

Review and Recommendations for the Proposed Reauthorization of the
Master's of School Administration (MSA) Degree Program at
East Carolina University

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Prepared by:

The University of North Carolina General Administration

Division of Academic Affairs

INTRODUCTION

In December 2006, the State Board of Education adopted new standards for principals in North Carolina. These standards, North Carolina Standards for School Executives, were to be used in creating a new evaluation instrument for principals employed in North Carolina schools and in reviewing principal preparation programs. The program reviews required by the State Board of Education are to determine whether programs should be approved to recommend a license for principal candidates. Approved programs will be able to recommend a North Carolina license for degree program completers. The State Board of Education review is mandated and guided by House Bill 536.

A committee working with the State Board of Education created the North Carolina School Executive Evaluation Rubric for Preservice Candidates to guide campuses in revising their programs. The State Board of Education indicated to institutions of higher education with programs for principal preparation that candidates must be proficient on all standards to be recommended for license. Additionally, the committee created Guidelines for Electronic Evidences that institutions were required to submit for initial program approval by the State Board of Education – this approval pertains to licensure only.

Simultaneously, UNC General Administration initiated a reauthorization review of MSA degree programs to ensure that UNC school leadership degree programs are of the highest quality. The university-based review required UNC campuses to submit additional information and data leading to reauthorization of Master's of School Administration (MSA) degree programs. While the reauthorization is directed at the MSA degree, a portion of the review is aligned and linked to the State Board of Education licensure requirements and includes a review of Guidelines for Electronic Evidences that were submitted to the State Board of Education.

A combined team of national and state-level reviewers were assembled for the following purposes:

- I. To review and contribute to the evaluation of the proposed revision and reauthorization of UNC MSA degree programs.
- II. To serve on a panel assembled to hear presentations of the proposed revisions to UNC MSA degree programs.

All UNC MSA degree programs were reviewed for alignment with the components identified in the review guidelines provided to the campuses by the UNC General Administration Division of Academic Planning. Dr. Alan Mabe, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dr. Alisa Chapman, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and University-School Programs, in consultation with Dr. Henry A. Peel, Special Advisor on School Leadership Development to the

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, identified the team of reviewers, with input from the UNC Council of Education Deans. Assessments and inputs from the reviewers were utilized by Academic Affairs in determining campus recommendations and in preparing each of the campus reports. The combined panel of national and state reviewers included the following individuals:

- Ms. Honor E. Fede, Coordinator, Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC)
- Mr. Eric Guckian, New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS)
- Dr. Bill Harrison, Chairman, North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE)
- Dr. Lynn Johnson, Public Schools of North Carolina (NCDPI)
- Dr. Ed Dunlap, Executive Director, North Carolina School Boards' Association (NCSBA)
- Dr. Neil Shipman (Review Committee Chair), Founding Director, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)
- Dr. Pamela Barber-Freeman, Department Chair, Educational Leadership Program at Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, Texas
- Dr. Gary Martin, Executive Director, National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA)
- Dr. Mike Williams, Executive Director, UNC Center for School Leadership Development (UNC-CSLD)

The evaluation of the proposed reauthorization procedure for campus MSA programs included a review that corresponded to the guidelines. Prior to the panel session, many program components were reviewed by the Panel members, including the following:

- Executive Summary
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Guidelines for Electronic Evidences
- Description of the reauthorized MSA program addressing the following components:
 - Common core of knowledge
 - Interdisciplinary and inter-professional content
 - Faculty resources and development
 - Curriculum and instructional procedures and methodologies
 - Field experiences
 - Internship
 - Collaboration
 - Program relationships
 - Recruitment and retention
 - Evaluation plans
 - Instructional delivery
 - Other information pertinent to the proposed reauthorized program
- Budget

A COORDINATED APPROACH TO ADDRESSING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PREPARATION ON UNC CONSTITUENT CAMPUSES

In a time of high stakes, higher standards, and increasing accountability, it is essential that our public schools have high quality teachers and school leaders prepared to do everything possible to improve teaching and learning. Since UNC President Erskine Bowles took office in 2006, he has insisted that the University of North Carolina do all it possibly can to improve and strengthen K-12 education. Because UNC campuses produce a significant proportion of the teachers and principals for North Carolina's public schools, we have accepted this charge as our responsibility and we are making every effort to be a part of the solution. As a result of this strong commitment, the preparation of more and better teachers and school leaders is the University's highest priority.

