MEMBERS PRESENT:
Marjorie B. Branch   Marilyn McConachie   Janet Steiner
Ronald J. Gidwitz   Connie Rogers   Beverly Turkal
Judith A. Gold   Richard Sandsmark

Robert E. Schiller, State Superintendent of Education

MEMBERS ABSENT:
Vincent J. Serritella

Roll Call
The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by the Chairman, Mr. Gidwitz, who asked Alison Harbour, staff secretary to the Board, to call the roll. Ms. Harbour called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Chairman Gidwitz indicated that Mr. Serritella was unable to join the meeting this month, Mr. Sandsmark would join the meeting later this afternoon, and Dr. Steiner will join the meeting before lunch.

East St. Louis S.D. Dialogue
The Chairman called for Agenda Item, School District Dialogue: East St. Louis District #189.

Chairman Gidwitz reported that the Board was very pleased to continue a series of discussions with representatives from local school districts about their academic challenges and accomplishments. He stated that East St. Louis School District #189 has made progress in student achievement at the elementary level but continues to face many challenges and barriers in relation to school improvement.

Superintendent Schiller reported that he had visited the district on October 1 and spent several hours at three schools – Miles Davis Elementary, Lincoln Jr. High School, and East St. Louis High School. He indicated that this visit had given him an opportunity to visit with students and teachers and to observe the programs that would be discussed during today’s dialogue.
Superintendent Nate Anderson introduced the following guests from his school district:

- Dr. Stephanie Carpenter, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education;
- Dr. Chester Bluette, Principal, East St. Louis Senior High School;
- Dr. Tam Hill, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education;
- Mrs. Darlene Morgan, Principal, Miles Davis Elementary School;
- Mr. Joe Louis, Board Member; and
- Mr. George Mitchem, Board Member.

Representatives from the East St. Louis District #189 Board and administration talked formally and informally with State Board members about the actions they have taken to improve their schools.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

Dr. Steiner arrived at 11:25 a.m.

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, East St. Louis S.D. #189 Financial Oversight Panel Annual Report.

The Chairman reported that each September 1 the Financial Oversight Panel is required to file its annual report with the State Board. He introduced Richard Mark, Chairman of the Panel. Mr. Mark introduced Ann Duncan, a member of the Oversight Panel, and Jim Tapscott the financial administrator for the Panel. He noted that Saundra Hudson, the remaining member of the Panel, had been unable to attend today’s meeting. He thanked the members and State Board staff member Gary Ey and retired staff member Gary Anderson for their hard work over the years with the Oversight Panel.

Mr. Mark reported to the Board regarding the Panel’s accomplishments during the past year. He explained the progress the Panel has made to ensure the financial stability of the East St. Louis School District, and his presentation provided the Board with the opportunity to understand in detail the Panel’s specific concerns and recommendations (see Addendum II).
Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

NCATE/State Partnership Agreement & Protocol

Chairman Gidwitz reported that on May 7, 1988, the Illinois State Board of Education approved an initial partnership agreement with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). He indicated that the five-year partnership agreement and protocol under which Illinois continues to operate was signed on October 30, 1996, and extended for two years on December 31, 2000. He noted that the agreement is scheduled for renewal on January 1, 2003. NCATE is scheduled to review the content of its State Protocol form, and some revisions are anticipated.

The Superintendent and staff members Chris Koch and Michael Long explained the terms of the proposed agreement and protocol, and solicited comments and reactions from State Board members. Superintendent Schiller reported that staff would incorporate the Board’s feedback into a second draft that would be shared with the Illinois Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (IACTE), the Partnership Committee, and the State Teacher Certification Board. He explained that reactions from these entities would be reported to the State Board at its November Board meeting.

Middle Level Certification Survey Results & Next Steps

Chairman Gidwitz reported that at the August Board meeting, the State Board accepted the findings of a survey on middle level certification distributed by staff in July. He indicated that the purpose of the questionnaire was to define critical issues that seemed to be causing concern or confusion regarding the proposed certificate. He noted that flexibility in assigned teachers, educator supply, capacity to meet anticipated demand, and job mobility were among the concerns cited most frequently by stakeholders who responded to the survey.
The Chairman explained that to increase the level of participation in the questionnaire, the Board directed the staff to re-open the survey on August 26 and to make it available for comment through the middle of September.

The Superintendent reported that the Board has been studying this issue for a long time. He indicated that it is a good example of the Board seeking substantial input on ways to resolve a policy problem.

Superintendent Schiller explained that because of the lengthy dialogue with stakeholders, he was recommending that the Board enhance the present middle level endorsement as an alternative to adopting a middle level certification. He noted that this enhancement would occur by redefining the present endorsement in terms of selected standards and performance indicators selected from those that were developed for the proposed certificate. He indicated that preparation based upon these standards would significantly improve the qualifications of middle level teachers in working with middle grade learners.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input regarding the results of the Middle Level Certification Survey and the many conversations that have taken place with colleges and universities concerning potential capacity for middle-level certification programming. Staff member Michael Long assisted in responding to questions.

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Illinois GED Testing Program Application Fee.

Chairman Gidwitz reported that the State Board is responsible for policy implementation and jurisdictional administration of the GED Testing Program, including establishing fees and providing supervision of all testing centers within Illinois. He noted that today’s issue is a proposed increase in the program application fee.

