AASA and Howard University
Urban Superintendent Preparation and Certification Program

INTRODUCTION:

The two cohorts (i.e., the Doctoral candidates and the AASA Certification cohort) will meet simultaneously on a series of common weekends (lasting from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday).

To meet university requirements, the Howard University doctoral (Cohort One) program will include the following:

- Weekend content modules (described below);
- Field work (including blended learning experiences) and internships;
- Affinity group participation (i.e., meeting with job-alike and interest-alike groups designed to enhance participants’ understanding of various aspects of the urban superintendent’s roles and responsibilities); and
- Ongoing interaction with their assigned superintendent mentor.

Both cohorts will participate in and complete:

- Seven content modules (aligned with the Howard University module experiences described below);
- Field work, including internships;
- Affinity group participation (i.e., meeting with job-alike and focus-alike groups interested in common issues, problems, and decisions involving the urban superintendent and urban districts); and
- Culminating clinical experience (i.e., a culminating project of the candidate’s choice, designed to enhance his or her preparation for the urban superintendency).
Module One:
Critical Educational Issues Facing the Modern Superintendent
September 18-20, 2015 and October 16-18, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. What does it mean to be a great instructional leader?
2. How can I as a superintendent address learning gaps extending from transience, diversity, socio-Economic imbalance, and overemphasis upon test-based accountability?

Module Overview: This module will explore and analyze potential solutions to a range of challenges involving the teaching-learning process in urban settings, including cultural diversity, student engagement, the impact of transience, and socio-economic inequality as well as the struggle to ensure rigor while differentiating for a range of learning needs and demands.

Module One Focus Areas:
1. Urban teacher quality and quantity: Ensuring expertise and availability
2. The urban achievement gap: Causal factors for persistent achievement gaps among students of differing racial and ethnic groups; creating a culture of positive performance in the urban school district
3. Addressing the digital divide: How does access to technology influence students’ access to and achievement in their education?
4. Controversial issues facing the urban superintendent discussed during this module might also include: (a) student performance; (b) student engagement; (c) conflicting expectations of the role of the school, administrators, teachers, and superintendents; (d) conflicts of interest and political factions: What should be taught? What services should be provided? (e) political factions and competing motivations; (f) governance: Who exactly should be in charge? (g) the relationship between the board of education and the superintendent; (h) high-stakes testing; (i) state and city takeovers and privatization; and (j) origins, evolution, current status, and future direction of urban education (research-based findings and public opinions).

Module One Shared Cohort Experiences:
- Participants will explore and debate what it means to be an instructional leader as an urban superintendent.
- A major focus of this module will be upon participants’ study of an in-service superintendent, profiling his or her credentials and experiences involving the improvement of the teaching-learning process.
- The spectrum of opportunities in this module is vast, including “hot topics” facing the modern superintendent, including accountability, curriculum focus, accountability, research-based findings v. public opinions, etc.
Module One Focus Areas and Sequence (September 18-20, 2015)

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I)
   1. The Teaching-Learning Issues Confronting Urban Superintendents Today: Learning Gaps Extending From:
      • Transience
      • Diversity (Including Linguistic Diversity)
      • Socio-Economic Imbalance
      • Lack of Rigor and Student Engagement

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene
   1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with the teaching-learning issues confronting modern educators in urban settings.
   2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II)
   1. Socio-Economic Inequality: The 1% vs. “Other”
   2. Models of Schools That Work in the Face of Socio-Economic Diversity

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
   1. The Struggle to Ensure Rigor While Differentiating for a Range of Learning Needs and Demands:
      • The Meaning of Rigor
      • Relevance and Authenticity as Motivating Factors in Contemporary Education
      • Personalizing the Educational Workplace

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday)
   1. Module Session (Part III)
      • Generating Practical Solutions to Universal Educational Problems in the Urban Setting
   2. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios (Described below).
   3. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review
Module One Shared Cohort Experiences:
- All participants will have ongoing opportunities to explore problems of practice involving case studies of one or more urban districts and the challenges facing superintendents in those districts.
- Additionally, participants will build consensus about the distinctions between and “blurred lines” involving contemporary urban, suburban, and rural districts.
- Major focus will be upon the changing roles of the urban superintendent, including implications of elected and appointed boards.
- Activities will include observations, follow-up discussions, clinical observations of boards and board cultures, and emerging topics related to Module One focus areas. (Concepts related to this module will become ongoing themes, revisited throughout the program as big ideas facing all urban superintendents.)

