give individuals opportunities to enhance their skills in an environment in which they are constantly receiving supportive and constructive feedback from their peers. Programs are structured with the assumption

that participants have existing skills and experiences that can be used to inform their peers' development. Some programs seek to build heterogeneous cohorts in which each individual is representative of a particular view within their field. This heterogeneity, which can involve differences in age, sector, ideology, and beliefs, ensures that participants will be exposed to diverse viewpoints throughout their participation.

Ensuring the participation of individuals with varied backgrounds can be difficult. Leadership development staff members identified two main challenges to diversifying the participants: recruitment and tuition support. Individuals seek extended leadership development opportunities for a variety of reasons. Commonly cited motives include the desire for a promotion, enhanced professional networks, or increased knowledge in a particular field. Individuals may also be encouraged to participate by colleagues or mentors. The wide variety of skill-based professional development programs compete with leadership development

programs in public policy for participants. Individuals for whom policy is a component of their positions (e.g., lobbyists, legislative aides) are more likely to seek out the latter, while practitioners may be more likely to seek developmental activities that support credentialing in their field. To circumvent these barriers, program staff must continuously articulate the value of leadership development to a diverse group of organizations. Often, this involves demonstrating the short-term and long-term benefits of program activities on both the individual and organizational levels. One senior staff person remarked that she must constantly “make the case” to skeptics. Program alumni are often involved in these efforts and asked to share their positive experiences with potential participants.

A second barrier to recruiting a diverse group of participants is cost. Scarce resources and the current economic climate can make building the case for leadership development tailored to individuals difficult. Some leadership development programs are subsidized by funding from private resources, such as foundations with an interest in leadership development or the sector in which the program operates. Many program staff mentioned utilizing high participation of individuals from larger, well-funded, nationally based organizations to help fund professionals from smaller agencies. These measures are often supplemented by cost-cutting strategies that help lower the overall expense of the programs. Staff members often negotiate deals for donated space and meals, and rely on their networks to provide content expertise at little or no cost.

IN PRACTICE

Pennsylvania EPFP

Pennsylvania EPFP began in 1999 at the Education Policy and Leadership Center in Harrisburg. One of the larger EPFP sites, the Pennsylvania program averages 30 participants each year. Annual cohorts are diverse, including superintendents, university faculty and administrators, school board members, lobbyists, and state officials. Over the ten-month program, fellows explore and analyze traditional education issues such as school finance, the achievement gap, and teacher quality. They also focus on the leadership challenges inherent in education systems. It is within this focal area that fellows are introduced to leadership development in the armed forces.

Through a partnership with the Army War College in Carlisle, the Pennsylvania EPFP travels to the military installation to learn more about the Army's approach to leadership development. The field trip provides participants with a comparative learning experience that often breaks down existing stereotypes while providing new means of addressing systemic problems in the public sector. The learning is mutual. Each year, staff members from the Army War College's strategic leadership department participate in the Pennsylvania EPFP program. The impact of such cross-boundary learning can be immediate and can have a long-lasting impact on participants. It also can stimulate innovation among participants as they engage in a mutual exchange of leadership ideas and practices.

3. Cross-Boundary Curriculum

Cross-boundary learning is a significant component of programming in the leadership development programs in the EPFP study. Many study participants spoke about the importance and necessity of giving participants direct access to knowledge and practice outside of their field. These experiences take many forms and stretch participants' understanding of the nature of the challenges they confront in their own work. As noted before, many of the programs regularly include cross-boundary perspectives through the selection of participants to ensure the representation of diverse perspectives on issues. In addition to cohort composition, programs use lecturers, simulations, and field trips as vehicles for exposing leaders to different sectors.

4. Safe Space and Time To Learn

Successful leadership development programs provide participants with adequate time and space to process the knowledge and skills that are the focus of their efforts. The dual themes of *intensiveness* and *intimacy* facilitate learning as the group grapples with complex and controversial issues. These leadership development programs are intensive. They provide participants with a high level of input, often demanding that participants meet for hours at a time over several days. It is not unusual for programs to meet for six to eight hours in a given day. This produces the second, important aspect—intimacy. A high degree of emphasis is placed on the relationships that develop between participants. Activities are structured to facilitate these relationships and the learning they produce.

