The meeting was called to order at 11:20 a.m. by the Chairman, Mr. Gidwitz, who asked Alison Harbour, the staff secretary to the Board, to call the roll. Ms. Harbour called the roll of members. A quorum was present. (Dr. Steiner arrived at 11:30 a.m. on October 17, and Mrs. Turkal arrived during the lunch break on October 17.)

Chairman Gidwitz indicated that Mr. Serritella was unable to attend the Board meeting this month due to business conflicts.

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Strategic Planning: Goals and Measures.

The Chairman indicated that during the August and September Board meetings, the Board had discussed and continued to refine the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Measures that were initially developed during the June Work Conference. He noted that during today's meeting the Board would discuss the final recommendations of the Strategic Planning Committee and staff.

The Superintendent stated that following the September Board meeting, the draft Vision, Mission, Goals, and Measures were disseminated to Policy Council Members for review and input. He explained that during the Policy Council meeting, these materials were discussed and suggestions regarding revisions were identified. He indicated that these suggestions were then provided to the Strategic Planning Committee who, with staff, developed the document that was printed in this month's Board meeting materials. He reported that during conversation with the Strategic Planning Committee, six uses of the Goals and Measures were identified.

Superintendent McGee explained that the Committee and staff have attempted to bring clarity and brevity to the Goal statements, and rely on the Measures to assist in embellishing all dimensions of each Goal.
Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input (see Addendum II).

The meeting recessed at 11:40 a.m. and reconvened at 12:50 p.m.

Academic Early Warning List

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Academic Early Warning List.

The Chairman indicated that this discussion would update the Board members regarding the status of the Academic Early Warning List and recommended timelines for its implementation.

The Superintendent noted that staff would provide a detailed background and review past activity relating to the requirements associated with the Academic Early Warning List. He explained staff would also provide an overview of services that are or have been provided to Warning List schools. He explained that his recommendation states that between now and November, he would like staff to conduct a detailed analysis of the specific support services and their impact on the schools that have been previously identified and remain on the Warning List. He said that he would plan to recommend action on the Warning List during the November Board meeting.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input (see Addendum III).

Budget/School Funding

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Budget/School Funding.

The Chairman indicated that the Board had discussed the Fiscal Year 2003 Budget during the past two Board meetings, and would continue these discussions in preparation for hearings and a line item budget recommendation in November. He explained that in keeping with the Board’s focus for learning on school finance, staff member Bill Hinrichs would provide insight on the General State Aid Formula. He also indicated that Nona Myers would provide an update on the school construction program.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff members David Wood, Nona Myers, and Bill Hinrichs assisted in responding to questions (See Addendum IV).

FAAS Report Card

The Chairman reported that last spring an update on the Financial Watch List and Financial Reporting System was provided to the Board. He explained that at that time the Board discussed the need to develop a reporting methodology that the public could easily understand and use. He indicated that today’s discussion would provide an update on the Reporting system and its development status.
The Superintendent reported that in addition to the need for a clear and concise reporting methodology for public consumption, the Board had requested staff coordinate and integrate concepts of the Academic and Financial Report Card. He noted that staff are not quite there yet but that is their direction. He stated that staff member Gary Ey would provide the Board with an overview of activity since last spring.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input (see Addendum V).

**Examination**

The Chairman stated that during the past few months an advisory committee had been meeting to address the issues associated with the need to develop a high-stakes examination as a condition for certification. He noted that today’s discussion would focus on the recommendations of the advisory committee and next steps associated with those recommendations.

The Superintendent explained to the Board members that the information in the Board meeting materials provides a thorough overview of the deliberations of the advisory committee. He reported that specific items of clear consensus are highlighted in the meeting materials, and a variety of options where consensus has not been gained are also noted. He introduced two members of the advisory committee, Renee Clift and Bob Gerry, who are also the co-chairs.

Superintendent McGee stated that he recommends the advisory committee revisit the proposals and attempt to establish a consensus report. He noted that this report should be based on the reality of funding and resources available for implementation of an assessment.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff members Rob Sampson and Pat Glenn assisted in responding to questions.

**Closed Session**

The Chairman called for a motion to go into closed session.

