

EDUCATION POLICY ADVISORS' NETWORK (EPAN)

**National League of Cities
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families**



Supported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

The National League of Cities (NLC), through its Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute), has established the **Education Policy Advisors' Network (EPAN)**. This national network facilitates communication among senior officials who are working with mayors on key issues related to education reform and school improvement. More and more, mayors are using their leadership capacity and access to city resources to strengthen and support public schools—even when they have no formal authority over school districts. EPAN will enable municipal staff from large cities to share information, insights, and lessons learned regarding the strategies cities have employed to help their local school districts improve the quality of public education and confront the critical issues affecting student achievement.

Participation in EPAN provides cities with the following benefits:

- Access to a wide range of resources and promising practices on school improvement to support the work that mayors and their education policy advisors are engaged in, including research support from the YEF Institute to investigate key questions raised by EPAN members and documentation of promising practices in areas of particular interest.
- Opportunities to meet with other Network members at least once a year to hear from national experts in the field of education reform, as well as to share challenges and lessons learned. (The National League of Cities has secured financial support to cover travel expenses for these annual meetings.)
- Regular communications from the Institute through periodic conference calls, e-mail listservs, and mailings to facilitate the exchange of ideas and lessons learned among network members, as well as a forum for conversations with national policy experts.
- Targeted dissemination of a wide range of publications and background materials on school improvement and municipal leadership in education.
- Opportunities to showcase cities' school improvement efforts through articles in NLC's weekly publication, *Nation's Cities Weekly*, periodic audioconferences, and sessions at national conferences.

The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families offers a strong foundation to support the Education Policy Advisors' Network. Through its Municipal Leadership in Education initiative, the YEF Institute has been providing a full range of technical assistance to mayors, developing promising practices drawn from diverse communities around the country, and creating a series of publications to assist mayors as they seek to support local schools. Staff at the Institute have also engaged in a broad range of issues related to school improvement and afterschool programs, including strategies for narrowing or closing the achievement gap; approaches to middle school reform; public engagement efforts that seek to build public will and reengage the community with its schools; teacher recruitment and retention initiatives; afterschool programming and its links to student achievement; and high school reform and innovation.

For more information, contact Lucinda Dugger at the Institute for Youth, Education, and Families at (202) 626-3052 or email dugger@nlc.org or visit the Institute's website at www.nlc.org/iyef.