

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

To: Eric Liu
From: JB Buxton
Re: Rudy Crew

Have a good trip out West and meeting with Rudy Crew. Below is a little information on the former Tacoma, Washington superintendent and New York City schools Chancellor. The article is on the new Leadership Institute at UW that he is now running. I imagine most of your conversation will focus on leadership and the money in our budget for school leadership centers.

One key issue on these school leadership centers: we aren't looking to augment the budgets of administrator preparation programs. Rather, we are looking to fund new innovative partnerships (which might include some of those administrator training programs) which take innovative approaches to recruitment, training and ongoing professional development. If these administrator prep programs were doing the job, then we'd have well-trained folks out there.

I think Crew's plans for the Leadership Institute at UW look good and that they are focused on the whole spectrum of needs—from preparation to on-the-job training — that school leaders need. In addition, his focus on leadership beyond the principal and superintendent role is a good one. He's looking to create teams of teacher-leaders and principals that work to turn around failing schools. That's a smart effort and one we would hope some of the centers that we fund might support.

Overall, then, while our new initiative isn't focused on funding college of education administrator preparation programs, it would fund program efforts by Crew's Leadership Institute in specific areas such as recruitment or ongoing professional development or teacher-leader projects — as long as they were partnership efforts.

Background on Rudy Crew

- Crew is now the Executive Director of the Institute for K-12 Leadership at the University of Washington. He has been brought there with much fan fare to run the new Institute and create a national model to both train new principals and superintendents, but also to work with school leaders in the field in offering on-going professional development. More below in the attached article.
- Crew was ousted by the New York City Board of Education on a 4-3 vote at the end of December. Giuliani's appointees and allies on the Board voted to remove Crew, and many saw it as part of Giuliani's efforts to show his leadership at a time when he's preparing to run for the Senate. The Mayor was also known to be dissatisfied with what many saw as a lack of concrete progress in school and student achievement during Crew's tenure. Removing Crew also opened the door for the Mayor to more easily push his agenda to abolish the Board of Education, wrest control for the City's public schools under the Mayor's office, and implement voucher plans.

- Other reasons why Crew's removal was forced included stagnating test scores in the City, a scandal over cheating in a number of NYC schools on student achievement tests (which implicated teachers and principals), and Crew's public wavering over whether or not he wanted to extend his contract or return to the West Coast. This wavering opened the window which led to his ouster.
- Although Crew was hired by Guiliani, he had some high-profile disagreements with the Mayor. The biggest was his opposition to the Mayor's plans for an experimental voucher plan. Guiliani proposed earmarking \$12 million from the city budget for an experimental school voucher program to allow poor children to attend private or parochial schools. Crew opposed the move. Crew threatened to resign over the matter, but Guiliani backed off the plan.
- During his tenure in New York, he helped increase literacy, set tougher standards and ended social promotion. He wrested control of the hiring and firing of superintendents in the City's 32 districts out of local school board hands, which allowed him to centralize authority under him. It also made him more accountable for improvement in the system. Crew was also a driving force behind instituting extended learning time in the schools. In addition, he implemented a Chancellor's District in the system which placed all chronically low-performing schools under his and the Board of Education's control, rather than the districts where they were located. This sharpened the City focus, resources and efforts on these schools, and made Crew more accountable for their success.
- When Crew took over Tacoma schools in 1993, he pledged to boost minority students' test scores. During his tenure, achievement scores improved for all students - up 21 percent for fourth-graders and 13 percent for eighth-graders. Attendance also improved.

Article on Crew and the Institute from the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

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HEADLINE: N.Y. CHANCELLOR WILL JOIN UW;
CREW TO OVERSEE INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING EDUCATION LEADERS

Rudy Crew, chancellor of the mammoth New York City school system for four years, will join the University of Washington in three weeks as head of a new institute created to improve leadership in the public schools.

Crew's appointment is a coup for the UW, in part because he brings to the job a national reputation that could instantly instill legitimacy on the fledgling Institute for K-12 Leadership. UW authorities hope it ultimately will have an effect across the country.

"Our goal is nothing less than creating a program to serve as the national model for training future school leaders," UW President Richard McCormick said at a news conference yesterday announcing the appointment.

Crew is leaving the chancellorship after battles with New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and the city's Board of Education. While the intense politics in New York were playing themselves out over the past year, McCormick was courting Crew. He left the executive director's seat unfilled with the expectation Crew would join the UW eventually. "He's an outstanding school leader, he's a charismatic guy, he has been in the thick of it in the largest school district, the most difficult school district, in the world," McCormick said.

As executive director, Crew will have a strong hand in how the institute takes shape. He led an advisory group that helped form the institute and yesterday sketched out his main goals.