Mrs. Rogers moved that “the State Board of Education go into a closed meeting on October 17 at 4:15 p.m. and on October 18 at 7:30 a.m. under the exceptions set forth in the Open Meeting Act of the State of Illinois as follows:

Section 2 (c) (1) for the purpose of discussing information regarding appointment, employment or dismissal of an employee.

She further moved that Superintendent McGee be included in this meeting and that the Board be authorized to invite anyone else into the meeting as needed.”
Mrs. McConachie seconded the motion.

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

Ms. Branch - yes  Mrs. McConachie - yes  Dr. Steiner - yes
Mr. Gidwitz - yes  Mrs. Rogers - yes  Mrs. Turkal - yes

The public meeting recessed at 5:15 p.m. and the Board went into closed meeting at 5:30 p.m. The closed meeting recessed at 9:00 p.m. and reconvened on Thursday, October 18 at 7:30 a.m. The closed meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

The public meeting reconvened and was called to order by Chairman Gidwitz on October 18 at 9:35 a.m.

The Chairman announced that for various reasons a minor change was being made to the meeting agenda. He explained that the Baldrige in Education update was being postponed until the November or December meeting.

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Physical Development Health/Fine Arts Cut Scores.

The Chairman stated that the Board has approved cut scores for all ISAT content areas. He noted that in keeping with this practice, the Board will review and act on the Physical Development and Health/Fine Arts cut scores.

The Superintendent reported that the areas of Fine Arts and Physical Development and Health are different than other ISAT content areas. He explained that the process for recommending cut scores on these assessments was the same. He said that the differences include the following information.

1. There is no requirement in statute to assess these skills annually – the only requirement is to conduct special studies periodically; and
2. While 50 items were used for establishing cut scores, each individual student is assessed on only 10 items – thus no individual student scores will be reported.

Superintendent McGee stated that he would be recommending approval of these cut scores as recommended by the Standard Setting panels.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Carmen Chapman Pfeiffer assisted in responding to questions.
The Chairman indicated that there was extra time on the meeting agenda to discuss any issues of importance to the Board or the Superintendent.

**Supt. Report**

The Superintendent reported that the October 17 Special Senate Hearing regarding Reading had gone very well. He asked staff member Michael Dunn to update the Board on the Hearing specifics. Mr. Dunn commented that the Hearing had been one of the Agency’s finest moments. He noted there had been 22 oral testimonies given and the State Board’s reading improvement efforts were highly praised. He explained that he had been impressed with the broad range of state-wide representation and the range of responsibilities of the various people who had given testimony. He further explained that he had been very pleased to hear testimony which gave specific examples of how the Illinois Reads and the Reading Improvement Block Grant materials, products, and services have helped students and teachers.

**Federal Issues Report**

Superintendent McGee asked staff member Randy Burge to update the Board members regarding federal issues. Mr. Burge reported that the Conference Committee had been scheduled to meet on October 17 but the meeting had been canceled due to the adjournment of the House. He noted that there were still tough issues to be resolved and two of these are annual testing and the definition of adequate yearly progress. He also reported that some members of Congress are starting to doubt whether or not they will be able to finish the reauthorization of ESEA this fall. Mr. Burge noted that the House leadership and the President have both said they want to finish work on the reauthorization, and he believes that they will still push to do that. He stated that the House Appropriations Committee had passed their spending bill for education and gave it a seven billion dollar increase – the largest increase in history for education. He indicated that there was quite a great deal of interest in the House and Senate regarding the school renovation program, and that there is funding in the House Appropriations bill for this project.

Chairman Gidwitz commented that there was still additional time on the meeting agenda for discussion or reporting on issues of interest or concern. He indicated that Committee reports could be given at this time.

