

## **REPORT FROM THE EDUCATION DEANS EXPERT STUDY PANEL — NNER ANNUAL MEETING, 2009**

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### **What are the benefits of participation in the NNER for education deans?**

NNER is a compass in hard times, a conceptual guide.

The Agenda helps us remember why we're doing this, where we're trying to head.

Very few professional organizations have the content, the material, the depth of thinking that NNER provides, the foundational piece that NNER has.

The NNER's focus on partnerships with schools adds depth to our work and reminds us of the moral purpose of schools.

NNER has formalized partnership, raised it to a public entity and level, and created a focus on the whole university as responsible for teacher education.

NNER opens up doors with Arts and Sciences faculty, helps us solidify that, and gave us the conceptual and research framework behind "quadripartite."

There is always something to learn in the NNER- it provides opportunities and resource people.

We can assume a value base within the NNER that makes conversation easier within the Network and also helps internal conversation.

The difference between NNER and any other professional organization is that it causes us to reflect on who we are and how we contribute to a larger conversation and it takes us all beyond our immediate responsibilities.

This has opened up our partnerships with the schools and helps us talk about substance and what grounds them, not just about achievement data, and our school partners want that.

For small institutions NNER allows us to feel part of something big and important, a connection to something larger.

It is helpful to have the organizational and conceptual framework of NNER behind us as education deans.

For Education deans, the NNER enables to be not only the givers of help, but also the recipients- a form of simultaneous renewal in action.

NNER helps us go against the current tide of policy and rhetoric and reminds us why we do this work.

What is the historical context? The NNER stands for something and gives us gravitas.

The Agenda keeps us grounded and anchored in the state debate and at the national level.

### **What are the barriers to realizing the benefits of participation in the NNER?**

It's hard to have an elevator talk about NNER- can't make it into a sound bite.

Words like democracy have taken on lots of meanings- we can't assume everyone means the same thing.

The depth of the conversation in the Leadership Associates program is what's needed, but we can't provide that so easily because of lack of resources and time.

It's hard to have to keep renewing and pushing yourself to do that- it takes a lot of energy.

Instability of leadership on campus and in partner schools can be a barrier to realizing the benefits of membership, as well as financial instability in tough times.

The single focus of the policy conversation on student achievement is so strong, but it can be a plus because it makes the need for the NNER Agenda and conversation around that even greater.

What's the hook that gets people to the table? Where are the doors? Civic engagement? Service learning? We need to find what they are in our individual settings.

We, education deans and other leaders, have to take responsibility for keeping the conversation going and deep- we can't count on NNER and IEI to deliver that on a silver platter.

The work is never done, but we've changed, the partnerships have changed, there's always something new, another door, democracy is never done or finished. How do we keep coming back to it?

Seattle as the epicenter is going away. Is the Network structure going to serve us well for the next decade? So much of the work needs to be in our own setting, but do we have the infrastructure we need to go forward?

We need mentors, who are they? How are we going to support them?

There is also a need for fresh voices at the table. Where's the next generation of leadership- the brand new faces?

Is the structure here to bring forward the next generation of leaders? Do they exert leadership in different ways and how can that happen in the NNER?

There's something big and important about Seattle- the IEI building was part of that. What will take its place and help lift and strengthen all of us going forward?

The AED scholars could be important here.

A constant process of enculturation of new people is necessary.

### **What can we, as education deans do?**

Ask ourselves questions- What would you fight to the nth degree not to lose? Leadership Associates at the local level?

Fundraising has to become part of the pitch.

The Agenda is great for a starting point for new partnership sites.

We must be purposeful about the enculturation process wherever needed and at the leadership level.

There is a special role for education deans- if not us who? We have to be the major champions, drivers, in our settings within the NNER, we have to have that drive and that commitment, but the NNER helps us do our work and we have the network for support.

Part of our responsibility is getting other people to take ownership, because you can't lead others to the promised land. It has to be invitational, we have to allow other voices and that can be difficult, but it can't be only the education dean driving the bus all the time.

### **How can NNER support us?**

AED scholars program will be important and it needs to be nurtured.

Sometimes a visit from Ann for instance, can be key with new leaders. In particular situations someone from far away to say this is important, but we need a resource network, not just Ann.

Maybe we need to lighten the burden for Ann and call on each other a lot more, drawing upon the strengths of one another.

Just hearing you all today has been helpful, so maybe we need to keep this conversation among education deans going.

We need forums for us to do work together so we can know each other and each other's strengths, so we can draw on that as needed.

At NNER Annual Meeting we need a meeting for ed deans and at AACTE too.

The NNER can help us by providing materials we can use with new people like the new BYU materials.