Module One (Part II) Focus Areas and Sequence (September 18-20, 2015)

Essential Questions:
1. How can the urban superintendent address the critical issues in urban education?
2. What research-based models and solutions are available to the urban superintendent in confronting these issues?
3. How can we create systems in urban education that promote and sustain innovation and positive change?
4. How can you become a proactive, creative, and inspiring educational leader as an effective urban superintendent?
5. What does it mean to promote and sustain a personalized learning environment for the urban student?

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I)
1. Urban Teacher Quality and Quantity: Ensuring Expertise and Availability Through Effective Recruitment
2. Addressing the Urban Achievement Gap:
   - Causal Factors for Persistent Achievement Gaps Among Students of Differing Racial and Ethnic Groups
   - Creating a Culture of Positive Performance in the Urban School District

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with the achievement issues confronting the modern urban superintendent.
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II)
1. Addressing the Digital Divide
2. Controversial Issues Facing the Urban Superintendent:
   - Student Underachievement
   - Lack of Student Engagement and Sense of Authenticity
   - Competing Expectations Among Stakeholders: Who Is Responsible for What? (Implications for the Urban Superintendent)
   - Balancing Political Factions and Competing Motivations
   - High-Stakes Testing and Its Impact upon Accountability and Morale
   - Charter and Private School Competition
   - The Impact of Transience

4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
1. Reviewing and Refining Key Critical Issues: How Do You as a Future Superintendent Process Them? What Is Your Self-Assessment Relative to Handling These Issues?

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday)
1. Module Session (Part III)
   - Consensus Building: What Do We Consider the Most Pressing Educational Problems Facing Urban Instructional Leaders?
   - Generating Practical Solutions to Universal Critical Issues Facing the Urban Superintendent Today
2. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios (Described below).
3. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module One Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One**: This scenario will ask participants (individually or in small group settings) to formulate and express their personal philosophy of curriculum within the context of an urban district. What exactly is their definition of "curriculum"? What is their approach to ensuring alignment between and among the written, assessed, taught, supported, and learning curricula? What are their recommendations for avoiding or minimizing the effects of a "hidden" curriculum (resulting from a discrepancy or conflict between and among one or more levels of the curriculum, e.g., overemphasis upon testing in the face of a call for a more balanced approach to assessing student progress).
2. **Scenario Two**: This scenario will give participants the opportunity to investigate and debate issues related to accountability, assessment, and evaluation. Participants (independently or in small groups) will explore models of assessment, moving along a continuum from a behavioral-technical emphasis upon data acquisition and standardized testing toward growing forms of progressive models emphasizing authentic, performance-based assessment tasks. Their concluding task will be to synthesize and present their philosophy of assessment, defending it against audience members’ objections (with audience members assuming roles of community and board critics).

3. **Scenario Three**: A critical issue facing urban superintendents today is the issue of governance: Who exactly runs the district? This scenario will ask participants to investigate and debate models and exemplar districts reflective of differing forms of governance and management. The group will arrive at some form of consensus regarding which models of governance are most appropriate for specific conditions, settings, and environments. For example, many urban districts today advocate for collaborative decision making from multiple stakeholders. How can an effective superintendent address this priority while ensuring that long-range goals and board priorities are successfully addressed?
Module Two:
Community Relations and Politics of the
Urban Superintendency

November 20-22, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. As an urban superintendent, how can I successfully address the needs and competing priorities of a diverse urban community?
2. How can I successfully balance the needs and demands of competing constituent groups facing the contemporary urban superintendent?

