MEMBERS PRESENT:
Ronald J. Gidwitz       Connie Rogers       Janet Steiner
*Marjorie B. Branch   Vincent J. Serritella   Beverly Turkal
Marilyn McConachie

Glenn W. "Max" McGee, State Superintendent of Education

MEMBERS ABSENT:
None

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 10:15 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. (*Ms. Branch was connected to the meeting by telephone.)

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Rogers moved that “the State Board of Education hereby approves the minutes of the August 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, and 28 Board meetings.” Mrs. McConachie seconded the motion, and it was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

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

Jim Guilinger, representing the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education, shared the following information with the Board.

- He stated that he wanted to bring to the Board the two new compact discs that were distributed this past June to every agriculture educator in the State of Illinois, all of the universities that train agriculture teachers, and all of the student teachers who are in their last year of training to become an agriculture or horticulture teacher. These two new compact discs go with the original two compact discs.

- These compact discs contain approximately 115 lessons – individual lessons that a local teacher can use. Each lesson is cross-referenced to the Illinois State Learning Standards and the Skills Standards. The State of Illinois leads the nation in this effort.

- When the compact disc collection is finished, the entire curriculum for agriculture education in the State of Illinois would be completed. If this entire curriculum on paper it would be 8,500 pages long. This curriculum could be updated with a new compact disc -- each costing only $3.00.
His organization has two major goals in agriculture education this year. The first goal is that the State Board of Education retain at least two individuals that focus on agriculture education within the Agency, and the second goal is adequate funding for agriculture education. Agriculture education has been level-funded for the last three years. His organization’s budget proposal has been submitted to the State Board, and copies are available for Board members.

This budget proposal describes the projects his organization would pursue with any extra funding from the General Assembly. This proposal was a laundry list, and all of these projects would not be able to be completed. His organization has accomplished most of the things that the State Board of Education wanted them to do. Mr. Guillinger asked for the Board's support and thanked them for their time.

Donna Baiocchi, Executive Director of ED-RED, shared the following information with the Board. She explained that ED-RED represents suburban school districts and special education cooperatives. She stated that she wanted to address the Board about the impending state superintendent search.

Her organization was surprised and not necessarily happy about the announcement that Superintendent McGee would not be receiving a renewal on his contract. ED-RED believes this is a setback to the educational community.

The State Board's statement regarding the Superintendent’s contract listed many educational accomplishments that the citizens of Illinois can be proud of. The Board's statement praised the Illinois Learning Standards implementation, the new state assessment system, early childhood education programs, reading improvement programs, support for local districts, the ILSE website, and the Virtual High School. Ms. Baiocchi asked the Board members by whose standards are they judging their belief that the students in Illinois are not meeting the Learning Standards fast enough.

Illinois has been held up as an icon by other states in the area of school reform. Other states are backing off of standards because they feel their testing processes are wrong. Illinois has seen improvement and has not backed off. Ms. Baiocchi asked the Board to look at school reform instead of feeding a misconception that the schools in Illinois are failing.
The State Board of Education needs to follow through on its promise to consult and listen to a broad range of community members regarding the selection of the next State Superintendent. Ms. Baiocchi asked the Board to keep them and the school districts on track by choosing an educator who would direct the course for students and schools in Illinois.

Dave Peterson, Superintendent of the Northern Suburban Special Education District, President of the Illinois Alliance of Administrators of Special Education, and a member of the ED-Red Executive Committee, shared the following information with the Board.

He addresses the Board as an Illinois educator who is terribly disappointed with the Board’s decision to force Max McGee to resign. The Board had made a costly mistake that would negatively affect the children in public schools. No matter what spin is placed on the Superintendent’s resignation, only the most naive will view it as anything other than Illinois politics at its worst. Despite being the victim of political gamesmanship, Max McGee had begun to turn the tide on real education reform.

The Illinois Learning Standards, the Virtual High School, the Prairie State Achievement Exam, new teacher certification standards, and a renewed emphasis on interest with students with special needs were just a few of the benchmarks of the State Superintendent’s success. Max McGee has the courage and the tenacity to continuously and tirelessly talk about the needs of children. Mr. Peterson asked the Board to consider bringing continuity to the position of State Superintendent of Education. This job has been a revolving door which disrupts the smooth operation of Illinois school districts.

The next leader of the schools in Illinois should be an educator. That leadership must come from someone who understands and can champion public education. Mr. Peterson felt that Max McGee had been doing just that.

Lonnie Johns, from Jacksonville, Illinois, shared the following information with the Board.

