**Agenda Topic:** State Legislative Update

**Materials:** None

**Staff Contact(s):** Peter Leonis

**Purpose of Agenda Item**

To inform the State Board of Education of recent legislative activities and give a brief preview of what the Spring 2002 Legislative Session may bring.

**Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item**

State Board of Education members will be better informed about legislative activities.

**Background Information**

There are several substantive issues being discussed this summer which will likely result in legislation next spring.

- The Senate Education Committee wrapped up its summer hearings regarding annual testing and the school calendar. Overall, the hearings were well attended and many positive comments were received regarding annual testing.
  - Many witnesses acknowledged that the current gaps in testing caused a disconnect in the data and hindered their ability to accurately assess a student’s progress.
  - Many were willing to support annual testing if it resulted in better data and less cost to districts.
  - There was a preponderance of testimony about the PSAE and the use of the ACT. There were many statements about how the results will be used to improve learning opportunities for all high school students. Some witnesses were concerned about the logistics of the PSAE, particularly the loss of two instructional days.
  - When people criticized the PSAE or the ISAT, the biggest reason as to why they did not like the test was that it did not provide them with the kind of data they were used to receiving with other tests. (There seems to be a lack of assessment that can be used for accountability.)
The most powerful testimony came at the Chicago hearing where a number of teachers from District #299 and some suburbs talked about their involvement with the development of ISAT and the instructional importance of extended response test questions.

Most of the opposition that was expressed came at the Springfield hearing by teachers who felt students were over-tested.

It is not clear what the next step of the committee will be in terms of redrafting SB 616. The committee may be waiting to see what happens in Congress.

HR 250 (Erwin) asked that the Governor form a work group consisting of ISBE, IBHE, ICCB, ISAC, TRS, CPS and various business and teachers associations to develop a strategic plan for the State Of Illinois to address the teacher shortage. The group is to file a report to the General Assembly by October 15, 2001.

EFAB met recently to discuss the Augenblick findings which will be discussed in more detail in another presentation.

There is also an aggressive fall schedule of legislative meetings that have been arranged throughout the state with various legislators and Max. A schedule was sent under separate cover.

**Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications**

There are no direct policy, budget, legislative or communications implications.

**Next Steps**

Provide regular updates to the Board on state legislative activity.