UNC campuses are being held to high expectations in responding to this priority and have identified three primary strategies to guide the system's response. These strategies are recruitment, preparation, and better support to improve the retention of new teachers and school leaders. As a basis for continual program improvement, campuses are being held accountable to these strategies, as well as to the results from a system-wide teacher and school leadership quality research effort that addresses the entry, persistence, and impact (addressing student achievement and other measures of accountability) of teacher and school leaders prepared by UNC campuses.

UNC General Administration initiated the MSA reauthorization review to further ensure that UNC degree programs in school leadership are of the highest quality. Campuses have been fully engaged in this comprehensive review process.

The reviewer feedback was received and collated following the MSA National and State review panel meeting in Chapel Hill on November 18th, 19th and 20th. Suggestions are provided for each campus proposal and regardless of the campus's readiness for program reauthorization, there are certain identified areas in which system-wide coordination appears necessary. These areas are consistent across all school leadership preparation programs and were viewed by the panel as program components that need further study and system guidance.

The review of UNC MSA degree programs has lead to the identification of several action steps to ensure a continuing process of program improvement. These action steps may result in University regulations for all MSA programs. Advisory committees will be established in the following areas:

Advisory Committee 1: Recruitment, Selection, and Admission

The *Recruitment, Selection, and Admission Advisory Committee* will be charged with exploring the most effective processes and practices to better recruit, select, and admit high-quality candidates to UNC principal preparation programs. While each campus's admission process

may differ, it is anticipated that there will be similar aspects of recruitment, selection, and admission identified across all programs.

Advisory Committee 2: Internship and Early Field Experience

The *Internship and Early Field Experience Advisory Committee* will be charged with reviewing and suggesting the most effective design for internships that prepare principals for current challenges faced in our public schools. The committee will be asked to provide guidance on the development of a consistent state-wide model for internships in both the university and school district setting, and in the mentoring of new graduates from our programs. Full-time and part-time internship designs will be addressed by the Committee, in addition to early field experiences for MSA program candidates.

Advisory Committee 3: Public School Partnership and Principal Mentoring

The *Public School Partnership and Principal Mentoring Advisory Committee* will be charged with outlining the expectations of public school partners as well as with designing a professional development model for supervising principals who will be mentoring MSA candidates in their internship. The Committee will be asked to provide guidance toward a consistent model for support for graduates in a new principalship, continuing professional development for principal mentors, and a strategy to provide support for entrenched principals.

The MSA reauthorization process is one that has encouraged a continual review for continual improvement. That is, the work of the identified advisory committees will be shared with all campuses, and strategies for improvement will be implemented as they are determined appropriate. In addition to the advisory committees, continuing discussion about teacher and school leadership quality research, as well as, strategies to address instructional leadership and formative assessment in our public schools and preparation programs, will be coordinated in collaboration with the Department of Public Instruction. The continuing process allows for initial approval with ongoing dialogue and for changes as necessary to keep MSA programs current and viable in meeting the needs of North Carolina public schools.

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY MSA PROGRAM REVIEW:

Questions, Comments, and Suggestions

The panel of national and state reviewers met with the following MSA program representatives from East Carolina University on Friday, November 20, 2009:

- Dr. Art Rouse, Chair, Department of Educational Leadership
- Dr. Lynn Bradshaw, Department of Educational Leadership
- Dr. Jim McDowelle, Department of Educational Leadership

A. General Assessment

After a thorough review by three readers from the review panel and following a detailed presentation, and question and answer session with the full panel, it is recommended by Academic Affairs that the proposed revised MSA program in the College of Education at ECU may begin implementation in August 2010. While there are no restrictions to this implementation pending approval by the UNC Board of Governors' Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs, it is requested that the Department of Educational Leadership in coordination with the Dean of the College of Education and Chief Academic Officer at ECU respond in writing to the following items (*identified in italics*) to Dr. Alan Mabe and Dr. Alisa Chapman at UNC General Administration so that we will have documented along with the degree program, responses to the questions identified in the review process. The response should be submitted on or before May 15, 2010.

