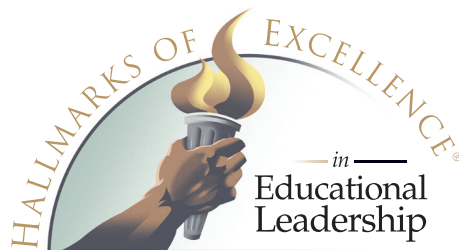


2006

Indiana Top Performing Educator Benchmark

“BLUE LINE” EXECUTIVE REPORT



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BUSINESS/EDUCATION JOINT VENTURE

A new generation of educational leaders is being developed who realize that the business of schools is big business, and, as such, are convinced of the multiple benefits of leveraging the best practices of the business community. The Business/Education Joint Venture was designed to empower educational leaders with proven business leadership tools and practices to maximize the ability of learning institutions to increase and sustain a powerful impact on their communities and the lives of those they serve.

The Business/Education Joint Venture has impacted over 270 educational leaders across the State of Indiana and has consisted of 3 Phases:

1. Initial Pilot Program, Fall of 2004
2. State Wide Leadership Summit, Fall of 2005
3. Development of Top Performing Educator Benchmark “Blue Line”, Spring of 2006

“ This is the first study of its kind in the United States that contrasts top performing educators to top performing business leaders. We appreciate the work of CHORUS, Inc. and the generous underwriting of Gibraltar Design.”

- JOHN ELLIS
INDIANA ASSOCIATION
OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Phase I was undertaken to develop and implement a pilot executive development and mentoring program designed to connect, with precise accuracy, leadership development needs of education leaders and their teams with skill development solutions. The pilot began in the fall of 2004 with the support of the business community and consisted of 10 Superintendents and 16 Assistant Superintendents who were carefully selected to represent four types of school systems: large metropolitan, suburban, rural and small town. The participants were taken through four program elements:

- Administration of the Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership and a management assessment
- Individual interpretation session
- Individual development and coaching sessions
- Team training for all participants covering team roles and team effectiveness

The IAPSS Superintendent Benchmark Composite information depicting the various leadership competencies (including the corresponding strengths and developmental gaps identified in Phase I) was presented at the December 2004 IAPSS Annual Conference.

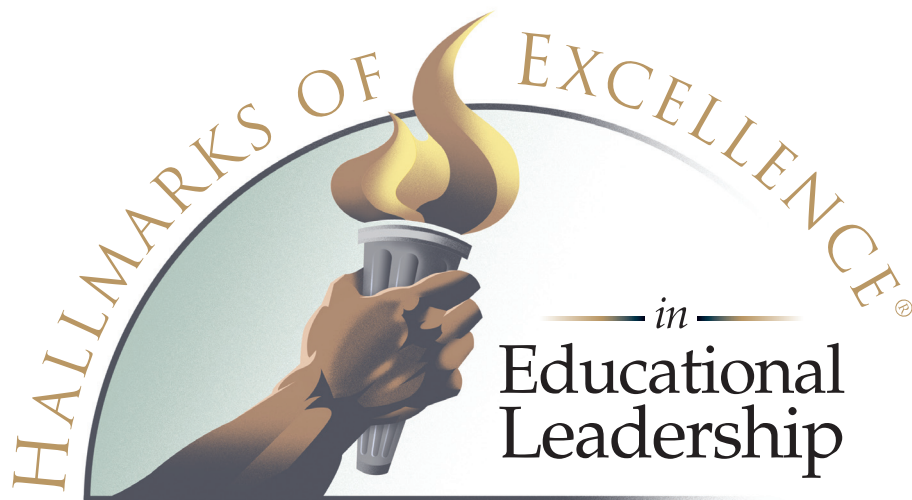
Phase II of the program followed in September of 2005 after funding was secured by IAPSS through a partnership with the Indiana Department of Education. A state-wide executive assessment program was delivered to the IAPSS cohort group. A measurable outcome was to equip the educational leaders with a personalized framework for skill development in order to maximize their leadership abilities to influence others and achieve extraordinary results. The three program elements consisted of the following:

- **NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS.** This process used on-line testing with state-of-the-art assessment instruments. It was administered to 246 education executive leaders across nine districts statewide.
- **GROUP INTERPRETATION SESSIONS.** Each participant received their individualized Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership Report which included both an executive summary and a complete report of the participant's results. Each participant was eligible to participate in one of the nine regional group interpretation session workshops throughout the state which were conducted by professional executive development experts from CHORUS®, Inc.
- A subset of the cohort group consisting of 30 Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents and Central Office staff received one-on-one interpretation sessions administered by a professional executive development expert. The individual results were compared to the Business "Blue Line" and an analysis was completed using this comparison.

Coming out of this study was an identified need to develop a top Educator "Blue Line" for a more accurate comparison of leadership traits. Phase III of the program resulted in the development of the Top Performing Educator Benchmark "Blue Line" which is the focus of this Executive Report. The results and validation of the Educational "Blue Line" now allows educational leaders an unprecedented view in comparing their assessment results to both today's top business and education leaders.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Extensive analysis of the aggregate data for the IAPSS cohort group (those administered assessments during the original 2004 Pilot Study and the September 2005 statewide effort) was initiated following the September 2005 Business/Education Joint Venture project. At that time, CHORUS began to identify and define key data points, categories of analysis and tables for reporting the findings from the effort. CHORUS' evaluative process ran three separate statistical passes on each attribute that the Hallmarks® (42 leadership traits from the four instrument battery) and the Management Development Questionnaire (20 management traits) queried. The results of the three passes were applied to the total cohort group (Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents) to determine averages, standard deviations, ranges and modal scores. The analysis was then applied to each attribute in the Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership Report. The results and application of the findings with top performing Superintendents were used to develop a validated Top Performing Educator Benchmark "Blue Line".



SCIENCE & METHODOLOGY BEHIND EDUCATOR "BLUE LINE"

The definition of the cohort group and corresponding universe from which this "Blue Line" was developed was the result of the aggregate analysis of the participants from Phase I and II of this extensive program (2004 Pilot Study and the September 2005 statewide effort).

The objective was to determine the top performing superintendents from this cohort group. In collaboration with the IAPSS staff, it was determined that one method currently being used to assess the top state performers was the existing program to name the Superintendent of the Year. This juried process measures the peer and self-nominations for this award and uses the following criteria to choose the winner.

- **LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING.** Creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system
- **COMMUNICATION.** Strength in both personal and organizational communication
- **PROFESSIONAL.** Constant improvement and administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team
- **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.** Active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional national and international issues

It was determined that analyzing the Hallmarks® results of those nominated for this award would assist in the determination of top performing educators. This award program has been in place in Indiana for the last eight years which has resulted in a total of 59 nominees from each of the eight statewide districts. From the pool of eight district annual nominees, one person is named the State Superintendent of the Year. This group includes two individuals who were nominated

more than once and three districts that did not submit a nominee during that time frame, thus a number less than 64.

From the field of 59 nominees, 19 of these leaders had taken the Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership during either Phase I or Phase II of the program. The composite score was a total of the raw data from the field of 19 and used to determine the top performers from strictly a numerical perspective. The top scores were ranked and the top 12 raw data scores were isolated. Five of the winners of the annual award were in this group of top scores. The total raw scores of the remaining seven nominees were differentially lower than the top 12, thus the selection of the top performing educators. It is important to note that raw data scores are only one measure of an excellent leader and actual practice is also a key indicator.

The following analysis was run on the composite score from each trait among the 42 (Hallmarks) separate leadership attributes:

AVERAGE
STANDARD DEVIATION
RANGE
MODE

From these findings the various attributes mapped to the executive summary composites (Mastering Your Core, Forging the Path and Ensuring Execution) were statistically analyzed to construct the Top Performing Educator Benchmark "Blue Line".

