Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by the Chairman, Mr. Gidwitz, who asked Judy Carmody, the staff secretary to the Board, to call the roll. Mrs. Carmody called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Chairman Gidwitz indicated that Ms. Branch was unable to attend the Board meeting this month.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. McConachie moved that "the State Board of Education hereby approves the minutes of the March 17-18, 2001, Board meeting and the Special Board meeting of April 9, 2001." The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rogers, and it was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Public Participation

The Chairman called for Agenda Item B., Public Participation. The following individuals spoke to the Board.

Laura Arterburn, representing the IFT, applauded the Board’s attempt to at least encourage that the P.E. waivers be kept to a maximum of two years. She noted that a lot of those waivers are renewals because of inadequate facilities, and she wondered if the districts have been asked what they have done in the last five years to try to provide more adequate facilities or to try to work this better into the curriculum. She commented that she suspected that we do not have an answer, and since they got it waived once, they continue the practice.

Ms. Arterburn expressed concerned about the number of waiver requests on substitutes (up to 32 -- 17 in Lake and Cook Counties). She indicated that the question was asked if these are day-to-day substitutes or substitutes that are being hired for when a teacher is out for a semester or on a leave, and the answer was that it did not matter. She commented that regarding accountability and the certified teachers, the teachers cannot do anything when administrators hire non-certified people because it saves the district money. Ms. Arterburn suggested that when the Board looks at school report cards and other accountability issues, this
may be another issue to take into consideration -- how many classes are taught by subs because certified teachers are not hired.

Chairman Gidwitz commented that he had read an article earlier that day in the State Journal-Register regarding a reduction in state sales tax revenues, and the first place the Governor is talking about going for money is education.

Ms. Arterburn indicated that teachers are still paid according to about 1940’s to 1950’s salaries, but there is so much more to address in teaching -- from every thing we expect teachers to be for students and the knowledge teachers are supposed to possess including technology, as well as everything else. Ms. Arterburn noted that teachers are expected to do this for the love of the job, and we do not live in that world any more.

Chairman Gidwitz suggested that we at least ask teachers to be lobbyists for the Board's budget. Ms. Arterburn responded that they always lobby and also ask why we are not fighting for a lot more money. The Chairman responded that that was a very good question.

Jacqueline Goetter, president of the Decatur Board of Education, indicated that their request for the P.E. waiver requirement for the 11th and 12th grades students is based solely on the current financial crisis in their District, and she commented on their comprehensive financial plan. She reported that the community did approve a 73 cent increase in the education fund tax rate that would significantly help the District in the very near future, and they have also implemented revenue enhancements throughout the District that would result in savings in the education fund. Ms. Goetter noted that the most important and most unfortunate element of the financial plan was the elimination of $7.25 million of expenses in the education fund. She commented on the different cuts and eliminated programs.

Ms. Goetter indicated that they would still continue to:
• Offer physical education as an elective;
• Provide eleven years of physical education as a requirement for kindergarten through 10th grade;
• Offer what they can in a wide range of sports activities -- both individual and team activities;
• Offer physical education activities in which students may choose to participate; and
• Provide students with a comprehensive physical and health education that is aligned with the Illinois state goals and the national education goals.
She urged the State Board to approve their request to waive the requirement for physical education for 11th and 12th graders.

Jim Guilinger, representing the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education (ILCAE), commended the State Board and expressed hope that the $200,000 in its budget for ag ed would be retained. He commented on SB1173
and indicated that ILCAE was one item that the Governor recommended to sunset. Mr. Guilinger indicated that he had informed the Governor’s liaison of the monthly and yearly reports that are submitted regarding their activities. He reported that they have submitted nominees to the Governor’s committee for six months with no appointments occurring, so the records show only one member of the Committee.

Mr. Guilinger called the Board members’ attention to a copy of the proposed five-year plan, giving directions of what they are looking for and how to move forward in ag education. He reported that every ag teacher in Illinois would receive two new CD’s (on management and banking as well as ag science, particularly addressing mechanics) in June and would attend workshops on using the CD’s. He noted that the CD’s meet all of the State Board standards and skill standards, and he had showed the members of the General Assembly that they are the leader in this business.

Chairman Gidwitz indicated that on April 18, the Board saw a presentation by the Standards and Assessment staff that showed some work they are doing in developing model lesson plans and examples of work that is being done by students. He reported that the request was made to include some ag ed material in that work.