Module Overview: This module will analyze the myriad political subtexts and conflicts in urban educational leadership today, including meeting the needs and demands of multiple constituencies. The major collaborative learning opportunities for the two cohorts will focus upon community relations and the ways in which effective urban superintendents mediate the political subtext of an educational system.

Module Two Focus Areas:
1. Community engagement
2. Purpose and nature of connecting leadership, schools, and the urban community
3. Effective strategies for engaging the community in the successful operation of the school district
4. Development of skills in partnering with parents, community agencies, business, and other institutions to establish and sustain positive relationships and collaborative support
5. Dealing with the media
6. Developing political astuteness: Navigating the politics of urban education as an effective leader (with a focus on determining appropriate political stances and activities for the urban educational leader, techniques for working effectively and productively with elected officials, and developing ethical and politically-savvy political behaviors)
7. Avoiding the pitfalls of urban leadership (including minimizing enemies and promoting maximum support)

Module Two Shared Cohort Experiences:
- All participants will have ongoing opportunities to explore problems of practice involving case studies of one or more urban districts and the challenges facing superintendents in those districts. As indicated above, the shared cohort experiences will encourage participants to explore strategies for addressing community relations effectively in an urban setting.
- Additionally, participants will build consensus about the distinctions between and “blurred lines” involving contemporary urban, suburban, and rural districts (including
competing expectations about the purposes of schooling and the need for an expanded range of services).

- Activities will include observations, follow-up discussions, clinical observations of boards and board cultures, and emerging topics related to Module Two focus areas (especially analysis and critique of community dynamics in one or more urban school systems with which one or more participants are familiar).

**Module Two Focus Areas and Sequence**

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I):
1. Variables That Influence Public Education (MATRIX)
2. Purpose and Nature of Connecting Leadership, Schools, and the Urban Community
3. Comparison of Urban and Non-Urban Communities

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene:
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with shifting roles of urban superintendents as they deal with competing community priorities and needs.
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue (focused upon an urban community with which they are involved or in which they are interested).

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II):
1. The Urban Superintendent: Changing Roles and Responsibilities Related to Community Outreach and Relations
2. Dealing with the Media and School Board Members (with Particular Attention to Practices and Policies of Governing Bodies Locally and Nationally)
3. Nuances of the Differences Between Appointed and Elected Boards and Media Relations
4. Understanding the Value of Doing Your “Street work” (Mapping the Key Players Who Can Help or Hurt Your Mission)

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
- Emphasis upon the changing nature of the role of the urban superintendent and the qualities needed to become a successful urban leader
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday): Module Session (Part III)

- Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics
- Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios (described below) focused upon community relations and the urban superintendent.
- Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module Two Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One**: Media Relations Problem of Practice One: Participants will be given a case study of a crisis within a hypothetical urban district involving how that district deals with school boundary changes. The participants will each develop an outline of a public relations outreach initiative that they will advocate for as the board considers redistricting. Their proposal should include suggestions about dealing with constituent groups, fear and anxiety about the change process, and competing perspectives about the most viable approach to the issue of redefining school boundaries.

2. **Scenario Two**: Media Relations Problem of Practice Two: Participants will present a strategic plan for how they would deal with one of the following “crisis areas” they may encounter in an urban setting: (a) an issue of gun violence within a specific school site; (b) instances of “cyberbullying” within a school environment; (c) the emergence and influence of a hyper-conservative community group that takes issue with the school district’s approach to Family Life Education; and/or (d) a budget crisis in which a shortfall necessitates cutbacks in staffing and program funding.

3. **Scenario Three**: Media Relations Problem of Practice Three: Participants will be asked to research and report to the group on a highly successful—or highly unsuccessful—educational leader. Their portrait should include a profile of how that individual dealt with constituent groups, handled the media, and navigated the politics of an urban school district setting. At the conclusion of the presentation, participants will generate a Venn diagram, citing areas of commonality and difference within their shared perceptions about urban leadership.
Module Three:
Urban Leadership
December 18-20, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. How can I fully prepare myself to be an effective urban educational leader?
2. What does current educational research suggest about the nature of effective—and ineffective—educational leadership in urban settings?
3. How can I develop the skills and gain the experience to address such processes as the following:
   • How can I fully prepare myself to address problems involving board relations?
   • How can I be an effective human resource manager?
   • How can I ensure that I am a sound fiscal manager?
   • How can I facilitate effective public outreach in urban educational setting?

