

## BARBARA JEANNE ERWIN

Dr. Barbara Erwin's career in education has spanned more than four decades. After many years in the field, she joined the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Indiana University. Barb has been a clinical faculty member since 2008. In that position, her primary role has been teaching and building important field connections with school leaders throughout the state. She excelled in these areas. This success was not surprising, given her prior work experience in public schools and her passion for education.

Prior to joining the faculty at Indiana University, Barb served as a superintendent in Indiana, Illinois, Arizona, and Texas. In Texas, she was named Superintendent of the Year and was acknowledged in numerous ways for her district leadership in the other positions. Additionally, she was recognized by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) with the Leadership for Learning Award. While at IU, she demonstrated great versatility in her teaching and connected well with her students. For example, she frequently taught Introduction to Educational Leadership, which is the first course in our master's program. The class includes students who are earning principal licensure. While working with these students, Barb always used the most relevant and recent examples to bring the issue being discussed to life. Specifically, she was easily able to use real world scenarios from her experiences working in Indiana, Texas, Illinois, and Arizona and connected them well to different theories. Students were always impressed with how quick on her feet she was to create hypotheticals to break down difficult course concepts. The students clearly appreciated her prior experience as a public school teacher, special education director, principal, superintendent, and employee of the Indiana Department of Education. They considered Barb to be highly credible. Beyond the course discussions, Barb was always personable and accessible to her students.

One student wrote that "her rapport with students is impeccable—she nurtures when a student needs nurturing and challenges a student when a student needs to be pushed." It was also noted that "she



pushes for mid-course and end-of-course feedback and then actually uses that feedback to improve her teaching practice." Other students spoke to how Barb had a positive impact on their careers.

It should also be noted that Barb helped design new programs. When creating these offerings, she developed the most convenient plan for students. While it may have been easier for her to teach on a week night, she felt it was best to accommodate teachers and administrators with longer commutes and happily volunteered her weekends to teach. More recently, she helped create strands of interest in our master's program (e.g., finance strand, special education strand, school law strand). Barb has shown the same initiative and innovation with our Ed.S. and Ed.D. programs. Most notable is the role she played in establishing a partnership with our Ed.D. students and the Kelley School of Business. Barb worked tirelessly for our students and programs. With regard to course development, among the nine courses taught, she was always willing to step in wherever she was needed. Throughout our various programs, Barb advised the vast majority of students who were pursuing a master's, principal certification, superintendent licensure, or an Ed.S. She spent a great deal of time marketing and recruiting students to our programs, too.

In the field, Barb led the Study Council, Partnershare, IUSAA Summer

Conference, and the Indiana Effective Leaders Academy with the Kelley School. The study councils play an important role in the state. It is a time when school superintendents and other district administrators come together to discuss policy and leadership issues with IU faculty. In her role, Barb led a monthly meeting of central office personnel in Seymour, Indiana, that included 21 member school corporations. The content of these meetings was driven by issues relevant to superintendents. The Study Council had a retreat each summer where they spent a more concentrated amount of time with speakers and leaders. The Partnershare was another major responsibility for Barb. She ran approximately four Partnershare meetings per semester. The Partnershare was made up of 20 Indiana school corporations, and she took an interdisciplinary approach in providing professional development with this group of school leaders. For example, she developed joint presentations with the School of Journalism, the psychology department, the Kelley School, and the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. This group also held a monthly technology directors' meeting throughout the state. She also worked tirelessly on the Effective Leadership Academy with the Kelley School. This program worked with struggling public school districts across Indiana. Through the work described above, Barb made several important connections between the educational leadership program and the state of Indiana.

When Barb was not teaching or working in the field, you would find her fostering dogs or training for a triathlon. On behalf of the School of Education and the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies program, we wish her the best in her retirement. We hope that she will be able to spend more time with her family and three grandkids in Arizona.

*Suzanne Eckes*