ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
February 19, 2003

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

Agenda Topic: Action Item: Adequate Yearly Progress Elements within the State Accountability System  

Staff Contact(s): Don Full, Gail Lieberman, Connie Wise

Purpose of Agenda Item  
• To inform the Board of federal requirements and timetable.  
• To provide the Board with background information.  
• To take action on the AYP components outlined below.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item  
The Board will be prepared to take action in February and, as necessary, thereafter, regarding components of the state educational accountability system. The Board will also be informed of recommendations on IMAGE from the Superintendent's Assessment and Accountability Task Force.

Background Information  
Beginning with the comprehensive state school reform law of 1985, various components of an educational accountability system have been put in place over time.  
• The Illinois Learning Standards were adopted in 1997.  
• The current state assessment system has four standards-aligned components -- Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE), the Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English (IMAGE) and the Illinois Alternate Assessment (IAA). Illinois also uses the Terra Nova for grade 2 assessment in Title I-funded schools for accountability purposes.  
• The School Report Card, the state's public reporting mechanism since 1986 (in 105 ILCS 5/10-17a), meets the NCLB requirements and also has additional information required by the State such as student demographics and local planning initiatives. Assessment results are a major component of the report card.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that states submit their accountability plans for federal approval by May 1, 2003. Required components of the plan were outlined in the Board materials for January 2003. The complete timetable for interaction between states and the USDOE is outlined below:
January 31, 2003  | States submit progress report on accountability requirements to USDOE.
--- | ---
Feb through April 2003  | States participate in a peer review process.
--- | ---
March through April 2003  | States continue with policy work and revise USDOE application based on peer comments.
--- | ---
May 1, 2003  | States submit final report on accountability to USDOE.
--- | ---
June 30, 2003  | 2003-04 federal grant awards to states.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

**Definition of AYP**
Under both NCLB and state law, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the basic mechanism for determining school performance from year to year.

To “make AYP,” schools and districts must meet three criteria:

1. **Participation**: At least 95% of students overall and in all counted subgroups must participate in state testing;
2. **Annual Targets for Reading and Mathematics**: schools and districts must meet annual targets set by the state (both overall and for all counted subgroups) for the percent of scores meeting and exceeding standards as measured by state tests; and
3. **Additional Academic Indicators**: Schools and districts must maintain or improve their performance on an additional academic indicator:
   - a. For high schools, graduation rate is required by NCLB
   - b. For elementary and middle schools: a choice of possible indicators is allowed by NCLB

If schools or districts have student subgroups that do not meet the annual target requirement for reading and/or mathematics, they can avoid sanctions by showing a 10% improvement in student scores over the previous year, but must still meet the other two AYP criteria.

**Elements of AYP**
The Superintendent’s Assessment and Accountability Task Force (Task Force) has considered the following AYP elements at their January 2003 meeting. Subsequent sections describe their specific recommendations for each.

- Minimum group size for reporting purposes/ensuring privacy
- Minimum group size for AYP calculations
- Definition of a “full academic year,” to determine which student scores count in AYP calculations
- Starting points for Reading and Mathematics AYP calculations
- Annual measurable objectives (annual targets) such that all students meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by 2013-14.
- Additional indicators for high schools and elementary/middle schools.
**Minimum group size for reporting purposes/ensuring privacy**

Illinois currently reports data on school report cards for student groups of 5 or more students. This has caused some concerns regarding whether individual students’ performance can be identified.

- **The Task Force recommends a minimum group size of 10 for reporting purposes.**

**Minimum group size for AYP calculations**

To meet AYP criteria, schools and districts must count student scores in various specified subgroups (racial/ethnic, low income, limited English proficient, special education). The size of the subgroup must be large enough to offer reliable and valid scores, yet small enough to assure that as many students as possible are counted in the accountability system. If the group size is too small, the scores of one or two students can drastically alter annual trends and AYP calculations.

- **Based on consultation with experts and a review of other states’ practices, the Task Force recommends a minimum group size of 40 for AYP calculations.**

**Definition of a “full academic year,” to determine which student scores count in AYP calculations**

Students in many districts enter schools in mid-year, and sometimes shortly before the state test administration. All students should be tested and their scores reported back to the school and district. However, it makes sense that scores that count for accountability purposes be those for students who have spent enough time in the school to be reasonably affected by its curriculum and instruction.