Module Overview: This module will focus upon leadership in transition within the urban educational environment. Specifically, this module will concentrate upon key leadership challenges, including board relations, human resource management, fiscal management, and public outreach.

Module Three Focus Areas:
1. The study of how leadership theories have evolved and changed over time
2. Examination of urban leadership traits/qualities and whether they are innate, acquired, and/or developed
3. Distinctions between urban leadership, urban administration, management, and authority as well as power and influence
4. The study of how functions differ within a hierarchical system v. a flatter, more distributed approach to urban leadership (including collaborative teams and professional learning communities)
5. Legitimization of authority as well as misuses of power and authority, including the range of urban influences upon the leadership process
6. Urban school improvement (including models of strategic planning) for 21st century school environments
7. A “real” blueprint for progress in urban environments: What will it look like? How will districts and schools function? How will leadership function to promote the success of the urban learner?
8. Climate and culture: Establishing and reinforcing norms and protocols that work successfully in urban settings
9. Data collection and analysis, assessment, and evaluation within the urban school and school district (including overcoming test fixation and inappropriate uses of value-added business models of accountability)
Module Three Shared Cohort Experiences:
- The major focus areas of this module will provide powerful opportunities for participants to share insights and observations concerning the components and processes associated with effective educational leadership.
- Areas of concentration for collaborative interaction will include human resource management, fiscal management, and public outreach in urban settings.
- Case studies, scenarios, simulations, and field experiences relating to one or more of these issues will contribute to participants’ professional portfolio.

Module Three Focus Areas and Sequence

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I) (CUBE):
1. Aspects of Board relations
2. Appointed vs. Elected Boards

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene:
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario involving leadership in the urban educational center.
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue. This module will encourage self-reflection and peer coaching involving action steps for improving or enhancing participants’ leadership profile.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II) (CUBE):
1. The Urban Superintendent: Changing Roles and Responsibilities
3. Nuances of the Differences Between Appointed and Elected Boards

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
- Emphasis upon the changing nature of the role of the urban superintendent and the qualities needed to become a successful urban leader.
- Participants will have opportunities to discuss and plan potential shared field experiences involving action steps and coaching suggestions extending from the group discussion.
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday): Module Session (Part III):

1. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics
2. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios described below.
3. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One**: This module will concentrate upon “problems of practice,” encouraging participants to use their critical and analytical reasoning skills to discern the parameters of a specific problem facing a majority of urban superintendents today. For Scenario One, participants will investigate problems of practice related to the area of human resource management within the urban setting. For example, how do issues of staff recruiting, hiring, and retention affect academic achievement and organizational climate within urban districts and schools? How can the urban superintendent successfully address issues related to human resource management within the context of a highly diverse school system? Participants will be encouraged to share their conclusions and observations within the context of a mock superintendent interview.

2. **Scenario Two**: Scenario Two will ask participants to synthesize their understanding of critical models of leadership considered to be operational within a 21st century context. They will prepare a five-minute presentation in which they present their personal philosophy of leadership, using specific research-based conclusions derived from one or more of the models they admire and espouse. At the conclusion of their presentation, participants will address questions posed by audience members (simulating a public forum/community meeting that may occur during a superintendent screening process).

3. **Scenario Three**: The third scenario will ask participants to reflect upon the issue of culture building within the urban school district. They will work with a small group of participants to share their perspectives about the challenges of facilitating, reinforcing, and maintaining a positive and engaging school and district culture in the face of the myriad challenges facing the urban superintendent today. Each group will synthesize their conclusions at the end of the session, presenting their insights as part of a panel discussion.
Module Four:  
Overview of Urban Schools and School Boards  
DATES: TBD 

Essential Questions: 
1. To what extent are there universal patterns and issues confronting all urban school districts today? 
2. How do successful urban superintendents address these issues? 
3. What are the universal demands and challenges facing the urban superintendent today? How can I prepare myself for these challenges? 
4. How can I ensure that I establish and sustain positive and productive relations with my school board in my role as an urban superintendent? 

