AGENDA

1. Public Participation

2. Minutes of the May Education Policy Planning Committee Meeting *(pp. 2-4)*

3. Update on Special Education Hearings (Chris Koch) *(pp. 5-7)*

4. Discussion on District 211 PSAE Proposal *(Becky McCabe) (pp. 8-18)*

*5. Assessment Frameworks *(Becky McCabe) (Plenary pp. 174-368)*

*6. IAA Cut Scores *(Becky McCabe) (Plenary pp. 369-372)*

*7. IAA Contract *(Becky McCabe) (Plenary pp. 373-374)*

*8. ISAT Writing Contract *(Becky McCabe) (Plenary p. 375)*

*9. Increase IBM Student Information System Contract *(Plenary p. 376)*

*(Connie Wise/Becky McCabe, Terry Chamberlain)*

*10. Approval of RFSP for ISAT Administration Services *(Becky McCabe) (Plenary pp. 377-379)*

*11. Technology Immersion Pilot Project RFSP *(Dana Kinley) (Plenary pp. 380-381)*

*12. TAOEP Task Force Appointments *(Donna Luallen) (Plenary pp. 382-385)*

13. Additional Items

14. Adjourn

* Items listed with an asterisk (*) will be discussed in committee and action may be taken in the plenary session.
The Education Policy Planning Committee meeting convened at 2:05 p.m.

1. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**: There was no public participation.

2. **MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2006 EPPC MEETING**: The Committee approved the minutes for the April 2006 EPPC Meeting.

3. **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE NETWORK (Paul Dulle, Chris Koch)**: Paul Dulle, CEO of Cerebral Palsy, was present to acquaint the Committee with the Assistive Technology Exchange Network which is a successful program which refurbishes, and donates computers and distributes them free of charge to children with disabilities annually. He presented the Committee with handouts, had a power point presentation and stated the following:
   - As of today, ATEN has served about 1 million students and that by maximizing resources and through partnerships, we can make a huge difference in these students’ lives;
   - The network started about 10 years ago with just a few school districts and now they serve over 1600 schools;
   - The network offers an assistive technology library;
   - The network has saved over $1.5 million over the years;
   - They provide durable medical equipment at no charge and provide this information on the website;
   - They worked with the Illinois Housing Authority to build ramps for the wheelchair-bound children who do not have access to their homes.

4. **IMPROVING TEACHER QUALITY OF ILLINOIS’ NEEDIEST STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS PROJECT (Lynne Curry, Education Trust/ISU Project)**: Lynne Curry of the Illinois State University was in attendance to present to the Committee information about the project of Improving Teacher Quality so the Board can become aware of this, its results and to use this information in creating policy. Lynne provided the Committee with a copy of the Illinois State Working Group Draft Recommendations.

Lynne began by stating the since 2004, the Joyce Foundation and the Education Trust have sponsored working groups in three states (Illinois, Wisconsin and Ohio) and three school districts (Chicago, Milwaukee and Cleveland) to study the question of student access to qualified teachers within the public schools. The Illinois state-level working group consisted of representatives from various stakeholder groups concerned with teaching quality. This group included Illinois State
Board of Education members along with representatives of teacher unions, school administration, higher education, business organizations and research entities.

Lynne further stated that with the assistance and coordination provided by the Education Trust, the groups engaged in the following three-phase process to arrive at a set of actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners:

- Examining data to determine patterns of student access to qualified teachers;
- Probing the likely factors contributing to inequitable access; and
- Developing recommendations to increase access.

In addition, the working group identified the following six key factors that contribute to the access problem:

- Insufficient professional support for teachers in High Need Schools;
- Poor working conditions in High Need Schools;
- Need for stronger principal leadership in High Need Schools;
- Teacher preparation specifically for succeeding in High Need Schools;
- Inequitable funding disproportionately affecting High Need Schools; and
- Insufficient data systems for collecting and reporting teacher data.

Also, there are three primary educational policy sectors that are positioned to address these inequities in access and their underlying causal factors:

1. School Districts can adopt policies and practices that increase the availability of highly qualified teachers for all students.
2. Higher education institutions can improve the preparation of highly qualified teachers and specifically prepare them for work in High Needs Schools.
3. The State can institute systemic improvements in certification, recruitment, placement and funding that will support the work of both districts and higher education in addressing these inequities.