IN PRACTICE

CORO Leadership New York

CORO Leadership New York is a leadership development program for mid-career professionals working in the public sector in New York City. Each year, the program recruits a diverse cohort of approximately fifty individuals representing the corporate, nonprofit, and government sectors in the city. The curriculum is organized around three program elements: public policy, leadership, and power and privilege. The participants explore these areas during their monthly sessions.

With the exception of the first session, each seminar is designed around a participant-selected issue. Members of the cohort work together in self-selected teams on an unfamiliar question of interest in predetermined policy areas. The teams collaborate to identify resources and to shape sessions for their peers around the questions they have selected. The formats offer individuals an opportunity to explore a particular policy issue in depth with a group of peers who hold differing opinions and viewpoints. The responsibility that the team takes for their cohort's learning also provides leadership opportunities as the individual members become "experts" on issues.

"Going to school, listening to lectures, taking notes, passing exams...that is not adult education...that is putting schooling into adult life where it does not belong."

—Adler, 1952

5. Funding Partnerships

Despite variation in funding models, all of the programs require significant resources to support their operations. They need support for the individual or team of individuals who develop and implement program activities. Programs that offer job assignments for participants often pay stipends and travel expenses and require support for these costs. In-service programs that allow participants to maintain their jobs need release time from their employers. Additionally, programs need support for materials, speakers, and other events related to their operations.

Staff members know that passing all these costs to individuals or their employers is a barrier to full participation. Similarly, the nonprofits that run these organizations understand that philanthropic dollars are not a guaranteed, long-term means of support. Most programs have come to the same conclusion: the cost of leadership development must be spread out over the institutions that benefit from the programming.

IN PRACTICE

The ACE Fellows Program

The ACE Fellows Program has prepared leaders in higher education for over forty years. The program, which targets faculty and administrators, seeks to prepare change agents for colleges and universities across the nation. The fellows program has evolved over the past four decades, but its emphasis on providing participants with strategies and approaches to overcome institutional challenges remains. Program activities include readings, week-long seminars on topics related to theory and practice in higher education, individual professional development plans, and job assignments at partner institutions for extended observation and learning.

The program involves a large commitment by multiple institutions for a semester year or a shorter period. The nominating institution pays the salary and benefits of the ACE Fellow; the receiving institution provides for professional development of the fellows (but, for political reasons, does not cover travel); and ACE provides for staff salaries and conferences. ACE began with a comprehensive foundation grant, but soon evolved into another model. The current tripartite arrangement for the costs and resource base is in recognition of the expense of individual leadership development and the need for a commitment on the part of all participating institutions to sustain the program over the long term.

6. Strong Staff and Institutional Support

Interviews and focus groups revealed the impact of leadership on individual EPFP programs, and discussions with the staff of other leadership development programs confirmed that this program element is critical. Individual program leaders are often responsible for every aspect of the program, including participant recruitment and selection, curriculum development, and program implementation. This means that the leaders of such programs must have capacities in policy content, policy frameworks, governance, and political settings. It also means that they must have the ability to develop curricula for adult learners and a broad, professional network that can help with the delivery of content.

All of the varied staff responsibilities are not carried out by a single individual. Many of the programs in the EPFP study had one to two leaders who managed different aspects of the operations. Other programs, however, relied on a single program leader and used part-time consultants or administrative staff to accomplish program work.

In addition to individual leadership, study participants also highlighted the importance of the local partner institution. Leadership development programs require substantial resources to support their operations and need an institutional base that can and will help. Program leaders look to their institutional partners for help identifying and supporting potential program participants and in securing expert resources. Individual program leaders who may or may not be employed by the institutional partner may also need administrative support, access to facilities, and, in some cases, staff assistance to organize and run the program.