Diane Robertson, Superintendent of CUSD #4, indicated that they require 4 years of P.E. to graduate, which is unique. She noted one exception.

- If a varsity level athlete, the student can meet graduation requirements with three years of physical education, but that only means that the student can take two semesters out of the junior and senior years. P. E. is the only class that they require four years for graduation, and it is considered an academic course just as important as the other courses.

Ms. Robertson reported that the District requires their students to be enrolled in eight academic classes each year (on the block schedule), and when they take the classroom portion of driver ed, they are in a classroom earning an academic credit. She indicated that on a current waiver, the District has been pulling them from their P.E. class for six days in a semester to do their driving part. She noted that their waiver request is for those six days. Ms. Robertson commented that if the District cannot continue this practice, there is no other option but to assign the students to a study hall for a semester, pull them out of study hall for those six days, and then have them spend the rest of the semester in the study hall. She indicated that the District feels that it is overall more educationally beneficial to the students to miss six days of P.E. rather than spend most of a semester in a study hall.

Kirt Hendrick, a principal in Herscher CUSD #2, spoke regarding their request for renewal of a P.E. waiver and gave some background information about the
District, indicating that it is very well known for musical excellence. He reported that there are two junior highs in the District.

- One junior high is in a more suburban, populated setting, and they actually do two bus runs every day. Their instrumental music students take their music class before their actual school day begins, so the students are able to have transportation to school.
- The other junior high is from his own attendance area, as well as two smaller elementary schools, for about 210 square miles, and a double bus run is not realistic. A few years ago, in an effort to increase their instructional class periods from 37 to 44 minutes, they went from a 9 to 8 period day. In order to fit in all of the other classes, continue to allow the students to be able to take two music courses, fit that equality within the District, and the musical excellence, they needed to get the P.E. waiver. If the students take two music courses, they give up a daily study period and P.E. If they take one, then they miss their study period but they have daily P.E.

Mr. Hendrick commented that the music students were involved in other kinds of activities -- intermurals or interscholastic sports. He indicated that they also did a statistical study of those students who were in the music elective courses. He reported that in all of the comparisons they did, the students' scores were significantly higher than those not participating, so they felt that the students are doing well academically.

Marjorie Olson, representing the Illinois State Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities (ISAC), reported that it has recently come to the attention of ISAC that Governor Ryan has proposed the elimination of 81 boards and councils including ISAC. She indicated that they found this recommendation to be very surprising in that a state advisory panel on special education is a requirement of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (IDEA) Section 300.650 (a). She noted that in fact, the requirement of a state advisory council is directly tied to a state’s eligibility to receive IDEA funds.

Ms. Olson reported that if the ISAC is eliminated, Illinois stands to lose over $243 million in federal dollars for special education. She indicated that the state would also lose valuable programmatic input regarding special education for youths with disabilities. Ms. Olson commented that most importantly, children with disabilities would incur a much greater loss, the inability to access appropriate educational services and programs. She noted that surely the ultimate cost of eliminating ISAC is far greater than the amount associated with funding of this all volunteer council. She urged the State Board to send a letter to Governor Ryan reinforcing the need to reconsider the elimination of ISAC.

Superintendent McGee indicated that he had the opportunity the attend the ISAC meeting for just a few minutes, and that was the first time that he heard about this issue. He reported that the State Board is certainly strongly supporting the
continuation of ISAC, and a formal letter would be sent in addition to many phone calls.

Chairman Gidwitz commented that it was probably safe to say, that the Governor is interested in receiving all of the tax dollars from the federal government that is due to Illinois. He noted that this is clearly an oversight on the part of someone in the executive branch, and he assured Ms. Olson that once this issue is called to their attention, it would be fixed. He indicated that the Superintendent and the Board's General Counsel would be sure that happens.

Mr. Serritella asked if a letter would be sent from the Board to the Governor's Office. The response was "yes."

Mrs. Rogers asked that other than the dollars, what are some of the exciting things that ISAC has done already to help improve student learning. Ms. Olson commented that one of the very important projects that ISAC completed about two years ago was with State Board employees -- the rewriting of the due process.

An audio tape of the meeting is available through the State Board office in Springfield (217/782-9560).

Technology
Rules
Part 575: School Technology Program Rules.