The following observations report the general findings in comparing the two sets of scores from the Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership trifecta model.

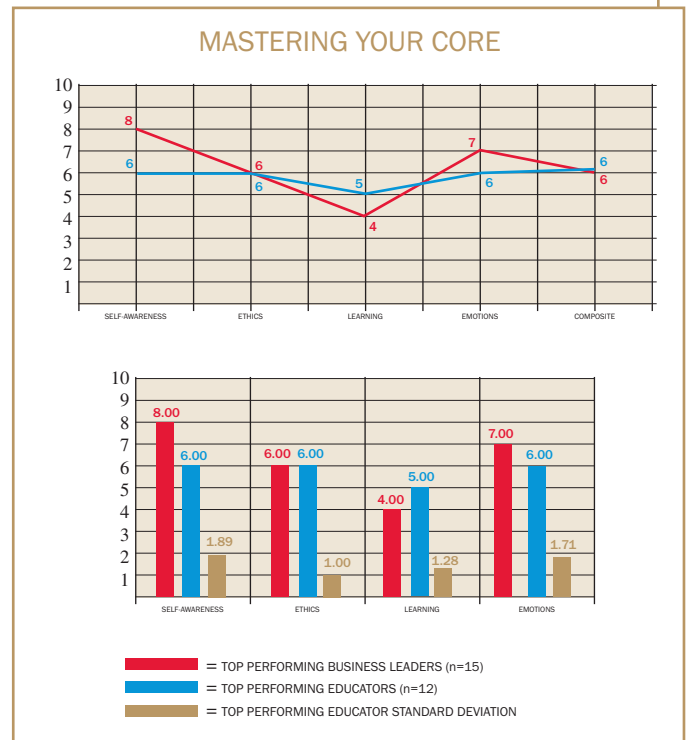


Tables 1-3 illustrate the comparison scores for **Top Performing Business Leaders** (red line) and **Top Performing Educators** (blue line).

Contrast Top Educator and Business Leader Benchmarks

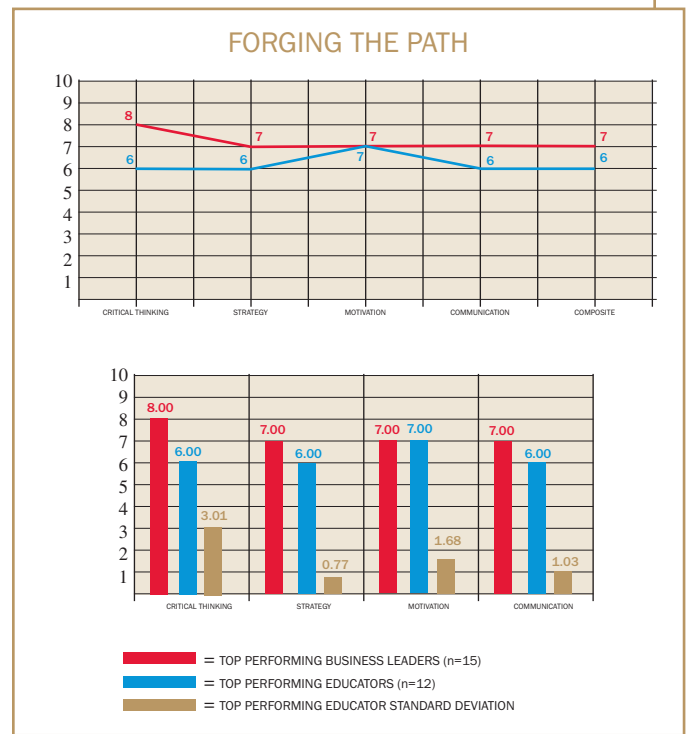
In **MASTERING YOUR CORE**, the scores between the two leadership profiles are similar with the exception of Self-Awareness. The scores for Ethics, Learning and Emotions reflect a consistency and strength for the educators. The composite score of 6 for Self-Awareness is within the threshold (6-7) for this attribute, but less than their business counterparts.