This project is funded through The Joyce Foundation and the The Education Trust.

5. PROFICIENT SCORES FOR ACCESS ASSESSMENT (Robin Lisboa): Robin Lisboa presented to the Committee a handout of the process for establishing the ACCESS for ELLs English language proficiency test cut-score and the score itself. Robin stated that previous to the ACCESS for ELLs, school districts in Illinois were allowed to use one of four approved English language proficiency tests to determine bilingual program eligibility. Further, with the advent of NCLB, states were mandated to develop English language proficiency standards aligned to their content area standards (Illinois Learning Standards). In addition, states were also mandated to develop an English language proficiency test aligned to their new English language proficiency standards. Also, ACCESS for ELLS became the Illinois approved English language proficiency test in FY 06. This assessment is to be administered annually to identify limited English proficient students until they no longer test as limited English proficient.

Robin further stated the following in which school districts in Illinois will use the ACCESS for ELLs cut score:

- To identify limited English proficient students for reporting on the Annual Student Report (districts are required to annually report to ISBE the number of identified limited English proficient students in their schools);
- To determine continued program eligibility for language support services; and
- To make program exit decisions.

In addition, by establishing a cut score for determining English language proficiency through the ACCESS for ELLs, means that ISBE and school districts will have a viable way to interpret student
performance based upon the first administration of ACCESS for ELLs that was completed in March 2006. The cut score also provides school districts a uniform score to be used as a guide to determine program exit.

Robin concluded that the Board is informed of this process so they can respond to constituents in an informed manner and the Division of English Language Learning will post the ACCESS for ELLs cut score on the ACCESS for ELLs webpage and the Assessment webpage and will also include this information in the a Superintendent’s Bulletin.

6. **BACKPACK STUDY (Becky Watts):** Becky Watts presented the Committee with existing research on the on the effects of students carrying heavy backpacks. She stated that there is no funding for this so no study could be done. Becky also stated staff will ask for a recommendation on this issue at the June board meeting, which in turn we can make this information available to school districts, parents, et al.

7. **STATUS OF HARCOURT CONTRACT (Randy Dunn/Jon Furr):** Superintendent Dunn presented a status report to the Board in regards to the Harcourt Assessment Contract. The Superintendent stated that Harcourt’s services under its contract can be grouped into two categories: 1) test development and psychometric services and 2) processing, production, scoring and reporting. ISBE staff believes that Harcourt performed the first category successfully. However, the staff believe that Harcourt’s processing and production work have been a failure and we believe this failure justifies removing these services from Harcourt’s purview, thereby restructuring their contract.

Superintendent Dunn further stated that the agency proposes the following:

- Harcourt continue its current services for ISAT test development and to use SAT10 questions for norm-referencing;
- ISBE terminates Harcourt’s services for ISAT processing, production, scoring and reporting, but ISBE will determine what processing and production services for FY 07 assessment remains with Harcourt to ensure the assessment remains on schedule. All other processing, production, scoring and reporting services will be transferred to another Contractor;
- ISBE and ACT determine the feasibility of shifting all PSAE services to ACT;
- ISBE retains a separate contractor to provide a third-party of the transition of services and assessment administration.

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board to adopt a motion on the above and with the Board’s authorization, staff will negotiate the terms of the new contractual framework with Harcourt, negotiate with ACT on the performance of additional PSAE services, engage the services of a thirty-party contractor and develop an RFSP for the performance of the ISAT processing and production activities.

8. **ADDITIONAL ITEMS:** There were no additional items.

**ADJOURN:** The Education Policy Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.
TO: Education Policy & Planning Committee
FROM: Dr. Christopher Koch, Assistant Superintendent, Special Education Services

Agenda Topic: Update on Special Education Hearings
Materials: Schedule of Hearings
Staff Contact(s): Dr. Chris Koch

Purpose of Agenda Item

To update board members on progress and content of public hearings on proposed state special education regulations. Public hearings began in May and will run through mid-September. A total of 9 hearings are scheduled as indicated in the attached news release.
For Immediate Release
May 3, 2006

Public hearings to be held on Illinois’ proposed special education rules

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) will conduct a series of public hearings on Illinois’ proposed changes to the special education rules (Part 226 of Title 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code) during the coming months. The purpose of these hearings is to discuss the proposed changes to the rules and to accept public comment. The proposed changes to Part 226 are available online at http://www.isbe.net/rules/proposed/pdfs/226wf.pdf.