**Board Operations Committee Report**

Mrs. Rogers commented that in the mode of continuous improvement, the Board had received a book on the subject of ten trends regarding educating children for a profoundly different future. She noted that she felt this book had been a “really good read.” She asked that staff look at the Goals that the State Board had developed and see where they fit in with these future trends. She indicated it would be helpful to find out if we are on or off target and if we are off target, how far off are we. Mrs. McConachie stated that this process should be brief and succinct. Superintendent McGee assured the Board that it would be.
Mrs. McConachie reported that she and the Chairman had attended another meeting of the Joint Education Committee – a long and intense discussion of the “Unified Plan” for preparing quality educators in Illinois. She noted that the Board of Higher Education, the Community College Board, the State Board of Education, the Workforce Investment Council, and the Student Assistance Commission are all working together to try and come up with a common plan. She explained that this plan would advance the agenda that the State Board has been working on with quality educators. She reported that the plan is moving closer and closer to something that we are all going to be able to support. Mrs. McConachie noted that this plan will be the central topic of conversation on November 19 at the Governor’s State Summit regarding quality educators. She indicated that the Board would be acting on this document following the Summit in November.

Mrs. McConachie reported that the Strategic Planning Committee had completed work on the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Measures and now they would be integrated by staff into the Agency division business plans and also integrated across all divisions for the major Board initiatives. She also reported that the Committee had discussed Board training and Bill Hinrichs’ presentation during yesterday’s meeting was a part of that plan. She noted that this training will continue to focus, for the short term, on finance since that is a major Board goal. She noted that this training would help the Board members become well informed about the finance system and about adequacy and equity issues.

Mrs. McConachie reported that the Committee had also discussed governance issues. She commented that these issues are being talked about in the press, by Legislators, and by practitioners in the field. She explained that these groups are concerned about how education in Illinois should be governed and the following questions are being raised.

- Does the current system work well enough?
- What are the system’s strengths and weaknesses?
- What are some alternatives?

She noted that the Committee felt that these questions were in the purview of the State Board to discuss and to research. Mrs. McConachie commented that the Committee is proposing that the Board engage in discussions at subsequent meetings over the next six months with our critics, our partners, with Legislators, and with experts in the field. She explained that this public dialogue would focus on structure, selection of state board members, organizational models – strengths and weaknesses, and appropriate roles and responsibilities.
Mrs. McConachie stated that the Committee believes that this dialogue would not only help the Board improve on its own work as presently constituted, but it would also inform the public and the Senate Committee that is interested in this subject. She said that this proposal would be referred to the Board Operations Committee for their consideration.

Mrs. McConachie reported that on October 19 she would be participating in a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., to announce the results of the NASBE year-long study on e-Learning policy. She explained that e-Learning refers to uses of on-line technologies in classrooms across regions, across states, and across international boundaries. She noted that the title of this report is *Any Time, Any Place, Any Path, Any Pace: Taking the Lead on e-Learning Policy*. She explained that this report was about state board’s policies and opportunities for revising state board policy to accommodate e-Learning issues.

Mrs. McConachie commented that e-Learning has the potential to totally upset the apple cart of not only state governance but local governance and organization of education. She reported that in Pennsylvania there are on-line charter schools that are operating state-wide and are pulling substantial amounts of per-pupil stipends from the state out of school districts. She said that there is a similar and much more expansive program in Alaska. She commented that these kinds of operations change where students want to attend school.

Mrs. McConachie indicated that there are accountability issues associated with this learning strategy because some online programs are of poor quality. She noted that some of these programs are excellent – but there are no consumer guides out there to tell people which one is which. She indicated that these e-Learning programs are not proceeding as aggressively as they were a year ago. She explained that these programs would be back and would change the way we think and do business.

Mrs. McConachie stated that in the NASBE report there is an interesting chart that has questions that assume the current educational system, and questions that do not assume the current educational system. She shared the following information from the report.

The questions that assume the current educational system:

1. How can computers improve schools?
2. How is today’s technology best used in classrooms? Is it being used well?
The questions that do not assume the current educational system:

1. How can new technologies enhance learning wherever it occurs?
2. How might you use emerging new types of networked computer and digital devices to enhance learning at anytime, anywhere, at any pace, and calibrated for the individual child?

Mrs. McConachie also stated that there are interesting trends emerging in terms of customizing for individuals, rather than delivering a mass education as we have done in the past. She said that she was grateful to staff members Lugene Finley and Lee Patton for putting together her bullet points for the press conference. She asked that copies of the NASBE report be provided to each Board member. She indicated that this is one of those out-in-front issues where there are wonderful opportunities for leadership and action.

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 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

__________________________________________
Connie Rogers, Secretary

__________________________________________
Ronald J. Gidwitz, Chairman