Mr. Johns asked the Board why they have been so unsuccessful at improving Illinois education testing results even after moving the testing dates almost two months later in the school year. He quoted text from an article in Phi Delta Kappan which detailed why education reform always ends up making things worse.
• The recent ISAT results represent a failure of the State Board of Education. The State Board does not have a system of school accountability but just little pieces.

• At the news conference releasing the ISAT results, the fact that more special education students took the ISAT was noted and praised. Later in an editorial in the Chicago Tribune, the State Superintendent commented that special education students were the cause of flat or declining scores. Thirteen pages in the State Board meeting materials contained information regarding ISAT results, but the only results noted are comparisons of students labeled IEP and students labeled non-IEP. Mr. Johns asked the Board what they had expected.

• By any objective measurement, the Board’s alternate assessment is a failure. This assessment was used by only one-third of the expected number of students. This assessment is needlessly complex, time consuming, and will require tremendous effort and expense to be made minimally acceptable. The Board’s special education staff promoted ISAT and repeatedly stated that almost all students should take the ISAT because children are more alike than they are different.

• The Board and staff tell local schools that they will be judged by inclusion, and they believe it. At a summer conference, Project Choices had a speaker making fun of separate, specialized special education classes in schools, and everyone knows that the State Board is funding and supporting Project Choices. This kind of support will produce a reaction. Mr. Johns asked the Board where the evidence was that proved they were putting learning first.

• A former member of the Board had warned them not to agree to the Corey H. settlement agreement. At the strong urgency of the State Superintendent and certain members of the Board, they had agreed to it. The Board had spent months attempting to say it did not understand the agreement’s clear language and intent. Now the Board is about to add all of the Corey H. requirements to every regular education teacher in Illinois.

• For a variety of reasons, the Board has put themselves into an impossible political position. For the first time in the Board’s history, the Agency’s mailings have the imprint of George H. Ryan, Governor. Mr. Johns asked the Board if they were independent or under the control of the Governor. It appeared they were trying to do both.
Disastrous decisions lead to political control, and if the Governor’s name is on State Board’s mailings, the Governor is going to attempt to exercise even more control over the Agency. Putting learning first is a high standard for the Board, but eventually it would be held accountable.

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

**NBPTS**

The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Immediate Action Items, NBPTS.

The Chairman reported that during the Board’s discussion yesterday regarding the National Board Professional Teacher Standards (NBPTS), the Board requested to review its options for expanding this program and develop a more strategic recommendation, as well as a compensation proposal, to bring back in October-November. He stated that the Board would not be recommending any action at this time on NBPTS.

**Title II Report Card**

The Chairman called Agenda Item D., Immediate Action Items, Title II Report Card.

Superintendent McGee reported that during yesterday’s meeting, the Board discussed the Title II Report Card. He stated that issues were raised by that report and other documents including the newspapers of the last two weeks. He commented that several suggestions had been made regarding the packaging of the information and the implications this holds for the FY 2003 Budget Proposal.

The Superintendent noted that staff will address these suggestions next month. He indicated that the Title II Report Card is due to the United States Department of Education (USDE) by October 7. He stated that at this time, he was asking the Board to authorize the submission of the 2001 Illinois Title II Report Card to the USDE and to the citizens of Illinois.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

**Motion**

Mrs. Rogers moved that “the State Board of Education hereby authorizes the Superintendent and staff to submit the 2001 Illinois Title II Report Card to the United States Department of Education by October 7, 2001.”

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

The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Immediate Action Items, Semi-Annual Waiver Report.

Superintendent McGee stated that concern was expressed at yesterday’s meeting about the recommendation to submit the Physical Education and Health Waiver requests to the General Assembly without comment. He stated that he was very disturbed that the Agency had not notified the field appropriately, and he indicated that he started to collect data on how we did notify them and what happened to a letter that he knew had been written. He noted that he would report back to the Board before the next meeting.

The Superintendent indicated there were two options that the Board has to consider regarding the current Waiver Report. He noted that the first option is that the Board submits the Report to the General Assembly without recommendation or denial or without recommendation of approval but with analysis of some of the problems found in the Waiver Report. He explained that some students in many of the districts will be denied the opportunity to participate in enough physical education classes which will enable them to meet State Standards. He stated that the second option is for the Board to take action to recommend General Assembly denial of a specific waiver request.

The Superintendent stated that it was his recommendation to send the State Board’s analysis to the General Assembly, because they are empowered to act on the Waivers. He also noted that he thought the General Assembly would benefit from this analysis, given the fact that we did drop the ball on communicating the detail that we expected from the districts regarding compliance with the State Board’s policy.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

Mrs. McConachie moved that “the State Board of Education hereby recommends to the General Assembly denial of the 10 waiver requests that propose certain groups of students not be afforded an opportunity to participate in physical education and therefore not meet the Physical Development and Health Learning Standards. She further moved that the State Board of Education provide an analysis to the General Assembly regarding the waiver requests relevant to the policy that the Board has established for making these determinations.”
Mr. Serritella seconded the motion.