Any individual who needs accommodations for a disability to participate in a hearing (e.g., interpretive services, assistive learning devices, materials in alternate formats) should notify the Illinois State Board of Education at 217/782-5589 one week prior to the public hearing date. The meeting sites are accessible to individuals with disabilities, and no pre-registration is required.

For further information, please contact Illinois State Board of Education Special Education Services – Springfield at 217-782-5589.

Please note that the phone numbers of the hearing locations listed on the following page are provided for direction information only. Please call ISBE at 217-782-5589 for all other inquiries.

### Public Hearing Information - Proposed Changes to Special Education Rules

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<tr>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>South Elgin High School</td>
<td>Conference Room B-100 760 East Main Street South Elgin, Illinois 847/289-3760</td>
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<td>June 13</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Freeport Junior High School</td>
<td>Jeanette Lloyd Theater 701 W. Empire Street Freeport, Illinois 815/232-0329</td>
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<td>June 26</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Western Illinois University</td>
<td>University Union Sandburg Theatre 1 University Circle Macomb, Illinois 309/298-1914</td>
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<td>June 27</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Edwardsville High School</td>
<td>Auditorium 6161 Center Grove Road Edwardsville, Illinois 618/355-6016</td>
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<td>August 7</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Rend Lake College</td>
<td>Learning Resource Center Theater 468 N. Ken Gray Parkway Ina, Illinois</td>
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<td>August 8</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Springfield High School Commons Area</td>
<td>101 South Lewis Street Springfield, Illinois 217/525-3100</td>
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<td>August 14</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Danville Area Community College Vermilion Hall, Room 306 Martin Luther King Memorial Way</td>
<td>2000 East Main Street Danville, Illinois 217/443-2222</td>
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<td>August 15</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Naperville Central High School Little Theater</td>
<td>440 W. Aurora Avenue, Entrance 39 Naperville, Illinois 630/420-6465</td>
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<td>September 12</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Michael Bilandic Building Room C-500</td>
<td>160 North LaSalle Chicago, Illinois</td>
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**Page URL:** [http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/may3a.htm](http://www.isbe.net/news/2006/may3a.htm)
TO: Educational Policy Planning Committee

FROM: Dr. Ginger Reynolds, Assistant Superintendent
Becky McCabe, Division Administrator, Student Assessment
Dr. Connie Wise, Division Administrator, Data Analysis

Agenda Topic: Proposal for testing Grade 12 students using the Prairie State Achievement Examination

Materials: District 211 Proposal

Staff Contact(s): Becky McCabe, Student Assessment and Connie Wise, Data Analysis

Purpose of Agenda Item
Township High School District 211 petitioned and presented to the State Board its proposal for testing students in grade 12 who did not meet the standards on the grade 11 Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE). This report is a staff response to that proposal.

Relationship to/Implications for the State Board’s Strategic Plan
This report is not specifically related to the Strategic Plan.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item
No action is expected at this time.

Background Information
Township High School District 211 presented and petitioned the State Board at its March Board meeting regarding the administration of the PSAE and credit to students, schools, and school district’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The District is proposing that for Grade 12 students who did not “meet” on the PSAE when in Grade 11 would be given another opportunity in the spring of their Grade 12 year to re-take the PSAE. Their “new” scores would be applied to the AYP status of the school – either retroactively or for the current year – and students would receive credit for their new score.

The expectation is that students would be placed in rigorous course work during their Grade 12 year to be sure that they have adequate instruction to meet the standards in their last year of public high school education. District 211 states in their petition that “there has been minimal emphasis regarding the development of academic consequences for senior-year students who are unsuccessful in meeting or exceeding State reading or mathematics standards”. District 211 believes that continued “instructional support and an appropriate educational plan that addresses these students’ needs should continue through their senior year of high school.”

If the State Board allows for this petition, District 211 states in its proposal that it will “require all students who fail to meet the standards on the PSAE to enroll in senior year classes and coursework that address their learning deficiencies.” The petition also requests that ISBE measures that mastery by permitting seniors who failed to meet standards on the PSAE in Grade 11 to take the PSAE again in the spring of Grade 12, and to count those newly achieved “meet” results to the school and the district’s AYP status either retroactively or for that current year.
Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications

Policy Implications: This would be a significant change in ISBE assessment policy.