The standard deviation of 1.89 for Self-Awareness suggests there is a varied ability among educators to display this important leadership trait. A standard deviation of 1 for the Ethics findings indicates a very consistent pattern of ethical and diversity attitudes and behaviors among top educators. Learning or the awareness of and commitment to personal growth appears stronger than their business counterparts. Even though the standard deviation for Emotions is 1.71, it is due to the variation in individual scores and not representative of fluctuation between emotional intelligence attributes of self-awareness and managing emotions.



In FORGING THE PATH, the scores follow a pattern similar to top performing business leaders with the exception of Critical Thinking. The mid-range score in Critical Thinking for top performing educators seems to indicate a problem-solving approach that seeks middle ground. The Strategy score, coupled with the Critical Thinking score, may indicate that the educators are adept in translating concepts into strategies versus being visionary. The Motivation and Communication scores are within the norm for top performing leaders.

The Critical Thinking score places the educators in the middle range in evaluative/problem solving skills, but it is worth noting that the standard deviation for this attribute is 3.01. This may reflect a significant variance between the problem solving orientations among educators. The standard deviation scores for Strategy, Motivation and Communication seem to indicate a remarkable consistency among educators for being strategic/tactical, motivated and generally effective communicators.



Scores for ENSURING EXECUTION indicate a similar though subtly more positive pattern for educators compared to business leaders. The scores suggest that top performing educators are as committed to delivering excellence as top business leaders. Project Management appears to be an important facet for educators. Agreeableness is similar to top performing business leaders, but may suggest some independence tendencies. The Finance score exceeds the benchmark of top performing leaders indicating that top performing educators engage with and manage the financial resources more directly than their business counterparts.

The drive for excellence represented in the Achievement score illustrates that top performing educators are as committed to these behaviors as the business profile. The standard deviations for Project Management and Finance are similar. It is worth noting that the Project Management and Finance modal scores were 5 which are stronger than the business leader profile. The slightly lower score and high standard deviation for Agreeableness (1.68) may indicate a slight tendency towards independence rather than initiating projects through teams.



STRENGTHS

In Contrast to Their Business Counterparts

Findings from the pilot study and follow up statewide project yield several strengths in the educator profile in comparison to their business counterparts. The following points report the comparative strengths of the top performing educators:

ETHICS/CULTURAL AWARENESS – There was more consistency in the ethics scores of educators in comparison to the business profile. Of particular note, there were 26 educators who scored 8-10 which accounts for nearly 90% of this exceptional range from all leaders who have completed the Hallmarks since it was first developed. This indicates that the educator cohort takes ethics and cultural awareness more serious than any cohort group that has been isolated to date.

LEARNING - Although the score for the educators is within the same range as the business leaders, it is worth noting that there is more consistency and some higher scores in the educator profile. The insight is that educators are committed to following through in their personal development.

EMOTIONS – The scores for managing emotions are constant and indicate an important finding of consistency between self-awareness and emotions. This means that top performing educators exhibit self-discipline and check their emotions under stressful conditions.

ACHIEVEMENT – Achievement is indicative of a high commitment to excellence and the attention to detail. Nearly half of the top performing educators score in the exceptional range (8-10) indicating a superb commitment to quality. It is also worth noting that Achievement was a consistently high attribute among the educator cohort from the pilot study and September 2005 statewide project.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT – The skill set of educators for managing time and resources appears to be slightly stronger than their business counterparts. The educators scored a strong 4 with several reaching 5-7. Business leaders reached a statistical average of 4 with several leaders scoring 2-3. While this does not indicate a major strength, it does illustrate a slight edge over the business profile.