Superintendent McGee reported that the proposed amendments address procedural changes in the school district's application for a loan from the School Technology Revolving Loan Fund, and most of the changes concern if the money is not used properly. He indicated that these rules were published for public comment, and no public comment was received. He recommended that the Board adopt the proposed amendments as presented and authorize their submission to the Joint Committee on Administrative Review.

Mrs. Rogers moved that "the Illinois State Board of Education hereby adopts the proposed amendments to Part 575: School Technology Program Rules and authorizes their submission to the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules."

Mrs. McConachie seconded the motion.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion. The motion passed with the following votes recorded.

Mr. Gidwitz - yes  Mrs. Rogers - yes  Dr. Steiner - yes
Mrs. McConachie - yes  Mr. Serritella - yes  Mrs. Turkal - yes

Excess Cost
Rules
Part 140: Calculation of Excess Cost Rules.
Superintendent McGee reported that this rule amendment primarily is concerning students residing in orphanages or detention homes. He indicated that the rule amendment addresses P.A. 91-764 that amended the statute to provide that a district's failure to certify its claim for a particular year by July 31 would constitute the forfeiture of that claim. He recommended that the Board authorize the submission of this rulemaking for publication in the Illinois Register to elicit public comment.

Chairman Gidwitz asked why we were doing this, and staff member Sally Vogl responded that basically the rule amendment is only to make the Board's rules consistent with state law.

**Motion**

Mrs. Rogers moved that "the Illinois State Board of Education hereby directs the dissemination of the proposed amendment to Part 140: Calculation of Excess Cost rules under Section 18-3 of the Illinois School Code for publication in the Illinois Register to elicit comment."

Dr. Steiner seconded the motion.

**Vote on Motion**

The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion. The motion passed with the following votes recorded.

- Mr. Gidwitz - yes
- Mrs. Rogers - yes
- Dr. Steiner - yes
- Mrs. McConachie - yes
- Mr. Serritella - yes
- Mrs. Turkal - yes

**Waiver Report**

Superintendent McGee reported that on April 18, the Board discussed the waiver report and heard from a Rockford School District representative regarding the rationale for their waiver request. He indicated that there were some other representatives who spoke to the Board earlier during public participation regarding their waiver requests.

The Superintendent recommended that the Board

- Approve his recommendation to deny the waiver modification request to extend the reading improvement block grant funds for additional grades (Rockford waiver);
- Recommend to the General Assembly denial of the waiver request from Antioch High School District #117 to administer an assessment other than the PSAE;
- Recommend to the General Assembly that 18 of the 19 physical education waiver requests be limited to two years based on the Board's new policy and pending legislation (The request from Leyden High School District is
recommended for approval for the 2001-2002 school year per their request. This is a modification to the recommendation as printed in the Board packet.); and

• Forward the remaining requests without comment.

Superintendent MccGee expressed appreciation to Superintendent Robertson and Board President Goetter for their comments during public participation, and he also expressed hope that in two years, things may be different. He encouraged them and others to come back at the two-year period. He commented that we need to focus on the Illinois Learning Standards, and we believe that the physical education/health standards are critically important to all students.

Chairman Gidwitz indicated that he thought it was important that young people have physical education. He noted that the Board had spent the last several months talking about how important it is and that we see that we fulfill the intent of the Board's standards. The Chairman suggested that in future submissions, we begin to get evidence of the accomplishment of those standards even if the formal practice of having a P.E. class is not undertaken. He noted that that is what we have asked the General Assembly for. The Superintendent responded that going forth from this point, we will have that.

**Motion**

Mr. Serritella moved that "the State Board of Education adopts the following two motions.

'The Illinois State Board of Education hereby denies the request of Rockford Public School District #205 for modification to Section 2-3.51 of the School Code that specifies the use of reading grant funds.'

'The Illinois State Board of Education hereby approves the Spring 2001 Waiver Report and authorizes its submission to the General Assembly by May 1. This includes:

1. Recommendation to the General Assembly for legislative denial of the request of Antioch Community High School District #117 concerning the Prairie State Achievement Exam;
2. Recommendation to the General Assembly that the legislature approve the 18 requests seeking to waive the daily physical education requirement for two years only (through school year 2002-2003) and 1 request, Leyden High School District #212, for one year (school year 2001-2002) per their request.
3. Submission of all remaining requests to the General Assembly without comment.'"

Mrs. McConachie seconded the motion.