Module Overview: This module will revisit and go deeper into current and emerging patterns and issues associated with contemporary urban school districts. Specifically, participants will investigate how successful urban superintendents operate, especially in relationship to their dealings with elected or appointed school boards. Throughout this session, participants will be encouraged to be self-reflective and self-evaluative, revisiting their own leadership profile and identifying areas in which enhancement, experience, or coaching may be useful. 

Module Four Focus Areas: 
1. Overview of Urban Schools  
2. Comparison of Urban and Non-Urban School Systems and Schools  
3. The Urban Superintendent: Changing Roles and Responsibilities. 
5. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics  
6. Dealing with the Media  
7. Developing Political Astuteness (Navigating the politics of urban education as an effective leader with a focus on determining appropriate political stances and activities for the urban educational leader, techniques for working effectively and productively with elected officials, and developing ethical and politically-savvy political behaviors) 
8. Avoiding the Pitfalls of Urban Leadership (including minimizing enemies and promoting maximum support) 

Module Four Shared Cohort Experiences: 
- All participants will have ongoing opportunities to explore problems of practice involving case studies of one or more urban districts and the challenges facing superintendents in those districts. Once again, participants will share insights and recommendations about responding to universal issues and patterns typical of urban districts today.
• Additionally, participants will revisit and build consensus about the distinctions between and “blurred lines” involving contemporary urban, suburban, and rural districts.
• Activities will include observations, follow-up discussions, clinical observations of boards and board cultures, and emerging topics related to Module Four focus areas (again, emphasizing universal patterns, issues, and themes associated with the role of the urban superintendent.

**Module Four Focus Areas and Sequence**

**9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)**

**9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I):**
1. Urban Education from the Lens of Elected Officials
2. Navigating the Challenges of Dealing with Urban Boards of Education

**11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene**
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with shifting roles of the urban superintendent in relationship to elected and appointed school boards.
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue. Specifically, the focus of this module will be upon reflection and analysis of actual boards with which participants are familiar—exploring universal patterns, themes, issues, and dynamics.

**12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch**

**1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II)**
1. The Urban Superintendent: Views from the Business Community
3. Nuances of the Differences Between Appointed and Elected Boards

**5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:**
1. Emphasis upon problems of practice associated with superintendent-board relations, including achieving consensus about the responsibilities—and ideal limits—of board actions and interactions
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday): Module Session (Part III):
   1. Emphasis upon problems of practice associated with superintendent-board relations, including achieving consensus about the responsibilities—and ideal limits—of board actions and interactions
   2. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics
   3. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios (Described below).
      4. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module Four Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One:** As a group, build consensus about what you consider to be the most pressing issues and problems facing the urban superintendent today. Be prepared to present your list to the entire group, giving specific examples from districts with which you are familiar to support your conclusions. End your presentations with questions from the audience. Be prepared to explain how you might address a specific issue if you were an urban superintendent.

2. **Scenario Two:** (Individually or in small group cohorts) Many contemporary social critics make the argument that all school districts today are “urban” districts. They argue that such issues as racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity are bringing new challenges and imperatives to every district, regardless of its location. Prepare an argument in support of this assertion—or against it. Use specific evidence you have gathered during this module to defend your assertions and claims.

3. **Scenario Three:** Attend one or more board meetings in a local district near you. As a cultural anthropologist, gather evidence about the norms, practices, and perspectives expressed during the sessions you attend. Compare your observations and conclusions with other members of the group. Use your discussion to draw inferences about the relationship between boards of education and the modern superintendent, including (if perceivable) about nuances involving elected vs. appointed school boards.
Module Five:  
Goal Attainment and the Practical Realities of Becoming an Urban Superintendent  

March 18-20, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. What are my strengths as a potential urban superintendent?
2. In what areas of my professional profile will I need to expand my skills and knowledge?
3. How can I implement an action plan to prepare myself to be a successful urban superintendent?