The institute Crew envisions would support not only entering principals and superintendents, but also those in the field. He envisions a forum for working principals and teachers to share ideas and spur improvement in low-performing schools.

He would like to act as a bridge between research and what goes on in the classroom.

Over time, Crew would like to build a national consortium of research universities that can effect change in school systems across the country.

Although colleges of education nationwide offer principal training in degree programs and continuing education for principals, the Leadership Institute is unusual in its focus. It will attack the need for ongoing leadership training and bring together academia, public schools, educational leaders, non-profit groups and private businesses.

Local school leaders, some of whom helped woo Crew, were thrilled at the appointment.

"I think it's spectacular," said Seattle Public Schools Superintendent Joseph Olchefske. "I think it's an enormous addition to the intellectual capital of our community. Rudy is an unparalleled leader in the education community, and his depth and breadth of skill and intelligence is going to be a huge asset - to the Seattle school district, but also school districts throughout the region and country."

Crew was the keynote speaker at the Seattle School Board retreat in August and is already making plans with the district to collaborate in training "leadership teams" in Seattle schools.

The institute was founded on the assumption that education lacks any formal mechanism to develop, train and support those in leadership positions - a view long held by Don Nielsen, vice president of the Seattle School Board.

"I think the biggest single issue in public education is the lack of leadership training," Nielsen said. "Public education is not set up to create leaders, and it doesn't do so; this is why we hired a John Stanford."

One thing the institute can't assume, however, is that principals and superintendents want their help.

Brian Barker, executive director of the Association of Washington School Principals, a professional association with 2,800 members statewide, said he would prefer to see the UW expand its principal preparation program in the College of Education.

"It isn't that there's a lack of training programs," Barker said. "It's how do we provide the incentives; how do we provide the authority with the position so the job is doable?"

Crew and others at the UW acknowledge that can be a problem and anticipate holding a series of meetings with school leaders to find out what they want and need.

The new job brings Crew back to the Puget Sound region after a roller-coaster term at the head of the largest school system in the country, responsible for educating more than 1.1 million children.

Crew's relationship with Giuliani was close for the first three years of his New York chancellorship, but the relationship turned sour over the contentious issue of school vouchers. Giuliani supports them; Crew does not and threatened to quit last spring if the mayor went forward with his plan to begin a voucher system.

Contract negotiations stalled out last year, and on Tuesday the New York Board of Education agreed to pay \$225,000 to buy out the rest of Crew's contract, which expires June 30, and then to retain his services as a \$1,000-a-month consultant to the board and the City University of New York until Oct. 16.

The deal allows Crew to take the UW job while technically serving five years as a school district employee, which entitles him to a New York City pension valued at about \$18,000 a year.

At yesterday's news conference, Crew said that he wanted to come to the UW largely to "play ball" for McCormick, whom he described as "someone whose vision

and judgment and philosophical commitment to these issues is as profound as mine."

Before his move to New York City, Crew was superintendent of the Tacoma School District.

He has also served as superintendent of the Sacramento, Calif., Unified School District and held various teaching and administrative positions in California and Boston.

But when Crew left for New York, he never entirely pulled up his roots in the Northwest. He maintains a home near Tacoma, and two children are in the area.

In February, Crew was invited to speak to the UW Board of Regents about the challenge of urban school reform.

His presentation touched on many of the underlying goals driving the school reform he created in New York City: set high standards, give principals more authority and hold them accountable, abolish social promotion, assume every child is capable of learning.

UW Regent William Gates Jr. said at the news conference yesterday that Crew's "inspired commentary" helped direct the regents' focus toward improving school leadership.

"Partly as a result of what he said, and further hearings, it became prominently obvious (that) the real essence of reforming public education was in leadership," Gates said.

The institute was created in response to a perceived "crisis" in recruiting, training and retaining school leaders.

A report prepared by the UW in July cited a 1998 study that found a shortage of qualified principal candidates in almost half the 400 school districts studied nationwide.

A statewide survey showed that about half of Washington's principals will be retiring in the next five years. And applicants are getting harder to find.

"That leadership that I'm talking about needing to support is dwindling in terms of the numbers of people who are willing to step into that chair," Crew said.

The institute has a \$400,000 budget this year, funded by the university, but Crew anticipates raising more private and grant money as the institute matures, with the goal of making it self-sustaining.

The new executive director expects to have a detailed plan in three or four months and to begin training principals and superintendents this year.

He also will serve as an affiliate professor of leadership and policy studies in the UW College of Education, where he will teach. His salary will be \$175,000.

Crew said he expects to spend a lot of time in classrooms.

"I will never lose my enthusiasm for teaching," Crew said. "I'm going to be in the schools no matter what. It's in my nature." P-I reporter Ruth Schubert can be reached at 206-448-8130 or ruthschubert@seattle-pi.com. This report includes information from The Associated Press.