FINANCE – Managing, understanding and evaluating financial information is an interesting finding for the educator profile. The difference in the profile scores is worthy of note. The score of 3 versus 4 between the business and educator profile is bigger than just 1. Nearly 75-80% of all leaders taking the Hallmarks® score low (1-3) in this attribute. In contrast, top performing educators scored a strong 4 with 33% of these leaders scoring 5-6. Furthermore, in the larger educator cohort there were a significant number of participants scoring in the 6-10 range.

DEVELOPMENTAL GAPS

In Contrast to Their Business Counterparts

In comparing the business and educator profiles, several gaps emerged worth noting for development potential. The following observations were derived in discerning gaps in the educator profile:

SELF-AWARENESS – As noted previously, the self-awareness score for the educators reached the acceptable threshold level of 6-7. However, the standard deviation of 1.89 (the range was 3-10) illustrates a significant variance in the behaviors and capacities of this critical personal trait among the educator profile. The writers emphasize further that the business profile was nearly an average of 9. The importance of self-awareness cannot be overstated. It is perhaps the most critical trait that equips leaders to discern, use and apply all of their abilities and skills with coordination and finesse.

CRITICAL THINKING – Problem solving, evaluating ideas and assumptions and carefully developing alternatives and solutions is a quintessential leadership quality. The educator profile score of 6 is strong, but misleading. The standard deviation of 3.01 (range of 1-9) yielded a statistical average of 6 (5.5). This score reflects the largest standard deviation and variance among the top performing educators specifically and generally in the educator cohort. Several insights could be drawn, but perhaps a most telling one is the consistent focus of isolating ideas to reach a singular solution. Fixing the problem appears to be more important than considering creative alternatives in reaching the more viable solution.

STRATEGY – The strategy score of 6 is a strong score indicating a consistent ability to translate ideas into strategies and tactics. In contrast, the business profile had several leaders scoring in a range of 8-9 indicating a creative, visioning capability. It is worth noting that the modal score for the top performing educators was 5 tilting a preference toward tactics versus vision. This may play an important role in how educators shape their future amidst the pressures for change, adjusting to competition and the succession for new leadership.

AGREEABLENESS – Even though top performing educators scored in the same range (6-7) as top performing business leaders, it is important to note that the standard deviation is 1.68 and the range (2-9) indicate a significant variance in relating to people and working collaboratively. Further evaluation reveals that top performing educators have a tendency to be more individualistic and independent than their business counterparts. Further discussion and evaluation may reveal that this is characteristic of the education environment, but if true, requires attention in lieu of increasing collaborative demands.

ATTRIBUTE DEFINITIONS FOR THREE LEADERSHIP CORE AREAS

The following definitions for the attributes used in the Executive Summary are provided to give the reader helpful insights for these important leadership qualities.

SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness is the capacity to know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses and to take responsibility for managing and disciplining yourself

ETHICS/CULTURAL AWARENESS

Knowing and asking what is right, confronting wrongs and respecting the values and cultures of others

LEARNING

An awareness of and commitment to ongoing personal growth and development of others to enrich performance

EMOTIONS

Ability to read/understand the feelings of others and manage personal emotions under duress and pressure

Mastering
Your Core

CRITICAL THINKING

The ability to challenge assumptions, root out bias, and ask questions that draw out alternatives and then press for evidence to support solutions to problems or new opportunities

STRATEGY

Studies trends, sees ideas beyond current realities and then creates new opportunities to lead organizations into uncommon areas of growth and productivity

MOTIVATION

A determination to press beyond limitations and circumstances to accomplish big things and inspire others by example

COMMUNICATION

Communicates ideas effectively across the mediums, displays presence and leads in public forums

Forging
The Path

ACHIEVEMENT

Sets high standards, expects more from themselves and others, delivers consistent results and leads others to do the same

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Skills in managing time, resources, information, efforts of people and finances

AGREEABLENESS

Carefully contemplates other people's views and situations, considerate and socially confident and committed to a team focus marked by participation and reasonableness