Superintendent Schiller reported that the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) introduced a new series of tests on January 1, 2002. He noted that additional costs of the 2002 Series GED Tests include an increase in leasing fees for test batteries, an increase in the per person fee assessed to jurisdictions for first-time examinees, and the establishment of a statewide electronic scoring system.
The Superintendent commented that in response to the increases in July 2001, the Board convened a GED 2002 Fee Committee to review Illinois’ options for handling the additional fees for testing and the cost of electronic scoring. The following recommendations were suggested:

- a nominal increase in the application fee for test takers;
- utilizing remaining funds to pay a portion of the test rental fees; and
- an additional state appropriation.

The Superintendent indicated that he was asking the Board to review and approve the recommendation of the GED 2002 Fee Committee to increase the GED application fee from $30 to $35 effective January 1, 2003.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff member Chris Koch assisted in responding to questions.

Rules for Initial Review: Part 25

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Rules for Initial Review: Part 25 (Certification).

Chairman Gidwitz reported that the amendments contained in this set of rules arise from three recent pieces of legislation, as well as from the staff’s experience with approving the providers of continuing professional development for purposes of the renewal of teaching certificates.

The Superintendent and staff discussed the proposed amendments for initial review and asked the Board for its authorization to distribute them for public comment.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff member Sally Vogl assisted in responding to questions.

Standard Monthly Reports

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, Standard Monthly Reports: Finance, Audit, Agency Operations Status.

Chairman Gidwitz reported this was the third in an ongoing series of reports about agency fiscal matters and human resources.
Staff member David Wood reported to the Board regarding key information on fiscal and administrative activities of the state agency.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

Financial Profile System

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, District Financial Profile System Status Report.

Chairman Gidwitz reported that in March 2002, staff met with the Board to release the final Financial Watch, Financially Certified, and Financially Certified, and Financial Oversight Panel lists under the FAAS measure and process. He noted that at that time, the Board encouraged staff to finalize a new designation system and report progress by mid-year.

Superintendent Schiller reported that the proposed School Financial Profile is ready for use as an internal management tool and will be demonstrated to the Board for discussion during the meeting.

The Superintendent and staff members updated the State Board on the development and implementation of the proposed School District Financial Profile that replaces the Financial Assurance and Accountability System (FAAS), and they explained the overall framework and benefits of the School District Financial Profile. Superintendent Schiller stated that the Board would be asked to approve the designations and criteria indicators at the November meeting (see Addendum III).

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff members David Wood, Gary Ey, Nona Myers and Debbie Vespa assisted in responding to questions.

Ms. Branch left the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and she and Mr. Sandmark joined the Education Roundtable Forum discussions at 4:00 p.m.
Chairman Gidwitz reported that the State Board of Education recognizes that Hazel Crest School District 152 ½ is experiencing serious financial problems which have resulted in requests for assistance including a petition from their district for a Financial Oversight Panel. He noted that staff has worked closely with the district and attended the district board meeting on September 30 where a resolution to petition the State Board for immediate appointment of a Financial Oversight Panel was considered.

Superintendent Schiller explained that an Article 1B petition for a Financial Oversight Panel requires a school district to be certified as being in “financial difficulty” under Section 1A-8 and sets forth specific criteria for this designation. He indicated that because of the speed with which Hazel Crest School District found itself in this situation, it is essentially bypassing the normal progression of financial designation and instead is petitioning the State Board to act immediately to appoint a three-member Financial Oversight Panel. He explained that if approved, the Panel would be able to provide immediate oversight and approval for additional borrowing by the district as well as development of an “emergency financial assistance and recovery plan.” He said that there would be three people appearing before the Board from this district: Superintendent Dr. Harry Reynolds, finance officer Donna Gayden, and finance consultant Rob Grossi.

Superintendent Schiller and agency staff provided the Board with the details of the school district’s precarious financial position and the potential for it to exhaust all available cash reserves prior to the completion of the 2002-2003 school year (see Addendum IV).

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input. Staff members David Wood, Gary Ey, and Harry Blackburn assisted in responding to questions.
The Chairman announced that before the Board moves into closed
session, the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools,
Superintendent Schiller, and the members of the State Board would be
hosting Education Leadership Forum roundtable discussions at 4:00
p.m. in Ballroom C. He indicated that these discussions would seek
input on critical education issues facing the state.

**Closed Session**

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

**Motion**

Mrs. Rogers moved that the State Board of Education go into a closed
meeting under the exceptions set forth in the Open Meetings Act of the
State of Illinois as follows:

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

- Section 2 (c) (11) for the purpose of discussing litigation.

She further moved that the Board be authorized to invite anyone else
into the meeting as needed.

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
Ms. Gold – yes  Mrs. McConachie – yes  Mrs. Turkal – yes

The public meeting recessed at 4:00 p.m. and the Board went into
closed session at 5:30 p.m. The closed session recessed at 9:30 p.m.
and the public meeting reconvened at 9:15 a.m. on October 17.
State & Federal Legislative Status

The Chairman called for Agenda Item, State and Federal Legislative Status Reports.

Superintendent Schiller and staff member Peter Leonis updated the Board regarding the process in developing legislative priorities and proposals to support the Board’s goals and the needs of school districts in Illinois. The Superintendent, the Board’s Governmental Affairs Committee, and the staff agreed to continue to work with stakeholders toward development of a legislative proposal for FY04. The Board also discussed the federal legislative report and its implications for Illinois.

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 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Connie Rogers, Secretary

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Ronald J. Gidwitz, Chairman