B. Guidelines for Electronic Evidences

The items outlined in Section B "Guidelines for Electronic Evidences" have been identified and prepared by the State Board of Education (SBE) as a part of their simultaneous review process pertaining to program approval for MSA licensure. Responses to these items will be directed to the SBE for final review and licensure approval. The date for submitting additional information needed by the SBE is also May 15th.

- *Need to address institutional commitment.*
- *Need to provide additional information on the training for school leaders.*
- *Need GA protocol agreement.*
- *Need to address authentic partnerships with adjunct faculty.*
- *Need transition plan.*

C. Vision and Core Curriculum

- The vision statement is not identifiable. *Please provide a succinct vision statement indicating what you expect from your MSA graduates in the 21st century.*
- *Describe how will school-based school leaders actually be involved in the delivery of instruction?*
- *The Teaching Working Conditions Survey is critically important to the NC State Board of Education. How can you incorporate utilization of this tool in terms of perceptions, school culture, and school improvement into course content and field based experiences?*
- Instructional strategies appear to be well grounded in problems of practice
- *Show how you will link instructional leadership more closely to data analysis so school leaders are able to help teachers understand what the data tells them about their teaching methods.*
- The coordination for part-time students with course sequence with the sequence for full-time students is well thought out.
- Overall, this is an excellent and innovative MSA course outline.

D. Public School Collaboration

- The close partnerships among practitioners and the university faculty are very commendable. The individual visits with so many superintendents is a marvelous way to gather valuable input. However, there is a very strong dependency on the superintendents and not much indication of the same type input from principals. *Describe how principals could be more deeply involved.*
- *How will school-based school leaders actually be involved in the delivery of instruction?*

E. Internship and Field Experiences

The integrated field experiences are commendable.

- *Please describe more fully the training for intern mentors.*
- *How could experiences outside of their base school and across levels be given to the interns?*
- It is still unclear how the 200 days for the internship are attained, especially for part-time students. *Please clarify.*

- *Please provide more detail regarding the induction and mentoring of new principals, in particular, if they are going to serve as mentors for interns.*

F. Recruitment, Selection, and Admission

- How could principals be more deeply involved in selection, admissions, program development, etc?
- This admission process is heavily dependent on superintendents' recommendation and is fairly typical, basically resulting in a traditional self-selection model. *Could you develop and define criteria for admissions that may result in a higher quality candidate that will eventually lead to more effective school leaders? What are the characteristics you are seeking in potential school leaders and how will you determine if a candidate has those characteristics?*

G. Assessment and Evaluation

- Commitment to tracking graduates through student achievement results and using this data for on-going MSA program improvement is on target with 21st century thinking. In fact, the entire assessment system-- formative, summative, and program evaluation appears to be strong and on track.
- *What is the specific process for graduates to evaluate the MSA program over time?*

H. Faculty

- While there are several faculty who have public school leadership experience, the recent connections to leadership in the schools are barely adequate, and, of course, will lengthen as time moves on. *How will you address this issue of "recent" school leadership experience among faculty during the first five years of implementation of this new program?*

SUMMARY

The proposed revision of the MSA degree program at ECU is approved for initial implementation beginning with the fall semester of 2010, pending authorization to continue under the newly revised program format by the UNC Board of Governors' Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs. A written response to the questions and comments identified in the proceeding section of this report is requested on or before May 15, 2010. Please submit responses to Dr. Alan Mabe and Dr. Alisa Chapman at UNC General Administration.

It is expected that ECU will participate in and contribute to continuing system-wide discussions focused on MSA program improvement as a part of the University's coordinated approach to addressing school leadership preparation. The continuing process of review and improvement allows for initial program approval with ongoing dialogue and for changes as necessary to keep MSA programs current and viable in meeting the needs of North Carolina public schools.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Department of Educational Leadership at ECU for the planning, time, and energy that have gone into preparing this new MSA. The implementation of this program will prepare aspiring principals for the public schools of North Carolina. We look forward to continuing to work with you as you implement this model.