Module Overview: In this module, participants will continue to be self-reflective and self-evaluative, revisiting the requirements and professional preparation necessary for becoming an effective urban superintendent. A major focus of the activities in this module will concentrate upon participants’ professional goals and their action steps toward achieving them.

Module Five Focus Areas:
1. Maximizing the effectiveness of the job search for the urban superintendent
2. Ensuring compatibility between the candidate and the system
3. Successfully negotiating with the urban school board to ensure accountability and job security
4. Professional Image: Expressing self to the outer world as an urban superintendent; reinforcing the image and iconography of urban leadership (e.g., wardrobe, self-expression, communication, promoting a viable image); portraying self as “knowledgeable, gracious, collaborative, or….whatever we choose to communicate about ourselves as a leader…”
5. Presence: Ensuring that others can recognize our professional presence (e.g., assurance, confidence); assessing professional presence in self, including developing and implementing an action plan to address areas of growth or need: How can the candidate develop external and internal behaviors that communicate the essence and presence of an urban superintendent?

Module Five Shared Cohort Experiences:
- All participants will have ongoing opportunities to explore problems of practice involving case studies of one or more urban districts and the challenges facing superintendents in those districts.
- Additionally, participants will build consensus about the distinctions between and “blurred lines” involving contemporary urban, suburban, and rural districts.
- Major focus will be upon the changing roles of the urban superintendent, including implications of elected and appointed boards.
Activities will include observations, follow-up discussions, clinical observations of boards and board cultures, and emerging topics related to Module Five focus areas, especially professional preparation required for the urban superintendent’s role.

Module Five Focus Areas and Sequence

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I):
   1. Requirements and Professional Preparation Needed to Become an Effective Urban Superintendent
   2. Self-Reflection: How Would You Rate Yourself in Terms of These Characteristics?

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene
   1. Both groups engage in “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by a mentor superintendent) dealing with self-reflections on participants’ current experiences and background (relative to identified characteristics and leadership requirements)
   2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore a problem of practice related to preparation for becoming an effective urban superintendent.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II) (Search firm)
   1. The Role of the Superintendent Search Firm: How Important Is the Interview?
   2. Background Check and Credentialing

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
   1. Emphasis on what to look for in a search for an Urban superintendent position

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday): Module Session (Part III):
   1. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics
   2. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios described below.
   3. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module Five Shared Cohort Experiences:
   1. This module will provide multiple opportunities for networking, peer coaching, and shared information concerning vacancy openings.
   2. Major simulation experiences will involve job interviews, including public-forum interviews facilitated by program leaders.
3. Additional workshop opportunities will include portfolio development and image consultation, including coaching to develop assurance, confidence, emotional stability, and personal efficacy in all aspects the interview process.

Module Five Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One:** This entire module will focus upon aspects of the participants’ professional profile (and techniques and strategies for reinforcing strengths and addressing areas that may benefit from professional learning and experience). Scenario One will ask participants to complete a leadership profile questionnaire. They will be asked to share with a partner (or in small group settings) what their results reveal about their strengths and areas that may require improvement.

2. **Scenario Two:** Participants will be asked to select a minimum of five career artifacts that reflect one or more of their skills and qualifications for being an urban superintendent. Each participant will present an electronic overview of these artifacts and (keeping their presentation to no more than four minutes) showcase what their artifacts reveal about them as an urban leader. Their goal is to persuade their audience of their qualifications as a prospective urban superintendent.

3. **Scenario Three:** Participants will assemble into small groups of four to five members. They will take turns as a prospective candidate for an urban superintendent’s position in a simulated job interview. The interviewers (i.e., the other group members) will be responsible for posing challenging interview questions and asking follow-up questions. The candidate should make certain that their responses are focused and evidence-based while conveying a sense of their true personality and temperament. At the conclusion of each interview, candidates will receive feedback and coaching advice from the interviewers.
Module Six:
Dealing with Relationship Building and Human Resource Demands

April 15-17, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. As an urban superintendent, how can I be a successful catalyst and support for an engaging and positive learning environment?
2. How can I ensure that I have the competencies and skills needed to build a successful and positive urban educational culture?

