AGENDA

1. Public Participation

*2. Discussion Items
   a. Minutes of the November Board Operations Committee Meeting (pp. 2-5)
   b. Review New Resolutions of Recognition (Chris Ward) (p. 6)
   c. Emerging Issues (Chris Ward) (p. 7)
   d. Additional Items

3. Decision Items

4. Additional Items

5. Adjourn

* At the conclusion of any discussion item in which the committee is ready to make a decision, a discussion item may be immediately moved for a decision.

** Items listed with a double asterisk (**) will be discussed in committee and Board action may be taken in the plenary session.
1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Chairman Chris Ward asked if there was anyone that wished to speak to the committee for public participation. No one came forward.

2.a. **COMMITTEE MINUTES**
   Joyce Karon moved that the minutes of the Board Operations Committee on September 20 be approved. Ed Geppert seconded the motion and it passed with voice vote approval.

2.b. **REVIEW OF 2006 CALENDAR**
   Chris Ward reviewed two dates that have potential conflicts.
   - The January 18-19, 2006 meeting is currently scheduled for Chicago. The State of the State address is also scheduled for that day in Springfield.
   - The February meeting dates need to be changed due to a conflict with staff needing to make presentations at the agency’s NCLB Conference in Chicago.

   Vinni Hall moved to change the location of the January 18-19, 2006 meeting to Springfield. Joyce Karon seconded the motion and it passed with voice vote approval.

   Ed Geppert moved to change the dates of the February 2006 meeting to February 22-23, 2006 and it will remain in Springfield. Dave Fields seconded the motion and it passed with voice vote approval.

2.c. **BOARD RECOGNITION PROGRAM**
   Chris Ward indicated that Chicago Public Schools submitted a candidate for recognition by Board resolution. The nomination is for an employee at Corliss H.S. Vinni Hall moved to recommend a resolution for Board approval in December. Dave Fields seconded the motion and it passed with voice vote approval.

2.d. **REVIEW, DEFINE AND PRIORITIZE EMERGING ISSUES**
   Chris Ward indicated that the Board has had several conversations over the past year in terms of identifying emerging issues they wish to study as a board or that the agency seeks Board input. The materials in the committee packet attempt to summarize the issues that the Board has discussed and Superintendent Dunn’s suggestions. Dr. Ward suggested that the Board discuss the lists and attempt to define each one of the issues listed.

   Dr. Ward asked Superintendent Dunn to comment and to elaborate on each of the issues in the agency’s list. Dr. Dunn indicated that he feels the first three on his list are of the highest priority for the agency.
1. What do we want school restructuring and district corrective action to look like under the NCLB requirements? Dr. Dunn feels that we may want to have more wide-ranging discussions about what restructuring could entail. We may want to discuss with outside organizations what our role is, as well as district corrective action. There are a full range of options that we might want to discuss.

2. What is needed in terms of high school reform and how do we go about achieving this as a state with widely varying capacity across districts? This could be capacity issues; it could be an extension of the discussion around high school course requirements. Those discussions are not unrelated.

3. How do we integrate compliance monitoring and oversight within our most chronically dysfunctional districts while differentiating oversight functions with districts which have a long record of full compliance? We are currently putting out “brush fires” as they approach, and we need to have an approach that is integrated.

Dr. Dunn briefly went through the other issues in the agency’s listing: e-learning/technology infrastructure, other systems to measure district effectiveness beyond assessments, wrap-around services, and ways to reward success/funding schools achieving results. Dr. Dunn indicated he would be glad to discuss any of those or answer any questions.

Ed Geppert commented that he feels that numbers district corrective action and dealing with chronically dysfunctional districts (numbers 1 & 3) are related. Dr. Dunn responded that the leverage to do something with chronically dysfunctional districts may come through corrective action. Jon Furr commented that #1 is a subset of #3. If we need to take corrective action, how we would do that. To a certain extent, there are districts that could get into corrective action in certain areas, but are not chronically dysfunctional, or non-AYP areas. Ginger Reynolds commented that when we think about #1 (school restructuring & corrective action), we need to think about the staggering numbers. We’re talking hundreds of schools this year. What are we going to do to help them in their quest to improve?