- **The Task Force recommends counting students enrolled on or before the last school day of September in AYP calculations. This date coincides with the date of the Fall Housing Report already collected by ISBE.**

**Starting points for Reading and Mathematics AYP calculations**

The State Board adopted a methodology for calculating starting points in April 2002. By this method, all schools are ranked by their reading and mathematics performance (% meets + exceeds). Counting from the bottom of the list, Illinois identified the school at the level that accounts for 20% of all students. Student performance in reading and mathematics (% meets + exceeds) for this school serves as the starting point for the state annual targets.

By applying this methodology to Illinois 2002 state assessment data, the value for Reading performance was 40.86% (meets + exceeds scores), and the value for Mathematics performance was 39.68% (meets + exceeds scores).

- **The Task Force recommends that the starting points for Reading and Mathematics both be set at 40%.**
Annual measurable objectives (annual targets) such that all students meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics by 2013-14.

Illinois acknowledges that the Congressional intent was to ensure that no State waited until near the end of the timeline and then expected enormous, unrealistic growth in the last few years. As requested by the State Board in December 2002, the Task Force reconsidered its initial recommendation.

The table below demonstrates the Task Force’s and the Superintendent’s agreement that growth at the beginning of the timeline will be slow (as schools develop improved curriculum and instruction). It will also be statistically difficult to make huge achievement increases at the end (as schools approach very high levels of achievement). However, steady growth can be anticipated and will occur in the middle years. In order to follow such a scientifically-based approach, planning must occur; staff must be of high quality and serve in their fields of expertise, and also be prepared for focused work in reading and mathematics with students of all ages; the curriculum must be consistent with the Illinois Learning Standards and focused. The proposal outlined below meets that intent as well as the requirement for “continuous and substantial” growth within the context of a research-based approach.

### Illini Plan for Implementing Annual Measurable Objectives

- The Task Force recommends the continuous and substantial growth plan, with the illustrated annual targets/intermediate goals.
Additional indicators for high schools and elementary/middle schools.
NCLB requires that states adopt graduation rate as the secondary indicator for high schools.

Illinois already has a definition for public high school graduation rate. As stated in the Consolidated State Application in June 2002, the graduation rate used in Illinois is derived using the cohort method (i.e., the percentage of ninth grade students remaining until graduation). The School Report Card data collection effort has been modified to allow for the disaggregation of graduation rate by the major racial/ethnic categories, and by English language learning, low-income, students with disabilities, and migrant classifications. This methodology is consistent with those of the National Center for Education Statistics.

The Illinois School Report Card data collection instrument is used to report, on an annual basis, a school graduation rate for every public high school in Illinois. More details on high school graduation rate calculations may be found in Attachment A.

- The Task Force recommends that Illinois adopt graduation rate as the additional academic indicator for high schools, using the currently accepted cohort method.

For elementary and middle schools, NCLB allows several options for an additional academic indicator. The Task Force considered many options, looking at various plans and proposals from other states. By far, most states were planning to use attendance for their additional K-8 indicator. The current Illinois statewide average attendance rate is 92%. More details on calculating attendance rate may be found in Attachment B.

- The Task Force recommends that Illinois adopt "attendance rate" as the additional academic indicator at the elementary and middle school levels.

IMAGE
The Task Force at its January 2003 meeting made a series of recommendations regarding modifications in the current IMAGE assessment and reporting. These recommendations addressed needs of students with limited English proficiency, also called English Language Learners (ELL). A primary issue was treating IMAGE similar to ISAT and PSAE in frequency, reporting, and the student identification system. Issues that were extremely technical in nature or concerned communications were delayed for additional dialogue.

Specific recommendations adopted were:
- IMAGE should reflect the same requirements that are established for the ISAT/PSAE 2006.
- Ensure that the achievement categories on IMAGE are equivalent to ISAT/PSAE.
- Develop a statewide supported identification system that would allow school districts to collect data on mobile students.
- Develop a Grade 2 IMAGE assessment test as an option for school districts (pending appropriations).
- Determine a state definition of ELL/LEP students.
- Ensure use of accommodations: allow local districts to report data on listening and speaking using an approved standardized instrument. The state will provide a common reporting system.

They also urged that language similar to NCLB be adopted, to allow Illinois students on a case-by-case basis to take IMAGE after being in the bilingual program for more than three years. This issue will be discussed further and come back to the Task Force.

