IILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
December 18-19, 2002

TO: Illinois State Board of Education
FROM: Robert E. Schiller, Superintendent
Lynne Haeffele Curry, Director

Agenda Topic: Action Item:
Academic Early Warning List 2002
Academic Watch List 2002
Materials: Lists of Schools (available at Board meeting)
Staff Contact(s): Connie Wise

Purpose of Agenda Item

• To establish the Academic Early Warning List and Academic Watch List for 2002, in accordance with requirements in the School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.25d).
• To discuss implications for the Academic Watch List.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item

• Board approval of the 2002 Academic Early Warning List.
• Board approval of the 2002 Academic Watch List.

Background Information

Academic Early Warning List (AEWL) History

Schools are eligible for placement on the state’s Academic Early Warning List when their composite ISAT or PSAE scores show that fewer than 50% of tests met or exceeded state standards for two years in a row. Table 1 shows the history of the AEWL and the data that generated the school lists in past years.
System of Support for AEWL Schools

Since 1997, ISBE has provided some level of assistance to districts with schools on the Academic Early Warning Lists. This assistance overlaps, and is coordinated as appropriate at the district level, with that provided to Title I schools designated for “School Improvement” under the federal ESEA legislation (1994 reauthorization.)

Important components of the System of Support include

- Support that is “tiered” based on the amount of support the schools and districts need;
- State and federal dollars leveraged to support specific improvement processes, through a comprehensive school improvement plan revision for each participating school; and
- District support and involvement—districts sign “performance agreements” with ISBE to assure collaborative progress.

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

Policy Implications

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires states to have a single, unified accountability system in place by 2003. Superintendent Schiller has convened an Assessment and Accountability Task Force to provide recommendations for unifying the state (AEWL/AWL) and federal (NCLB) requirements. These recommendations are expected by January 2003.

A unified system will generate a single list, using the new Adequate Yearly Progress criteria for all schools, but applying federal “school improvement” status designations to Title I schools only. The Assessment and Accountability Task Force recommendations will address any designations the state should apply to non-Title I schools.
Budget Implications

The numbers of schools identified as needing improvement is expected to rise as new, stricter federal requirements take effect. The System of Support requires staff time to (a) help districts with data analysis and to develop performance agreements, (b) provide on-site assistance from highly qualified experts and (c) provide ongoing technical assistance from ISBE. The Superintendent has merged the former Program Support Division with the System of Support Division to better coordinate ISBE technical assistance regarding the allocation of state and federal grant funds to school improvement planning. State funding must be identified in the FY04 budget to continue this assistance.

Legislative Action

As a part of a spring 2003 general vehicle bill to address NCLB requirements, ISBE anticipates including modifications to the School Code to create a unified accountability system congruent with federal requirements.

Communication

The Public Information Center will coordinate information flow, including notification to schools and districts, then subsequent notification to the media and the public.

Superintendent’s Recommendation

The Superintendent recommends that a 2002 AEWL list and a 2002 Academic Watch List be adopted for the purpose of complying with state law and offering schools on the lists “jump start” assistance through the System of Support services.

Next Steps

Notify affected schools of their status and begin System of Support assistance, coordinated with assistance being provided under federal law.