Budget Implications: The cost could be minimized if we allow only one re-take and move that date to the spring.

Legislative Action: State law would need to be changed to reflect that a Grade 12 re-take would not be optional for students who did not “meet” in Grade 11. At this time, state law states that Grade 12 students are permitted to re-take the PSAE if they choose in order to improve their scores on any portion of the examination. The state accountability workbook also would have to be revised and approved by the USED to reflect the necessary changes (recalculating AYP and including an additional grade level). Given the current stance of USED, this may not be possible.

Pros and Cons of Various Actions

Pros – This proposal would provide:
- Students after completing grade 11 would have the opportunity of a concentrated and rigorous educational program.
- Students would be better prepared to graduate.
- Rigorous learning would continue in grade 12.

Cons –
- State law would need to be changed.
- USED would need to be petitioned through the workbook process and they may not allow due to federal law.

Questions:
If this proposal is accepted, how will we approach this to meet other testing units such as elementary grades? Would this mean that a student who did not meet on the 3rd grade ISAT would have the opportunity to take the 3rd grade ISAT over again in 4th grade so AYP could be recalculated?

The proposal speaks to counting only those students who “meet”. Would there be any re-calculation of AYP using all scores, including those students that still did not “meet”?
TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 211
PETITION TO THE
ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Purpose of Petition

Present a proposal from the Township High School District 211 ("District 211") regarding the administration of the PSAE and credit to the students, and school district’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Expected Outcome of Petition

The Illinois State Board of Education is requested to adopt and implement District 211’s petition and recommendation.

Background Information

Illinois Accountability System

Under the Illinois School Accountability System, high school students are required to complete the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE) in April of their junior year of high school. And, school districts are required to permit students to take the exam again during their senior year, with that examination presently scheduled during the month of October. Results from the examination(s) determine whether the student meets or fails to meet Illinois Learning Standards considered essential for success in the world of work. The exam is comprised of three segments: the ACT (reading and mathematics), WorkKeys, and a state developed science test.

District 211 believes that passing the exam is an important step in making certain that all graduates have met the Illinois Learning Standards and performance descriptors. However, unlike some other states, students in Illinois are not required to pass the state exam as a condition of graduation from high school. Thus, though the PSAE is considered the sole measure of student achievement for the rating of Illinois high schools, and that it properly measures the learning standards the State of Illinois considers essential, no means or measures are in place to ensure accountability for making certain that students are expending every effort to be successful on the exam.
District 211 Background and Experiences

I. Introduction

Test results for District 211 reveals many successes and some failures. Too often, the successes and failures reflect various demographic data, the most common of which is the income level of the students' families. Those students with advantaged backgrounds tend to meet standards on the exam, while students with fewer resources tend to have higher failure rates. Some students come to District 211 in their sophomore year and have been in District 211 schools and in the area for merely one year. Some students come from other countries, while others come from very challenged backgrounds. If the Illinois Learning Standards that are assessed via the PSAE truly reflect the skills needed for success in the world of work or higher education as District 211 believes they do, then the full four years of high school should be available for mastery of those concepts. Colleges and universities permit retesting of the ACT (a major part of the PSAE) for students who wish to demonstrate their achievement for college enrollment purposes. Providing that same opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the Illinois Learning Standards makes equal sense.

Success in school and on the exam can be directly linked to direct learning time in courses with high rigor. In effect, the students who meet standards on the exam tend to enroll in rigorous courses nearly year-round, while students who fail the exam most often attend school only for the required school year and do not master the more challenging courses. For students who enter high school with an achievement level significantly below the ninth grade level, enrollment in higher level classes often is not possible until the junior or senior year. Testing students who fail the PSAE as juniors again in April of the senior year would give a much enhanced chance of demonstrating mastery of the standards.

Changing patterns of failure requires changing student behaviors. District 211 has already taken significant steps to address this matter with the Freshman Academy, authorization for the Sophomore Academy, and the Excel program. District 211 also has approved an additional summer school program for ESL students. All of this is in addition to the system-wide efforts of the past two years to accelerate learning in mathematics and English.

