ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

August 21, 2002

TO: Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
Christopher A. Koch, Director

Agenda Topic: President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education

Materials: Executive Summary Report: A NEW ERA: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and their Families

Staff Contact(s): Anthony E. Sims, Manager

Purpose of Agenda Item

To provide an overview of the Executive Summary of the final report completed by the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (PCESE) which provides the overarching findings illustrated throughout, A NEW ERA: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and their Families. The full report may be viewed on PCESE’s website: http://www.ed.gov/inaits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/reports/pcesefinalreport.doc.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

Board members will have increased awareness of national recommendations to improve the quality of special education services.

Background Information

President Bush charged the Commission with studying issues related to federal, state, and local special education programs in order to improve the educational performance of students. They held 13 open hearings and meetings across the country. At those meetings and hearings, the members heard from 109 expert witnesses and more than 175 parents, teachers, students with disabilities, and members of the public. Hundreds of other individuals provided the Commission with letters, written statements, and research. The Commission's effort represents the most expansive review of special education in the 27-year history of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The Commission submitted this report to The White House on July 1st as required by the Executive Order.
Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action, and Communication:

Policy Implications

Policy implications of the recommendations are negligible at this time. The broadest anticipated implication involves the extent to which the recommendations are adopted as part of the reauthorization of IDEA.

Communications

One of the commissioners recently presented a keynote session discussing the report as part of ISBE’s 2002 Special Education Directors Conference. Additionally, the report has been widely disseminated nationally and is accessible via ISBE’s website: http://www.isbe.net/spec-ed/.

Superintendent’s Recommendation