The importance of stability in the institutional partner cannot be understated. Financial pressures, transitions in leadership, and shifts in the political environment can challenge an individual leader's capacity to secure support for a program. Having a cadre of individual supporters within an institutional partner is beneficial to program longevity as priorities shift from year to year. ❖

IN PRACTICE

North Carolina EPFP

North Carolina EPFP began in 1979 with conversations between then National EPFP Director Paul Schindler and State Superintendent Craig Phillips. In its first thirteen years, EPFP was affiliated with the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA). In the early 1990s, the Public School Forum of North Carolina became the new institutional home of North Carolina EPFP. The Forum, as it is commonly known, is a natural fit for EPFP. The independent, not-for-profit think tank conducts research and administers a number of programs designed to enhance the capacity of education policy makers, teachers, and members of North Carolina's business community. Executive Director John Dornan and Associate Executive Director Jo Ann Norris have provided significant support to the program. Norris has served as a co-coordinator of EPFP since the early 1990s and has led the program through several transitions. In 2008, Kendall Jordan, Director of Public Policy Research at the Forum, joined Norris as a co-coordinator of EPFP.

North Carolina EPFP is well known and the Forum is able to leverage the EPFP network in a way that furthers discussion and action on policy initiatives in the state. The Forum's recognition of EPFP's value is evident in the support it provides to the program, including Jordan's and Norris's staff time as an in-kind contribution. The Forum's substantial commitment to the EPFP program is reinforced by the support of local agencies and organizations that continue to sponsor new fellows year after year.

IMPLICATIONS OF LESSONS LEARNED FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM STAFF

Since little consequential or enduring change occurs in the absence of a well-crafted and well-disseminated vision—one that anchors, supports and guides reform, IEL translated what it has learned into ideas for improving how we develop the leaders we need in education, and in the public sector. The ideas are expressed as best practices, and are designed to guide and support the work of program staff responsible for designing and implementing leadership development programs.

IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Effective, cross-boundary leadership development programs have the following characteristics:

► **Span Boundaries by Design**

Bringing together and collectively preparing diverse individuals who work in a variety of agencies and organizations—in the case of EPFP, from all parts of the education system, as well as from outside the system—is the only way to ensure that capacity-building occurs simultaneously across many sectors. Diversity among participants makes a huge difference.

Most leadership programs assume that participants have knowledge, skills, and experiences that can inform their peers' development. Heterogeneity among participants—in age, sector, ideology, work and life experience—ensures that participants are exposed to diverse perspectives, conflicting ideas, and alternative ways to resolve issues. The result: a dynamic learning environment in which individuals acquire deeper knowledge about complex issues, and a better understanding of and sensitivity to others' views on the issues. The program must provide participants with direct access to knowledge and practice outside of their field and day-to-day responsibility. This will stretch them to understand better the challenges they face in their own agency, and help them understand why and how to work across organizational boundaries.

► **Focus on Individuals at Mid-Career**

Early careerists need to develop mastery of their field, but mid-careerists need to develop and increase their capacity to work across multiple systems in support of

better policy, better programs and, most importantly, better results for all children and youth. Most leadership development programs are selective. Common selection criteria include an undergraduate or graduate degree and/or commensurate work experience. The goal is to identify and recruit individuals who have from five to ten years of work experience in a particular field, and some supervisory or managerial experience through which they have demonstrated a passion for their work, and have exhibited leadership.

► **Provide Time and a Safe, Supportive Space for Learning.**

Participants need extended time and a protected space in which to make mistakes and to learn. There are no incentives for being uninformed, so the program must create a learning environment in which seasoned professionals feel comfortable asking questions and, in turn, being questioned. The scope and length of the program, and how it promotes the development of relationships among participants are key program features that nurture participants as they grow and develop, and acquire new skills, while simultaneously building dense, professional relationships that will endure throughout their careers.

► **Share the Responsibility.**

Implementing and sustaining cross boundary leadership programs requires that the investment be shared. This helps ensure ongoing support for the program and can lead to the development of a stable of program champions. Passing all of the program costs on to participants or their employers, or to one funding source is a barrier to sustainability. Often, the non-profit organizations that operate the programs know that dollars from one source do not guarantee long-term continuation; once priorities shift, the support disappears. Leadership development programs are resource-intensive, and the financial capital required to operate them must be spread out across the many stakeholders that ultimately benefit from the programs' results, including the participants. They must be nurtured so they will become engaged alumni, remaining connected with the program in the years following their completion of the program.