District 211 wishes to change the behavior of students who fail to master the standards tested by the PSAE, and to support the expectations of our schools in regard to these students. Students who fail to meet standards on the PSAE must continue throughout the senior year to strive to meet the Illinois Learning Standards and learning proficiencies if they are to master them prior to graduation. School districts must require both students and school districts to remain at the task of mastering these standards, for as long as the student(s) remain in our schools. Once the standards are mastered, both the student(s) and the school(s) should be credited with the success.
In some states where passing the exam is a requirement for graduation, students are provided up to five opportunities to pass the state exam and thereby demonstrate mastery of state standards. In the best settings, accelerated learning opportunities are provided to students who initially fail the exam, and major efforts are extended to craft specific courses and focus learning activities on achieving the standards. Schools that succeed in assisting students to meet standards are permitted to know of their success. States that require students to pass the exam prior to a student’s graduation have an obligation to provide the resources and learning opportunities to bring students to the necessary achievement level in the essential learning areas of mathematics, English, reading, and science. If seniors are required to take the PSAE due to their failure in passing the PSAE as juniors, District 211 is willing to accept that same obligation to provide instruction that addresses the skill deficiencies for these students.

II. Description of Concern

Each year since testing began in 2001, a percentage of junior-year students in District 211 have failed to meet State of Illinois standards for achievement on the PSAE. This circumstance appears to have one of two causes:

a. Students have not put forth an effort to demonstrate their actual competence in reading and/or mathematics on the State assessment; or

b. Students have not mastered sufficient content and skills in reading and/or mathematics as measured by the State assessment.

In the first instance, both parents and educators need to be confident that everything possible has been done to motivate the best effort possible from students on the PSAE. Only when the best effort occurs do we truly know the ability of the students’ vis-à-vis State standards, and only then can schools have a chance to be accurately evaluated by those tests. Motivation can be engendered both from activities preceding the State test as well as from consideration of consequences following an inadequate test performance.

Poor performance on the State test may also reflect a student’s true academic achievement. Significant effort has been expended to prepare students in our schools to succeed on the PSAE. However, there has been minimal emphasis regarding the development of academic consequences for senior-year students who are unsuccessful in meeting or exceeding State reading or mathematics standards, as delineated by the PSAE. All students, but especially those with proven and serious academic needs, deserve our continued instructional support and an appropriate educational plan that addresses their needs during all four years of their attendance.

Among the options available to schools in Illinois is the prerogative of the school district to regulate the curricular choices of students. To establish an educational basis for this option, it is useful to review briefly the reason why success on the State test is important. The State test focuses on the core content areas of reading and mathematics because they are critical to post-graduate student success. It is our obligation as educators to continue the instruction of students in these two areas, from the time they enter until they leave our schools.
Before considering alternatives for responding to poor performance on the PSAE, it is important to consider the data pertinent to this issue. District 211 reviewed the Prairie State Achievement Examination results of the Class of 2005 and examined characteristics and course schedules of those students who were unsuccessful on that test. The resulting data will enable consideration of instructional options to address the motivation and continued education of these students.

III. A Case Study: Class of 2005

Although each student class has its unique characteristics, the student population in District 211 schools from year-to-year is relatively consistent in its academic tendencies. Because of this, a data analysis of the performance of the Class of 2005 can be expected to be predictive to some extent of future student cohorts.

Facts Concerning Student Performance on the PSAE Mathematics Assessment in 2004 (Class of 2005)

a. District wide, 1018 students performed at levels designated as below standards or academic warning for mathematics. Of this number:
   1. 203 are designated as students with special needs;
   2. 549 students are enrolled in a mathematics senior year course; and
   3. the remaining 469 students who did not meet State mathematics standards are taking no Mathematics Department courses as seniors.

b. Of the 469 students who did not meet State standards and who are taking no Mathematics Department courses as seniors:
   1. 96 are designated as students with special needs;
   2. 314 have full schedules (attend all courses all periods except for a lunch period); and
   3. 155 have study halls, resource periods, or free periods. Some arrive late at school or leave school early.

c. 49 students of the 1018 who failed to meet State mathematics standards are enrolled in senior year Mathematics Department courses, indicative of a strong mathematics sequence.

Observations

a. Only 49 students had motivational issues as an apparent primary cause of poor performance on the PSAE, based on the description between this mathematics course placement and their PSAE score. While these students represent only a small fraction of those performing poorly, they likely will be successful if they can be motivated.

b. The majority of students (969) who did not succeed on the State PSAE Mathematics Test appear likely to have educational shortcomings but, of these students, 499 are already enrolled in senior year Mathematics coursework.
c. A minimum of 373 of the poorly performing students have no special education status and have not enrolled in Mathematics coursework as seniors. 263 of these students have “full” schedules; 110 have open or resource periods.