**Vote on Motion**
The Chairman called for a roll call vote on the motion. The motion failed to pass with the following votes recorded.

- Ms. Branch - no
- Mrs. Rogers - no
- Dr. Steiner - no
- Mr. Gidwitz - abstain
- Mr. Serritella - yes
- Mrs. Turkal - no
- Mrs. McConachie - yes

**Motion**
Mrs. Turkal moved that “the State Board of Education authorizes the transmittal of the waiver requests in the area of Physical Education and Health without comment to be accompanied by the staff analysis of the specific requests for the General Assembly determination of waiver status.”

Ms. Branch 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.

- Ms. Branch - yes
- Mrs. Rogers - yes
- Dr. Steiner - yes
- Mr. Gidwitz - yes
- Mr. Serritella - no
- Mrs. Turkal - yes
- Mrs. McConachie - no

**Motion**
Chairman Gidwitz moved that “the State Board of Education hereby approves the Semi-Annual Waiver Report as recommended for all topic areas with the exception of Physical Education and Health and authorizes its transmittal to the General Assembly by October 1.”

Mrs. Rogers 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.

- Ms. Branch - yes
- Mrs. Rogers - yes
- Dr. Steiner - yes
- Mr. Gidwitz - yes
- Mr. Serritella - yes
- Mrs. Turkal - yes
- Mrs. McConachie - yes
The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Immediate Action Items, Qualified Zone Academy Bond Credit.

Superintendent M. McGee reported that the Qualified Zone Academy Bond Credit Program (QZAB) provides limited financial assistance to rehabilitate or repair public school facilities or provide equipment. He noted that the Board approved allocations for 2001 for four school districts last spring. He stated that he was asking for approval of the final application that was submitted by the Board of Education of the City of Chicago for designation of a total of $5,500,000 in bonds as Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members' input.

Motion

Mrs. McConachie moved that “the State Board of Education hereby approves the application for Chicago Public School District #299 for Qualified Zone Academy Bond Credit for the amount of $5,500,000.”

Mrs. Rogers 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.

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

The Superintendent stated that the Board and Agency Vision, Mission and Goals have been drafted and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee and staff. He indicated that he wanted the Board’s endorsement of the key themes represented by the Goals, the Vision, and Mission statements. He noted that this would allow staff to move forward in document preparation using these Goals as the framework as well as continue the efforts to better align the Business Plans. He also stated that it would provide time for review and input by our Agency leadership.

After discussion of this Agenda Item for clarification purposes and Board members' input, the Superintendent withdrew his recommendation. Mrs. Rogers stated that she felt the Board members were all in favor of the Goals but not completely satisfied about the wording of them.
Rules & Regulations, Certification


Superintendent McGee reported that the Part 25 Amendments cover several areas related to certification. He noted that they establish an endorsement in “self-contained general education” (for those teachers who elect to receive both an elementary and secondary certificate endorsed for a subject area). He commented that they also address the basis on which fees for certificate registration are calculated and a variety of other certification related issues.

The Superintendent stated that these rules were first reviewed in June and were subsequently published for public comment. He noted that six letters were received which were summarized in the Board meeting materials. He asked the Board to adopt the proposed amendments as recommended.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members’ input.

Motion

Mrs. Rogers moved that “the State Board of Education hereby adopts the proposed rulemaking for:

Certification (23 Illinois Administrative Code 25); and

Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition, and Supervision (23 Illinois Administrative Code 1).

Further, the Board authorizes the State Superintendent of Education to make such technical or non-substantive changes as the State Superintendent may deem necessary in response to suggestions or objections of the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules.”

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.

Ms. Branch - yes  Mrs. Rogers - yes  Dr. Steiner - yes
Mr. Gidwitz - yes  Mr. Serritella - yes  Mrs. Turkal - yes
Mrs. McConachie - yes
The Chairman called for Agenda Item D., Immediate Actions Items, Rules and Regulations, Pupil Transportation Reimbursement (Part 120).

Pupil Transportation

The Superintendent reported that the pupil transportation reimbursement amendments were being presented for the Board's initial review. He noted that these amendments are technical in nature and are intended to clarify and update existing rules. He recommended that the Board direct the dissemination of the proposed amendments to Part 120 for public comment.

Discussion followed for clarification purposes and Board members' input.

Motion

Mrs. McConachie moved that "the State Board of Education hereby authorizes the solicitation of public comment on the proposed amendments to the rules for Pupil Transportation (23 Illinois Administrative Code 120) including publication of the proposed amendments in the Illinois Register."