Module Overview: Module Six will focus upon participants’ understanding research-based techniques and strategies for building a positive, nurturing, and productive organizational culture in a rapidly changing urban educational environment.

Module Six Focus Areas:
1. Community Engagement Strategies
2. Political Astuteness and Awareness as Part of Effective Educational Leadership
3. Developing Skills in Partnering with Parents, Business, Community Agencies, and Other Educational Institutions
4. Techniques for Establishing and Sustaining a Positive Relationship with the Media and Other External Entities

Module Six Shared Cohort Experiences:
- This module will extend and refine opportunities for participants in both cohorts to receive coaching and peer support in areas of public relations, outreach, parent/community meeting facilitation, and strategies related to all facets of media interaction.
- Simulations and case studies will focus upon potential trouble spots faced by most urban superintendents—and strategies for coping with and successfully overcoming barriers and controversial issues.
- A major focus of this module will be on the issue of media relations and other external organizations and individuals who may impact the image, perceptions, and productivity of urban school districts and their leaders.

Module Six Sequence

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I):
   1. What does research say about relationship building and human relations?
2. What are the implications of this research for the urban educational environment?

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene:
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with human relationship management within the urban educational setting.
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue. For this module, major focus will be placed upon human relationship building and addressing human resource demands. Issues may include—but not be limited to—staffing, retention, culture building, and competing stakeholder group priorities.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II)
1. Extrovert? Introvert?
2. Reflective Leadership
3. What Works in the Urban Educational Environment?

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
1. Understanding the Nature of Human Dynamics in the Urban Educational Setting

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Sunday): Module Session (Part III)
1. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics in the Urban Setting
2. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios described below.
3. Wrap-Up, Planning, and Review

Module Six Shared Cohort Experiences:

Module Six Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One:** Participants in this module will investigate issues related to community engagement within an urban educational setting. Scenario One will ask them to research and report back to the group on a specific community engagement issue facing a school district with which they are familiar. Ideally, the district should represent the characteristics of an urban center. Each participant will present an analysis of the following aspects of the issue they investigated: (a) profiles of competing interests reflected in the issue; (b) profiles of major constituent groups associated with the issue; (c) current proposed solutions to conflicting points of view and perspectives; and (d) their suggestions for addressing the issue studied (if they were the superintendent in charge).
2. **Scenario Two**: Participants will investigate models for community engagement in an urban school district with which they are familiar. They will report back to the group about each model, including its strengths and weaknesses. Each participant will analyze and share with the group how they would use key aspects of each model to promote engagement among community members (if they were a superintendent).

3. **Scenario Three**: Scenario Three will challenge participants to formulate (either independently or in small group teams) a model for building cross-institutional partnerships in urban school districts. Part of this scenario will involve a meta-analysis of key patterns and structural characteristics of successful cross-institutional partnership, especially those involving business, government, and public interest groups. The culminating discussion should involve a presentation of each model—and a discussion of common patterns and issues.
Module Seven:
Strategic Thinking and Planning:
May 20-22, 2015

Essential Questions:
1. What does it really mean to be strategic in my planning and actions as a superintendent?
2. What really counts in the strategic planning process in an urban school?
3. How can I enhance my prowess as a successful strategic planner?

Module Seven Focus Areas:
1. 21 Trends for the 21st Century (Gary Marx)
2. Practices and Models of Strategic Thinking
3. Future-Focused Decision-Making
4. Future-Focused Leadership

Module Seven Shared Cohort Experiences:
- Participants will engage in direct online discussions of Gary Marx’s book, *21 Trends for the 21st Century*.
- They will share their perceptions of the implications for this text for their future career pathway, including recognizing appropriate timing for decision-making, problem-solving, and decisive action.
- Individuals (or small group teams) will be asked to formulate their personal models for strategic planning, synthesizing from the major models studied during the module.
- The participants will be coached to become “future-oriented” leaders, incorporating areas of the module that will help them alleviate a reactionary stance in favor of a strategic one as an urban superintendent.