► **Are Supported by a Committed Leader and Strong Host Organization**

There are many different ways to organize leadership development programs for success. However, the most successful ones are hosted by or based in well-respected organizations that understand that supporting the program strengthens the larger organization. The program director must possess certain skills and competencies, including having a broad understand-

ing of policy frameworks, governance, and political settings, and a capacity to develop curriculum for adult learners. They also must have and provide access to a diverse network that serves as a resource to the program. Sustaining cross boundary leadership development programs requires a symbiotic relationship between the host organization and the program, and an effective leader. ❖

CONCLUSION

Achieving almost any public sector goal requires leaders who can work effectively across boundaries to address and resolve public problems. Leadership development programs that help participants develop a broad understanding of public policy are an effective tool for developing such leaders. The programs in the EPFP study are designed to increase participants' on-the-job performance, enhance their careers, and develop participants' capacity for policy leadership. They also have important work-related benefits, both in the short run and over a participant's career.

Cross-boundary design is central to program success. Bringing together and collectively preparing diverse individuals who work in a variety of agencies and organizations ensures that capacity-building occurs simultaneously over many sectors. The leadership development programs in the study recognize the value of recruiting diverse participants and, by dint of that diversity, are able to introduce participants to conflicting ideas and perspectives. The programs' communal tables both model and set the stage for collaboration. The use of various venues and teaching and learning formats keeps the participants active, exposes them to new resources, and helps them to establish broader networks that can help in their daily professional endeavors.

One overarching theme that significantly impacts the success of leadership development programs in preparing public sector leaders is that inter-sector collaboration matters—or, as one study respondent stated, “the willingness of [all our] leaders to invest in leadership development programming.” Leadership development programs tailored to developing leaders for public service are subject to the same challenges that affect the implementation of effective public policy. Public institutions govern in an environment fraught with competing interests, sector fragmentation, and limited resources. Additionally, the network

of public and private agencies working in the public sector do not always share the norms that provide incentives for collaboration. While broad support exists for the idea that individuals must come together from different fields to address complex problems, this is not standard practice.

Despite the success of the leadership development programs, all face sustainability challenges. The primary message about sustainability is that leadership development in the public sector is an investment that must be shared. Cross-boundary leadership development programs that have experienced the most success work to achieve buy-in from all of the sectors they wish to involve. For this reason, the programs are often run by or housed in nonpartisan organizations or agencies that are able to maintain objectivity as they seek to build cross-boundary partnerships. Moreover, selecting participants and developing curricula that represent the full scope of perspectives that affect any one issue builds trust among diverse program stakeholders. This can be a painstaking process, but the long-term benefits are a program that is less subject to failure over time. Unlike other important program elements, staff cannot simply weave system capacity into the operations of their program. But, they can engage in sustained efforts to cultivate and sustain partnerships that will ultimately increase long-term support for their programs.

Much is at stake and much depends on effective, cross-boundary leadership. The Institute for Educational Leadership has long recognized that cross-boundary leadership is central to resolving multiple issues in the public sector, including better learning and development outcomes for all children and youth. IEL will continue to serve as an advocate for cross-boundary leadership development and to share broadly—in print, in person, and via the web—what it learns through its ongoing leadership work. ❖