Mrs. Rogers 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.

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

Chair

The Chairman called for Agenda Item E., Announcements and Reports, Chair.

Chairman Gidwitz stated that the State Superintendent has elected not to seek a reappointment. He indicated that the Board members have met in closed session to discuss the transition. He explained that when the Board has information to share with its constituent groups it will do so.

Supt.

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

The Superintendent commented that he wanted to reaffirm that he was eager to assist in the transition. He explained that on September 21, his message at the Superintendents' Conference would be that the State Board of Education is continuing progress to keep the momentum going full speed ahead. He stated that it is time for someone else to take the lead, and he explained that he would help that person get off to a terrific start.
Superintendent McGee reported that this year’s Superintendents’ Conference will be focusing on the subject of the implementation of the Illinois Learning Standards. He informed the Board that Robert J. Marzano will be this year’s keynote speaker, and he is a published author regarding standards implementation. He commented that Illinois has succeeded in staying the course on standards and assessment. The Superintendent explained that the State Board has seen changes in instruction and the Superintendents’ Conference would help even further. He noted that the State Board has not suffered some of the consequences other states have had to regarding assessment, back peddling, and retreating. He reported that from the information that has been shared in the recent Senate Hearings, he believes that the Board’s assessment is gaining credibility.

The Superintendent reported that he and staff are preparing for the Special Senate Committee Hearings. He informed the Board that the Hearing regarding reading had been canceled. He explained that he and staff had been prepared for that Hearing and if it was not rescheduled, they will seek a chance to spend time on reading even if it is with the Caucuses. He reported that it is important to show the impact that funds have made on reading, and how it will have an even greater impact since the revision of the Reading Block Grant.

Superintendent McGee reported that a Special Senate Hearing had been held last evening regarding professional development. He indicated that people from the field attended and talked about what effective professional development looks like. He commented that the State Board still has a few questions to answer regarding how many staff we have working with professional development and how much money goes into those programs from the various Agency grants. He noted that another State Board of Education Special Senate Hearing is scheduled for October 2 in Springfield regarding the State Board’s operations and administration.

**Members**

The Chairman called for Agenda Item E., Announcements and Reports, Members.

There was nothing further to report.

**Committees**

The Chairman called for Agenda Item E., Announcements and Reports, Committees.

Mr. Serritella reported that the Strategic Planning Committee has developed a draft outline of the Board’s learning path for school finance. He stated that the Committee will be working with staff members Kathy Nicholson-Tosh and Bill Hinrichs to begin putting these items in the right kind of learning bites. He noted that he was looking for new and innovative ways for Board members to grab onto this kind of learning – not the usual stand up Board meeting presentation format.
Mrs. Rogers reported that the Board Operations Committee took the Board’s advice and will continue to supply the Board meeting materials in a notebook layout. She noted that two signs had been posted in response to complaints regarding beepers and cellular phones ringing during the meeting. She explained that the signs ask people to turn off these communication devices while the meeting is in progress.

Mrs. Rogers asked her fellow Board members to let staff member Kathy Nicholson-Tosh know if they will be able to participate in discussions with local school board members during the Joint Annual School Board Conference.

Mrs. Turkal, Chair of the Board’s Legislative Committee, reported that she had met with staff member Peter Leonis to discuss legislative issues. She also noted that she and other Board members would be meeting with various legislators around the state before the Veto Session starts in November.

Mrs. McConachie reported that at the last meeting (September 17) of the Joint Education Committee, the following information was discussed.

- A new unified plan regarding teacher quality will be ready for the Board’s review very soon. This plan will integrate activities across the Board of Higher Education, the State Board of Education, the Community College Board, the Scholarship Commission, the Workforce Development Board, and the Governor’s office. This plan is a coordinated action on teacher educator quality agenda. The Committee has extensively criticized and evaluated the draft document. The Committee made many suggestions and expects to see it back with a more compelling vision and better integrated activity across all agencies. Staff at the highest levels has been assigned to finish polishing this proposal which goes to the General Assembly on October 15. The Board members will see copies of this document before that date, and they may have to take action on the Plan before the next State Board meeting.

- Also discussed was information regarding raising the high school graduation requirements. This would be done by looking at a content-based proposal that would be linked directly to the Illinois Learning Standards and would be required for all students to graduate. The proposal will not be based on seat time, but it will be based on content with some description of what students are expected to know and what topics they are expected to have studied. This proposal will be ready very shortly, and it will go forward as a legislative item.
Other Business

The Chairman called for Agenda Item F., Other Business.

There was nothing further to report.

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 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Connie Rogers, Secretary

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Ronald J. Gidwitz, Chairman