**Facts Concerning Student Performance on the PSAE Reading Assessment in 2004 (Class of 2005)**

There is an important distinction in the analysis of reading data versus that for mathematics. Courses in English have been required all four years of high school. There are very few individuals who do are not enrolled in English courses as seniors. There are some statistics that are available for consideration:

a. District wide, 835 students performed at levels designated as below standards or academic warning for reading. Of this number, 189 are designated as students with special needs.

b. In studying a sample of students who performed at levels designated as below standards or academic warning for reading, it is found that 23% are enrolled in English Department courses that are not considered by the English Department to have a strong reading improvement curriculum.

**Observations**

a. A determination of the role of motivation is more difficult in English without specific knowledge of individual students. An examination would need to be made, on a school-by-school basis, to estimate the number of students who have performed poorly on the PSAE, due to motivational factors.

b. Since nearly all seniors enroll in English courses, consideration for those with poor PSAE performance should not focus on whether they are enrolled in English courses, as with Mathematics, but rather as to whether that coursework that specifically addresses reading improvement.

c. As with Mathematics, students with special needs should be considered appropriately in developing remedies to poor PSAE performance.

**IV. District 211 Initiatives to Low Performance on the PSAE**

**Prior to Junior Year Testing**

Many initiatives have been documented to enhance student ability in the mathematics and reading prior to PSAE testing. These include, but are not limited to:

- Additional courses, course requirements, and graduation requirements;
- Expanded instructional formats and revised course content;
- Incorporation of reading and mathematics throughout the curriculum;
- Development of an enhanced assessment system in consultation with Dr. Marzano, a recognized expert in the field of educational research and parametrics;
• Summer acceleration programs;
• Tutorial programs;
• Creation of cohort programs for at-risk students; and
• Incorporation of assessment and skill building software into the curriculum and through individual study.

Additional initiatives should include;
• An emphasis on creating an atmosphere that encourages and expects the best performance on the day of the PSAE testing. Although it appears that the number of students who perform poorly due to poor motivation alone may be relatively small, this group represents unnecessary lost opportunities for each school to reach Adequate Yearly Progress.
• Past years have emphasized the ACT portion (day 1) of the PSAE test with limited emphasis on WorkKeys (day 2). A stronger emphasis than in the past is being given this year to the WorkKeys portion of the PSAE. The emphasis must become as pervasive as the support for PSAE.
• The emphasis on ongoing diagnosis of individual student content and skill weaknesses, and effective interventions to strengthen those weaknesses, is now being pursued, in conjunction with consultant Robert Marzano. This work, in its infancy, must be continued.
• Placement of students in spring of junior year who are at-risk in reading, as identified by PLAN or other testing, into a reading intensive senior year English course selections.
• Other initiatives from all available sources, both internal and external, must be researched, developed, and tested.

Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

For each student with and IEP who performs poorly on State testing, the IEP team will review that student’s stated transition goal and determine the specific courses and programs to be included in the student’s individual program. The team will acknowledge that State standards on junior year testing were not met, and will provide a remedy appropriate to the student’s capabilities. Consideration of available remedies will include the choices suggested above and any other general remedies adopted by the District.

V. Summary of Observations

Based on the above observations, District 211 has found the following:

a. Students may perform at a below standards level on junior year State tests due to a lack of knowledge and skills, a lack of motivation, or both.

b. It is incumbent upon our schools to provide the best academic preparation prior to State testing, and to motivate students to their best efforts on that testing.

c. It is a responsibility of our schools to provide continued senior year instruction to those students with demonstrable weakness in reading and mathematics, and to motivate them to their best educational development.
d. An examination of Class of 2005 students indicates that the vast majority of students performing poorly on the PSAE mathematics examinations have strong indications of true content area weakness. Very few appear to perform poorly purely from motivational causes.

e. In the Class of 2005, 350 non-IEP students who performed poorly in mathematics take no Mathematics Department courses as seniors.

f. Although almost all seniors take an English course, an estimated 150 non-IEP students who performed poorly in English fail to take reading intensive English coursework as seniors.

g. A large number of responses to student preparation for the PSAE have been put into practice, or are in the process of development. Some of these reflect identified student deficiencies.

h. Prior to testing, additional emphasis should be place upon student motivation and performance on the WorkKeys portion of the PSAE.

i. In senior year, students performing poorly on reading or mathematics on the PSAE should be required to continue coursework in the areas of weakness, retest in October, and/or complete special work independent of coursework and outside of the classroom focusing on the deficient area.