The Superintendent indicated that regarding the Rockford School District, the waiver requested that they reallocate their reading grant money or a portion of it to
serve students in grades 7-12. He reported that we denied that waiver based on
the data we had in reading achievement in the grade schools. He noted that it is
easy to see through the ILSI website that of the approximately 36 schools that
have third grades in Rockford, 23 of those schools have 50 percent or more of the
students who do not meet state reading standards.

Superintendent McGee commented that we were worried that allocating money
away from those schools would not be in the best interest of the students and
would dilute the resources to these students. He reported that as we assured
them on April 18, we do hope and are fervently working to have H.B. 2063 pass
the Senate and be signed by the Governor. He noted that this bill would allocate
an additional $5 million of reading block grant money to middle schools and high
schools above and beyond the $80+ million we already have in there for K-6.

The Superintendent indicated that there is hope for Rockford, and he hoped that
they would direct their efforts toward helping the State Board pass that bill. He
reiterated that the data was so compelling that the current reading grant money
they have now, which is over $400,000, really needs to be put to better use in their
elementary schools.

Vote on
Motion
The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion. The motion passed with
the following votes recorded.

Mr. Gidwitz - yes Mrs. Rogers - yes Dr. Steiner - yes
Mrs. McConachie - yes Mr. Serritella - yes Mrs. Turkal - yes

Board
Travel
The Chairman called for Agenda Item C.4., Immediate Action Items,
Quarterly Board Travel Report.

Motion
Mrs. Rogers moved that "the Illinois State Board of Education hereby approves the
Quarterly Board Travel Expenditures Report."

Mrs. McConachie seconded the motion.

Vote on
Motion
The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion. The motion passed with
the following votes recorded.

Mr. Gidwitz - yes Mrs. Rogers - yes Dr. Steiner - yes
Mrs. McConachie - yes Mr. Serritella - yes Mrs. Turkal - yes

Chairman
The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Announcements and Reports,
Chairman.

Chairman Gidwitz announced that the May Board meeting has been changed to
May 17-18, 2001 (Thursday and Friday), in Springfield.
Superintendent

The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Announcements and Reports, Superintendent.

Superintendent McGee reported that the Virtual High School is going very well for approximately 100 students enrolled in pilot courses. He indicated that we have selected additional courses for the fall semester based on surveys of superintendents, principals, and high school students which showed that they want more courses in AP, foreign language, career, technical, and fine arts. He noted that there are now 66 courses ready, and we have received inquiries from over 300 schools. The Superintendent commented that we are excited that the initial launch is bigger than it was in Florida and Kentucky. He reported that we have delivered 24 Virtual High School online instructor laptops, scanners, faxes, etc. He indicated that "e-college.com" and others are very excited about helping in this, and he was pleased to read an article talking about the success of some of these educational providers.

The Superintendent recognized the special accomplishments and achievements of several staff members.

- Gary Greene -- for providing an excellent presentation and technical assistance to Schlarman High School (a Catholic High School) and Danville High School personnel
- Sharon Riffey and Bill Lohman -- for their help to District #99 in Downers Grove in the Illinois Textbook Loan program
- Ann Keran -- for her tremendous contribution to the Christa McAuliffe Fellowship Program from the Council of Chief State School Officers
- Sharon Battles -- for helping an individual get the certification papers that were needed
- Shelley Helton -- for her technical assistance on a substitute waiver for Lake Bluff District #65
- Gloria Jordan and Dr. Hilda Everage -- for technical assistance to Belvidere School District
- Frank Llano -- for his hard work and cooperation from Carolyn Nordstrom of Chicago United
- Nona Myers and Marty Miller and from the Capital Development Board -- Donald Broughton, and Marcy Joerger -- for their help in preparation of a construction grant from Robinson School District #2

Superintendent McGee commented that we are taking customer service seriously, and providing first-class service is a part of the Board's mission. He noted that it was good to see that we are taking some big steps toward realizing that aspiration.

Committees

The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Announcements and Reports, Committees.
Chairman Gidwitz announced that he had asked Mrs. Turkal to chair the Legislative Committee, and she agreed to do this.

Mrs. Rogers, Chair of the Board Operations Committee, indicated that in an effort for continuous improvement, she asked the Board members what went well with this meeting and what did not. The Board members provided their feedback.

Members The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Announcements and Reports, Members. There were no further reports.

An audio tape of the meeting is available through the State Board office in Springfield (217/782-9560).

Adjournment The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

___________________________________
Connie Rogers, Secretary

___________________________________
Ronald J. Gidwitz, Chairman