APPENDIX

Table 1. Leadership Development Programs Descriptions

Leadership Program/Sponsor/Web Site	Program Description
ACE Fellowship Program American Council on Education (ACE) http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Fellows_Program1	Emphasis on higher education; job assignments, networking, and mentoring are used as tools to provide high-level (e.g., vice presidents, faculty, and deans) university staff with access to higher education policy, culture, and norms
American Leadership Forum Fellows Program American Leadership Forum http://www.alfnational.org/?link_id=55	Emphasis on community leadership; experiential learning, group projects, and trainings are used to provide participants with increased capacity to address community challenges
Blandin Community Leadership Program Blandin Foundation http://www.blandinfoundation.org/html/leadership_bclp.cfm	Emphasis on community leadership; team-based curriculum uses networking, experiential learning, and training are used to help participants (e.g., rural Minnesota communities) with the goal of increasing facility with community change processes
California Agricultural Leadership Program California Agricultural Leadership Foundation http://www.agleaders.org/education/ca_fellowship.html	Emphasis on agriculture; university-based curricula, team and individual assignments, and networking are used to provide participants with understanding of the scientific, economic, and sociopolitical context of agricultural policy
Center for Creative Leadership's Leadership Development Program Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) http://www.ccl.org/leadership/programs/LDPOverview.aspx?pagelD=20	Emphasis on developing self-awareness; although the program does not have an explicit policy focus, multi-source feedback, coaching, and training are used to develop capacity of individuals who carry out leadership tasks
Center for Collaborative Planning Women's Health Leadership School Women's Health Leadership School http://www.connectccp.org/programs/whl/leadership.shtml	Emphasis on women's health issues; training, assessments, individual projects, and networking are used to expose participants to public health and policy-making processes
The Center for Policy Alternatives Flemming Leadership Institute Center for Policy Alternatives http://www.stateaction.org/leadership/flemming/	Emphasis on legislative policy making bodies; a bipartisan group of elected state officials participate in networking and training designed to increase facility with policy-making processes
CORO Fellows Program CORO http://www.coro.org/site/c.geJNlUOzErH/b.2086429/	Emphasis on public affairs; job assignments, networking, and mentoring are used to expose early-career professionals to the public affairs arena
Education Policy Fellowship Program Institute for Educational Leadership http://www.iel.org/epfp/index.html	Emphasis on K–12 and higher education; curriculum-based program utilizing lectures, multi-feedback instruments, and networking expose individuals working within education to the policy-making process at local, state, and national levels
Entrepreneurial Leaders for Public Education Fellowship Program Aspen Institute NewSchools Venture Fund http://www.aspeninstitute.org/site/c.huLWJeMRkPH/b.2838245/k.28CD/Entrepreneurial_Leaders_for_Public_Education.htm	Emphasis on entrepreneurship in K–12 education; fellows (e.g., professionals from nonprofit, philanthropic, and district settings) engage in seminars, mentoring, and individual projects that emphasize innovation in public education
Environmental Leadership Program Environmental Leadership Program http://www.elpnet.org/aboutus.php	Emphasis on environmental policy; networking, training, and mentoring are used to provide participants (e.g., environmentalists from academia, business, government, and nonprofits) with enhanced knowledge of environmental issues
Fordham Fellows Thomas B. Fordham Foundation http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/fordhamfellows/index.cfm	Emphasis on national and state policy-making processes; job assignments and networking are the focus of this early-career professionals' program
Henry Crown Fellowship Aspen Institute http://www.aspeninstitute.org/site/c.huLWJeMRkPH/b.611979/k.410A/Henry_Crown_Fellowship_Program.htm	Emphasis on community leadership; fellows representing multiple sectors engage in seminars, mentoring, and individual projects that focus on community and civic responsibility
LEAD Fellows Training Programme LEAD http://www.lead.org/page/71	Emphasis on sustainable development; fellows participate in training, networking, and mentoring exercises that provide access to developmental issues at local/state, national, and international levels
Mind Trust Education Entrepreneur Fellowship The Mind Trust http://www.themindtrust.org/ed_fellowship/about_fellowship.htm	Emphasis on entrepreneurship in K–12 education; job assignments, mentoring, networking, and individual projects are used to develop fellows' leadership capacity
Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellows Program Robert Wood Johnson Foundation http://www.healthpolicyfellows.org/home.php	Emphasis on health policy; job assignments and networking are used to expose fellows (e.g., mid-career social and behavioral scientists) to federal policy-making processes
Zero to Three Leaders for the 21st Century Fellowship Zero to Three http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ldr_purpose	Emphasis on early childhood education; job assignments, mentoring, and networking form the basis of this program, which brings together interdisciplinary (e.g., law, science, psychology, medicine) professionals