Ed Geppert also mentioned the inevitability of all of them moving to the same place. The reason he related #3 to the “bad actors” is what he sees as a great deficiency in the federal statute about who they harm when they take these actions. Classroom teachers are the least empowered in the process, except in what they can do with some students in some circumstances. Andrea Brown commented that the system managers at the local level are getting their drive, their initiative and their direction from the State Board through the System of Support (for schools on watch/warning status). At some point we need to reflect the change in staff, change from the feds, and change in philosophy.

Joyce Karon asked Ginger what we are looking at in projecting for the two categories. Dr. Dunn commented that when we talk about “chronics” he is referring to districts; and not necessarily NCLB, but problems all across the agency. Special Education, grants, all agency divisions are having problems with some 20 districts. Ginger Reynolds indicated that we can run the numbers, but it’s going to continue to increase. Andrea Brown asked whether or not we see any indicators that we’ll get some relief? Dr. Brown hears we’re going to get Value-Added... Dr. Dunn commented that he understands that Secretary Spellings may be doing some announcement to the chiefs regarding allowable use of growth models. Ginger Reynolds added that she hasn’t seen anything that indicates that they are going to change the 100% requirement by 2013. Dr. Dunn said that since Secretary Spellings hasn’t announced, we don’t know what that’s going to entail.

Dr. Dunn indicated that in looking at restructuring & corrective action, one approach is to tweak the approach that we’re already taking. We could decide that we will provide technical assistance (through the RESPROMs, etc.) all the way to provider fairs... having schools come in to take a look at a range of providers and we would somehow qualify the providers. We need to make a
determination on where we want the state to fall on this continuum. Vinni Hall expressed an interest in the option of provider fairs.

Dr. Ward commented that we won’t solve those problems now, but the purpose of this conversation is to determine two or three issues. Dr. Dunn agreed and suggested that a white paper could be written for the Board’s consideration outlining the various approaches that might be taken and the Board’s discussion, along with outside organizations, would be to determine what the best approach might be. Joyce Karon suggested that a scenario might be to see what other states are doing. Dean Clark responded that we have to see what other states are doing, but we have to temper that with the reality of the State of Illinois. He likes the idea of a white paper to suggest some options. Dave Fields commented that no matter what the options are, a solution won’t be sustained unless we can address #6 (engage true collaboration around all aspects of student learning, wellness and development) in some way.

Dr. Ward indicated that a case has been made that this (school restructuring & district corrective action) will be on our agenda.

Dr. Ward indicated that we can see from some of the other issues that there is a linkage between our high school reform issue and #2. As we flush these out, they will prioritize themselves and we will need to engage in what our capacity and the agency’s capacity to get them addressed. He then took the members’ attention back to page 9, the listing of topics that the Board has discussed over the last year. The funding issue has been discussed and we certainly understand those implications, especially as it relates to #7 (fund schools achieving results/reward success). There is a linkage between the Board’s second issue with the superintendent’s #2 (high school reform). He commented the he would expand those comments to also include the rules and regulations that govern the high school templates that guide us. We are facing new issues with the same “ten commandments.”

Dr. Ward also mentioned the Board’s conversations regarding staff and administrators of color. Ed Geppert commented that he would like to see some information regarding that. Yesterday in the Gurnee budget hearing this issue came up regarding the Grow Your Own initiative; especially staffing of males in African American neighborhood schools. Dr. Ward commented that last month in the School Report Card information we saw that only 23% of certified teachers are males. He agreed there is a connection to the Grow Your Own initiative.

Dr. Ward reviewed some of the other issues the Board has discussed over the past year: student performance, Board/agency relationships with regional agencies, wrap-around services, school district reorganization, parental support, reshaping schools, support for students with abhorrent behavior, and teacher shortages.

Dr. Ward also pointed out the issues on page 10 of the committee packet: the Board’s role in the budget development process, increasing the capacity of the agency, etc.