Tripartite Council meetings this time were best ever and we learned a lot about what other partnerships were doing. We need not just presentations at the annual meeting, but conversation times to share around a topic or idea.

### **What can and should deans be doing?**

We must be active participants in local partnerships, attending Governing Board meetings, AED events, and we must make it a priority locally to be physically present.

A lot of cheerleading, advocacy for the Agenda, translating it, infusing it in conversations.

Developing a shared network for speakers and consultants to go to other sites, new and existing, to become a resource bank.

Ed deans should develop an expert directory for each other and the NNER.

We should have a Ning community for Ed deans, use the blog that AED scholars have developed as ways of becoming resources for each other.

Ed deans need to take responsibility for responding and participating in NNER activities.

Ed Deans need to marshal resources to send people in addition to us, (i.e. the next generation) to NNER events.

Host something at AERA for NNER deans- just a lunch at coffee shop even- if we're already there, it's another chance to get together.

Ed Deans should take responsibility for someone from the setting showing up to Governing Bd.

### **How can NNER help us achieve our goals locally?**

NNER can bring together ideas and concrete activities that partnerships do and that keep them going.

The new NNER journal is a great step forward.

Grants that are shared by sites across NNER, as Tom Bellamy is working on, are great.

Having exec director come to setting/campus- it's an important opportunity to convene faculty and partnership.

Issue of our successors- how will they be enculturated? Deans' role is so pivotal. NNER needs to reach out to new deans and accelerate the opportunities to get assistance from other deans and the NNER.

Perhaps we need mentors to new deans in the NNER- a formal process in which deans could volunteer to be available, be more reciprocal. We could try to match issues- e.g. lots of ELL issues in your setting and in mine. Perhaps that could be part of the Experts' directory (a paragraph about each setting and its issues).

The NNER should form special interest groups, appoint chief worriers among the deans.

Mentor future academic leaders from our sites about the NNER and the Agenda.

### **How is being the ed dean different from other leaders in the NNER?**

It's somewhat dependent on the setting.

Everyone looks to the ed dean to be the promoter, on top of things.

The buck stops here- it's our major priority and we have to cultivate the other leaders and associate deans too.

The education dean has to continually promote the leadership and status of everyone else- not be the chair of everything.

We have to ask ourselves, if I leave will everything go away? Answer changes and ebbs and flows over time.

We have to cultivate the agenda at the local level, it has to be a part of the interview for new hires, even asking potential faculty and leaders, "What do you know about the NNER?"

How do we get the language of the Agenda across all educator preparation?

We have to seed connections across our programs, not just teacher education.

Ed deans have the unique responsibility to educate up too- to the Provost and President.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS-WHAT THE NNER CAN AND SHOULD DO FOR AND WITH EDUCATION DEANS?**

1. Provide space at conferences for role alike groups- ed deans group, Expert Study Panels, but have them open (clear from beginning).
2. Develop a resource bank, an internal experts directory- with key words about what we do.
3. Develop a Ning community for ed deans.
4. Develop more transparency within the NNER. For instance, make it clear Gov Bd. Meeting,

Tripartite meeting, all meetings are open. We need to improve communication, sharing information, within the NNER. Perhaps make better use of Web 2.0 (social networks, etc.)

5. Develop new rituals and ceremonies for the NNER- e.g. Opening NNER Address for the Annual Meeting, because it used to be John Goodlad as the touchstone and we can't depend on him that way anymore.
6. Allow Award Winners to present for the whole group- not just in a breakout session- so everyone can have exemplars of excellence in the NNER.
7. Provide more expert visits (draw on retired group of leaders too- emeritus status), and set a regular cycle of director visits.
8. Promote regional connections (even visits) within the NNER for more frequent contact among and between settings.
9. Issue of setting contact: if it's not the Ed Dean, cc Ed Dean on everything.
10. Organize initiatives, events, around particular issues or areas for us to participate in- e.g. the arts in education, Teacher Preparing Schools, whether grant funded or not, and make them widely publicized and communicated.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS- WHAT CAN AND SHOULD EDUCATION DEANS DO TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE NNER AND THE AGENDA FOR EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRACY?**

1. Cultivate a larger group of leaders within our settings at national level too- e.g. bring someone to GB meeting each time.
2. Be proactive about recommending and cultivating new members for the NNER.
3. Be available to each other deliberately and consciously.
4. We must be the chief steward, chief worrier for the Agenda and NNER in our local sites.
5. The Ed deans have to take responsibility for planning regarding a successor to Ann and think ahead. We won't have her wonderful leadership forever!
6. Make it a priority to send people to Summer Symposium and other NNER events.
7. Look at structure, infrastructure, leadership, resources, etc. of NNER for the future.

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