Table 2. Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) Sites

State	Institutional Partner
Arizona	Lincoln Center for Applied Ethics and Mary Lou Fulton College of Education, Arizona State University http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/az.html
Connecticut	Area Cooperative Educational Services http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/ct.html
Georgia	Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education http://www.gpee.org/Georgia-Education-Policy-Fellowship-Prog.105.0.html
Massachusetts	Department of Political Science, Northeastern University http://www.epfp.neu.edu/
Michigan	The Education Policy Center, Michigan State University http://www.educ.msu.edu/epfp/
Minnesota	College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota http://www.cehd.umn.edu/edpa/epfp/
Mississippi	Mississippi State University—Meridian and The Montgomery Institute http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/ms.htm/
Missouri	School of Education, University of Missouri, Kansas City http://education.umkc.edu/epfp/
New York	Teachers College Columbia University and Putnam/Northern Westchester Board of Cooperative Educational Services http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/ny.html
North Carolina	Public School Forum of North Carolina, Inc. http://www.ncforum.org/initiatives/epfp.aspx
Ohio	Center for Educational Leadership, Cleveland State University (CSU) and Lake County Educational Service Center http://www.csuohio.edu/cehs/edleadership/epfp.html
Pennsylvania	Education Policy and Leadership Center http://www.eplc.org/fellows.html
South Carolina	South Carolina Association of School Administrators http://www.scasa.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=154
Washington, DC	Institute for Educational Leadership http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/dc.html
West Virginia	The Center for Education in Appalachia Fairmont State University http://www.iel.org/epfp/state/wv.html

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ABOUT THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Since 1964, IEL has been at the heart of an impartial, dynamic, nationwide network of people and organizations from many walks of life who share a passionate conviction that excellent education is critical to nurturing healthy individuals, families, and communities. Our mission is to help build the capacity of people and organizations in education and related fields to work together across policies, programs, and sectors to achieve better futures for all children and youth. To that end, we work to:

- ◀ Build the capacity to lead
- ◀ Share promising practices
- ◀ Translate our own and others' research into suggestions for improvement
- ◀ Share results in print and in person.

IEL believes that all children and youth have a birthright: the opportunity and the support to grow, learn, and become contributing members of our democratic society. Through our work, we enable stakeholders to learn from one another and to collaborate closely—across boundaries of race and culture, discipline, economic interest, political stance, unit of government, or any other area of difference—to achieve better results for every youngster from pre-K through high school and on into post-secondary education. IEL sparks—then helps to build and nurture—networks that pursue dialogue and take action on educational problems.

We provide services in three program areas:

- ◀ Developing and Supporting Leaders
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This report documents findings from a small study that confirms the contributions of teacher leadership and provides a picture of how principals rely on teacher leadership teams. It posits that the absence of a supportive policy framework that fosters empowering educators, the onus for creating change rests on principals and teachers.

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This report shares views collected from individuals working in leadership development programs in urban, suburban, and rural schools districts. It identifies best practices for preparing school leaders who are themselves diverse, as well as others, and ensuring that all have the skills, knowledge, and attributes necessary for cultural competence.

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This study focuses on two areas in which state policies and programs can have particular influence on school leadership. The report distills the national conversation about school leadership and principal preparation programs and presents promising approaches and practices in and/or across state systems, in local school districts, in universities and colleges, and in new provider organizations across the nation.

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This report highlights eight high schools that are succeeding because they couple strong, engaging, academic programs with an array of supports and opportunities for their students. These community schools are breaking the mold and demonstrating the power of community to support student success.

Workforce Development

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Designed for youth, and adults working with them, to help them learn about disability disclosure, this popular workbook helps young people make informed decisions about whether or not to disclose their disability and understand how that decision may impact their education, employment, and social outcomes.

Guideposts for Success

This important framework details what research says that all youth need, including youth with disabilities, to successfully transition into adulthood. It is designed to ensure that programs and policies are grounded in what all youth need to succeed.

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This guide provides practical information and resources for youth service professionals and policy makers to assist them in addressing system and policy obstacles and help improve service delivery systems for youth with mental health needs.

Guideposts to Success for Youth with Mental Health Needs Framework: Negotiating the Curves Toward Employment: A Guide About Youth Involved in the Foster Care System

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Washington, DC 20008

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Fax: (202) 872-4050

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