CONCLUSION:
Dr. Ward suggested that perhaps before moving forward we need to know what our capacity is over the next several months. Based on this conversation there will be a phone conference among the committee chairs to discuss which committees would take on the issues. Joyce Karon asked how these new issues will work with those in the Strategic Plan. Dr. Dunn commented that the agency is worried about capacity as well, but in the three goal areas in the Plan, there are defined steps that are lined out. In these issues, we need to define those steps. The discussion in these issues will be much more exploratory. Dr. Ward added that we do need to be sensitive that if we’re going to look at high school reform, we need to mindful of the relationship to the Literacy Goal, etc. Brenda Holmes suggested that we limit our study to two issues. Dr. Ward responded that we need to continue to look at the list of issues and revise it, so that as our capacity increases we can delve into some of the other issues. Joyce Karon commented that a significant number of the issues overlap and can be combined. She added that we should do two things really well, rather than 10
things haphazardly. Dr. Brown commented that if we do one of these things, it will impact some of those other issues. Dr. Ward commented that we may redefine the specifics of what our intent is as we study the issues further.

Board Chairman Jesse Ruiz commented that his feeling that the Strategic Plan is not a static document. This kind of work gets us ahead of the curve in planning for the next version the Plan.

Dr. Ward summarized what he thought was agreement reached in today’s discussion.

1. **School restructuring and district corrective action**: We need to provide time to deal with restructuring as part of NCLB. Brenda Holmes indicated that she would like to know what impact, at the implementation level, this will have on the agency, the impact it will have on the budget, and the impact it will have at the district level. Dr. Ward commented that there will be a lot of mining of the data. Dr. Brown added that we need to study what has been done at RESPROs and in System of Support in the past few years.

2. **How do we increase the learning capacity of high school age students?** Dr. Ward commented that in listening to the Board’s conversation today, this issue would be on our list. Recent legislation has also brought this to the forefront. Dr. Dunn mentioned that nothing will be done without going very slowly and being very thoughtful. Some of the things that we need to discuss are what should the capacity of high schools be around foreign language for how many years? Should a student that is not in a college-prep program should be taking a language; if so which language? What is the nature of co-curricular programs, should there be service learning as part of high school curriculum, for credit, or just graduation requirement? We want to look at the next generation of what the high school experience is; systemic change.

Dr. Ward will follow-up on the next step, scheduling a conversation with committee chairs and get Randy involved in that conversation.

3. **DECISION ITEMS**
Some decisions have been made during this committee meeting, and they were acted upon during discussion.

4. **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**
Jesse Ruiz mentioned that NASBE is asking for Board members interested in serving on a NASBE Commission on Financing Education. Dean Clark indicated he would be interested, but would then need to withdraw from the NASBE Government Affairs Committee.

Committee Chair Chris Ward asked Jon Furr to discuss Board Member ethics training. Mr. Furr indicated that materials are in the committee packet and when Board Members have reviewed those materials they are to sign the last page and return it to him.

5. **ADJOURN**: The Board Operations Committee meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.
TO: Board Operations Committee  
Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Chris Ward, Chairman Board Operations Committee  
Jean Ladage, Board Services Coordinator

Agenda Topic: Review Resolutions for Board Recognition

Purpose of Agenda Item
To review incoming nominations received since the last Board meeting. Nomination materials that are received will be sent to Board members prior to the meeting.

Relationship to/Implications for the State Board’s Strategic Plan
The State Board’s Recognition Program was developed to show the Board’s support for the outstanding work of educators and school boards that are serving all children in this state.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item
Recommendation of Board action.

Background Information
In May, 2005, the Board initiated a Board Recognition Program to become more proactive in its efforts to recognize the exemplary achievements of students, teachers, school administrators, and local board members in Illinois. These achievements are such that they truly stand out from the ordinary. Upon review and acceptance, the State Board of Education will pass a resolution describing the particulars of the achievement. The signed resolutions will be presented in one of the following three ways:

- mailed to the recipient(s);
- personally awarded to the individual(s) at their respective school(s); or
- presented to recipient(s) during the State Board meeting at which their resolution is approved

Superintendent’s Recommendation
No recommendation from the Superintendent.

Next Steps
Board Operations Committee will review the nominations received and make a recommendation based on that review.
TO: Board Operations Committee  
Illinois State Board of Education

FROM: Chris Ward, Chairman Board Operations Committee

Agenda Topic: Emerging Issues

Purpose of Agenda Item
At the November Board Operations Committee meeting, the Board discussed and selected two issues to focus their attention on over the next few months.

1. School restructuring and district corrective action:

2. How do we increase the learning capacity of high school age students?

At the December meeting I plan to provide an update following Committee Chairs Conference Call which was held on December 6.