FINANCE

Skillful in the critical disciplines of understanding how business works, managing costs and evaluating financial performance to ensure the execution of the organization's goals

Ensuring
Execution

RECOMMENDATIONS

As the researchers evaluated data from the pilot study, the IAPSS Statewide Project and the Top Performing Educator Benchmark Project, significant strengths and notable weaknesses were discovered. The strengths and gap analysis summarized above illustrate a number of skills and abilities to celebrate. The study also reveals findings that can be translated into recommendations intended to elevate the leadership effectiveness and excellence of Indiana's top educational leaders. Toward that end, the following recommendations are offered to advance the educational outcomes for all of Indiana's children.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE – The factors and elements of emotional intelligence are emerging as a critical set of skills that leaders need for self management as well as working effectively with others. The leadership of IAPSS could realize significant progress among its current and aspiring Superintendents with a comprehensive focus on emotional intelligence.

CRITICAL THINKING/PROBLEM SOLVING – As noted previously in the evaluative comments, critical thinking and problem solving are among the most prized assets of a leader. Leaders who are recognized in this area are noted for their courage, maturity and wisdom. The variance of this skill among educational leaders requires dedicated attention. IAPSS' commitment to developing the critical thinking skills of current and future Superintendents will increase the scope and effectiveness of education's impact on our culture.

STRATEGIC PLANNING – Educators studied in this project appear to be strong strategists and tactical leaders. This would be a great trait if the leadership

need was primarily focused on execution. However, with the advent of increasing complexity in the education marketplace (home school, private and alternative schools), federal/state mandates and regulations and a looming leadership exodus (38% of sitting Superintendents retiring in the next 3-5 years), the educational environment calls for something else. It becomes critical for educators to create innovative methods for responding to change. Therefore we recommend that IAPSS' leadership incorporate strategic planning resources to help current and future Superintendents develop breakthrough solutions to advance educational outcomes for Indiana.

WORKING THROUGH TEAMS – The consistently high independence scores and findings discussed under self-awareness seem to indicate a tendency by educational leaders to be more independent rather than interdependent. Becoming more collaborative within their districts, as well in their changing communities, will significantly advance the leadership effectiveness of Indiana's current and future Superintendents.

CLOSING REMARKS

Indiana school leaders were fortunate to receive the support of the Indiana Department of Education for the primary financing of the opportunity to participate in and learn from the Hallmarks of Excellence®. Credit is also owed to the over 270 school superintendents and central office assistants who gave their time to participate in a high-powered professional growth process.

What has been learned from this study of the assessment results may have been predictable for some — education and business leaders have many skill sets in common and could learn much from one another. Clearly, educational leaders bring a variety of strengths to their duties. Both the strengths and the developmental gaps found in this study, in contrast with Superintendents' business counterparts, provide an outline for the primary professional development needs for central office leadership and the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents as they translate the findings into professional development activities across Indiana.

These findings should also be of value to the state's stakeholders such as Indiana's colleges and universities that prepare school leaders. Training models can be revised to close the developmental gaps identified and build from the strengths emphasized in administrator preparation programs.

WHO CONDUCTED THE STUDY?

This study was conducted by CHORUS®, Inc., a leading human capital management firm working with businesses and non-profit organizations including schools throughout the United States. CHORUS specializes in *executive* and *executive team development* and aligning leaders to a disciplined *business strategy*. The Hallmarks of Excellence® in Educational Leadership was developed by and is a product of CHORUS, Inc. The Hallmarks® leadership assessment system is patent pending.





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GIBRALTAR
DESIGN

This study was underwritten by a generous grant provided to the Indiana Association for Public School Superintendents, who commissioned this study, by Gibraltar Design, an architectural and engineering firm serving clients in Indiana and Illinois. The study was conducted in its entirety by CHORUS, Inc., a human capital management firm working with business and non-profit organizations throughout the United States.

www.GibraltarDesign.com