Therefore, if this petition is approved by ISBE, District 211 plans to require all students who fail to meet standards on the PSAE to enroll in senior year classes and coursework that address their learning deficiencies. Also, District 211 wishes for ISBE to measure that mastery by permitting seniors who failed to meet standards on the PSAE in their junior year to again take the exam in April of their senior year, with the results of these seniors who meet or exceed standards in their senior year credited to the school and the District in some manner that counts toward AYP.

The process of identifying the seniors who should take the exam can be implemented through the State’s recently adopted student identification numbering system. By eliminating the October testing period for seniors and moving it to April, at the same time juniors are tested, costs should be mitigated to the extent possible. Taking the final step of identifying the senior year as the reporting time for NCLB and state accountability purposes would create the expectation, for schools and students, that the entire high school experience should be used to achieve mastery of the standards that Illinois policymakers have determined necessary for success in the coming years. To whatever extent this effort proves successful, the lives of our students and their families will be positively impacted in the years ahead. There can be no greater goal than that for students who previously had less than the needed opportunity to demonstrate success in this very important evaluation process.
Analysis and Implications for Policy, Budget, Legislative Action and Communications

District 211 is committed to the Illinois learning standards and is not proposing to make any modifications to such standards.

District 211 understands that the Illinois School Code requires that high school students be offered two (2) opportunities to take the PSAE, beginning as late as practical during the second semester of grade 11, but in no event before March 1. For each academic area, ISBE shall establish the score that qualifies for the PSAE on that portion of the examination. Any student who fails to earn a qualifying score for a PSAE award, in any one or more of the academic areas on the initial test administration, or who wishes to improve his score on any portion of the examination shall be permitted to retake such portion or portions of the examination during grade 12. Further, a student who successfully completes all other applicable high school graduation requirements, but fails to receive a score on the PSAE that qualifies the student for receipt of a PSAE award, shall nevertheless qualify for the receipt of a regular high school diploma. (105 ILCS 5/2-3.64) District 211 is not proposing legislative amendments to the Illinois School Code.

District 211 is proposing that, for those seniors who fail to pass the PSAE in their junior year, ISBE offer such senior retesting in April in lieu of October.

If seniors are required to take the PSAE if they failed to pass the PSAE as juniors, District 211 is willing to accept the obligation to provide instruction that addresses the skill deficiencies for these students.

Pros and Cons of Various Actions

Pros: Proceeding with implementation of this petition may promote more high school students to receive a PSAE award, and assist both ISBE and school districts’ efforts in meeting AYP.

Cons: Continuing with the current trend of the number of failing students and the increasing number of schools that do not meet AYP and are therefore subject to the consequences of the academic early warning and watch list processes.

Petition Request/Recommendation

Township High School District 211 Board of Education petitions the Illinois State Board of Education with the following:

1. to permit District 211 and all other high schools and high school districts, on a voluntary basis, the opportunity to extend specific instruction in the area(s) of low performance to all students who fail to meet the standards measured by the PSAE in April of the junior year;

2. that each School District of such high schools be permitted to require participation in that instruction as a condition of graduation;
3. that all students who did not meet the standards of the PSAE in April of the junior year be retested in April of the senior year, with the scores of those students who meet standards on the exam in the senior year credited to the student and to the school, in a manner that recognizes the accomplishment for the student;

4. that the passing score of any student credited for passing the PSAE in their senior year also be credited to the school in its effort to reaching its AYP, in either the present year or in a retro-active manner for the prior year;

5. that the State Board of Education reschedule its practice of retesting seniors, who did not pass the PSAE in their junior year, from October to April, along with juniors who are taking the PSAE at that time; and

6. that the State Board of Education consider the advantages of making Grade 12 the year of reporting for NCLB and State accountability purposes.

Approved by Township High School District 211
Board of Education: Feb. 9, 2006
(Date)

Respectfully submitted:

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