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

The Superintendent is committed to using this opportunity to improve educational accountability to create a system that is comprehensive, useful and fair. At the same time, the system will meet the basic requirements of federal law.

**Budget Implications**

The FY04 proposed ISBE budget adopted by the Board reflects the necessary costs of implementing the first year of anticipated accountability requirements. These are in the area of standards, assessment, accountability and system of support programs. Depending on final board and legislative action, additional costs may be incurred.

**Legislative Action**

Bringing state and federal requirements into alignment will require specific statutory modifications. Staff is preparing drafts of language for these modifications.

**Communication**

Accountability is the most high-stakes component of state and federal education law. Changes will require clear and specific information for school boards, school district staff, parents and the public.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

The Superintendent recommends that the Board adopt the following:

- Adopt a minimum group size of 10 for reporting student performance.
- Adopt a minimum group size of 40 for AYP calculations.
- Adopt a policy of counting students in AYP calculations who are enrolled on or before the last school day of September, to coincide with Fall Housing Report data collection.
- Adopt statewide AYP starting points of 40% for both reading and mathematics.
- Adopt the “continuous and substantial growth” plan for AYP annual targets/intermediate goals.
- Adopt graduation rate as the additional academic indicator for high schools, using the currently accepted cohort method.
• Adopt attendance rate as the additional academic indicator for elementary and middle schools.

The Superintendent further recommends that the Board adopt the following:
• IMAGE 2006, like ISAT 2006, should assess the state standards in reading, math and writing. Science should be added in 2007.
• IMAGE should reflect the same requirements that are established for the ISAT/PSAE 2006.
• Ensure that the achievement categories on IMAGE are equivalent to ISAT/PSAE.
• Develop a statewide supported student identification system that would allow school districts to collect data on mobile students.
• Develop a Grade 2 IMAGE assessment test as an option for school districts (pending appropriations).
• Determine a state definition of ELL/LEP students.
• Ensure use of accommodations: allow local districts to report data on listening and speaking using an approved standardized instrument. The state will provide a common reporting system.

Next Steps
• Continue meetings with the Task Force. The next meeting is planned for March 10th to discuss remaining issues of a unified accountability system, and to begin their role of technical advice to the State Board of Education. Individual reports from the IMAGE, writing, and IAA subcommittees are scheduled for the March 10th meeting.
• Draft the necessary statutory and regulatory changes to implement these adopted policies.
• Participate in the peer review process by USDE and prepare final accountability plan for May 1 submission to USDOE.
• Release a Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP) for new 5-year assessment contracts.
Attachment A. -- Calculations on high school graduation rate

Definition: The number of current year graduates divided by the number in the freshman class four years ago, less students who transferred out, plus students who transferred in, multiplied by 100.

A: Freshman Class, i.e., number of students enrolled for the first time in the 9th grade four years ago, (e.g., freshman class enrollment in the fall of 1998).
B: Graduates, i.e., number of students who graduated in the current school year (e.g., students who graduated July 2001 through June 2002).
C: Transfers Out, i.e., number of students from the freshman class (A) who transferred to another school or died prior to graduation.
D: Transfers In, i.e., number of graduates from among all the graduates (B) who were not members of the original freshman class (A).

NOTE: Students from A who dropped out, were expelled, or did not have enough credits to graduate, were not included in B, C or D above.

Graduation Rate = ((B / (A – C + B)) * 100

This is a cohort rate. All students who graduate from a school are included, regardless of whether the student took more or less than four years to graduate. This algorithm was last modified in 1995. Since 1995, the statewide rate has ranged from a low of 80.5% in 1996 to a high of 85.2% in 2002. (Source: School Report Card Data Form ISBE 86-43)

Attachment B. -- Calculations on attendance rate

Definition: The aggregate days of student attendance divided by the sum of the aggregate days of student attendance and aggregate days of student absence, multiplied by 100.

A: Sum of the number of students in attendance each school day of the year.
B: Sum of the number of students absent each school day of the year.

Attendance Rate = (A / (A + B)) * 100

This rate is computed for each school, district, and the state. This algorithm has been used since 1986. The statewide rate has been very stable over the years, ranging from a low of 93.3% in 1989 to a high of 94.0% in 2002. (Source: School Report Card Data Form ISBE 86-43)