Module Seven Focus Areas and Sequence

9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.: Welcome and Keynote (Saturday)
- Future-Focused Leadership: Becoming a Strategic and Successful Urban Educational Leader

9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.: Module Session (Part I)
1. The Impact of Strategic Planning and Thinking in the Urban Setting
2. The Importance of Intelligence Gathering

11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Cohorts One and Two Convene
1. Both groups engage in a “fishbowl” discussion (facilitated by mentor superintendents) of a case study or scenario dealing with shifting roles of the urban superintendent (as they relate to the strategic planning process).
2. At the conclusion of the fishbowl, participants will debrief (in affinity group configurations) to explore collaboratively a problem of practice or field experience issue they wish to pursue. In this concluding set of modules, participants will be asked to reflect upon themselves as strategic planners—and ways in which they can enhance their capacity for facilitating this process in an urban educational environment.

12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m.: Module Session (Part II)
   1. SMART PLANS
   3. Implementing Your Plan
   4. Dealing with the “Grenade Throwers”

5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.: Problem of Practice and Field Experience Discussion Involving Both Cohorts:
   1. Emphasis upon the changing nature of the role of the urban superintendent and the qualities needed to become a successful urban leader

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.: (Sunday)
   1. Review Module Seven Objectives
   2. Ethics, Board Culture, and Political Dynamics
   3. Additionally, participants will engage in one or more of the scenarios below.
   4. Wrap-Up: Planning and Review

Module Seven Shared Cohort Experiences:
- All participants will have ongoing opportunities to explore problems of practice involving case studies of one or more urban districts and the challenges facing superintendents in those districts (i.e., specific focus upon strategic planning as an essential competency of the effective 21st century urban superintendent).
- Additionally, participants will build consensus about the distinctions between and “blurred lines” involving contemporary urban, suburban, and rural districts (including strategic processes for dealing with competing stakeholder groups).
- Major focus will be upon the changing roles of the urban superintendent, including implications of elected and appointed boards for the process of strategic planning success.
- Activities will include observations, follow-up discussions, clinical observations of boards and board cultures, and emerging topics related to Module Seven focus areas, including contemporary strategic planning theory and research.
Module Seven Scenarios:

1. **Scenario One**: All participants will debate and analyze the “21 Trends for the 21st Century” model formulated by author Gary Marx. They will discuss and then vote on what they consider to be the five most important of these trends for the modern urban superintendent:
   - Generational differences
   - Growing diversity
   - The influence of an aging population (i.e., the Baby Boomers)
   - The growing influence of technology
   - Issues of identity and privacy
   - Economic transformation, including economic divides and the global economy
   - Changing job and career pathways
   - The need for new energy sources
   - Environmental and planetary security
   - Sustainability
   - International/global learning
   - Personalization
   - Ingenuity and creativity
   - Redefining the purpose(s) of education
   - Polarization resulting from competing ideologies and interest groups
   - Changing faces of authority and governance
   - Ethical decision-making extending from medical, scientific, and social discoveries and innovations
   - Continuous improvement as a driving force
   - The growing economic divide and the enduring legacy of poverty
   - Scarcity vs. abundance in the face of growing economic divides
   - Balancing work and personal life, including the search for meaning in a changing world

2. **Scenario Two**: In individual or small group settings, participants will investigate one or more models of contemporary strategic planning. At the conclusion of each participant’s or group’s presentation of the models they explored, the group will reflect upon the nature of strategic planning within the context of urban education today: Which components of each model are especially valuable for the urban setting? As an individual participant (and urban superintendent), how would I express my personal model for strategic planning?

3. **Scenario Three**: The last module will also present multiple opportunities for individual, small group, and whole-group reflection upon the program—and how it has influenced them in their growth and development. Participants will each present their top two to three “picks” for their peak experiences during the seven-modules.