Education Policy Planning Committee of the Whole  
Thursday, September 18, 2008  
8:30 a.m.

Location:  State Farm Insurance (Oakland Avenue Building)  
2309 E. Oakland Avenue, Forum Room  
Bloomington, Illinois  61710

All open meetings will be audio cast on the Internet at:  www.isbe.net

AGENDA  (timeframes are estimated for planning purposes)

1. Roll Call

2. Board Member Participation by Other Means

3. Public Participation  8:30 – 9:00 a.m. (15-30 minutes, at chairman’s discretion)

4. Minutes of the June Education Policy Planning Committee Meeting  (pp. 2-5)

*5. Cut Scores: Arabic Foreign Lang. Content Test (Linda Jamali)  9:00 – 9:15 a.m.  (pp. 6-7)

6. Committee Agenda Planning/Additional Items

7. Adjourn

* Items listed with an asterisk (*) will be discussed in committee and Board action may be taken in the plenary session.
EDUCATION POLICY PLANNING COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES
Wednesday, June 18, 2008
1:40 P.M.
Board Room, 4th Floor
Springfield, Illinois

Committee Members Physically Present
Dr. David Fields, Chair
Dr. Andrea Brown
Joyce Karon
Lanita Koster

Other Board Members Physically Present
Jesse Ruiz
Dean Clark
Brenda Holmes
Dr. Chris Ward

Committee Members Absent
Dr. Vinni Hall

ISBE Staff
Dr. Christopher Koch
Dr. Linda Tomlinson
Susie Morrison
Mark Williams
Darren Reisberg
Linda Mitchell
Gina Hopper

The Education Policy Planning Committee meeting convened at 1:40 PM

1. ROLL CALL: Dr. David Fields requested a roll call. See above.

2. BOARD MEMBER PARTICIPATION BY OTHER MEANS: There was no participation from Board members by any other means.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: There was no public participation.

4. MINUTES OF THE MAY 2008 EPPC MEETING: Dr. Christopher Ward moved to approve the minutes from the May 2008 Education Policy Planning Committee meeting. Mr. Dean Clark seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. ILLINOIS CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE REPORT - Susie Morrison and Mark Williams provided information on the Illinois Career Development Task Force Report. Ms. Morrison noted that many of the recommendations in the report have been implemented and that awareness of the issues is important so that each and every one of our students is prepared for a successful career.

Mr. Williams spoke regarding the task force recommendations. The report was presented in December to the Illinois Workforce Investment Board. Mr. Williams stated that the report originated from the Governor's Critical School Shortage Initiative. The task force was charged with identifying Illinois' greatest work force needs and how to create a system to fulfill those needs. The top three needs identified were healthcare/nursing, high-tech manufacturing and transportation distribution and logistics. The task force observed that there is no comprehensive system for introducing Illinois' young people to careers nor is there a way to ensure that Illinois' workers are equipped with the necessary skills to make a career transition inside or outside of a work sector. Mr. Williams asked for reactions to the report.

Susie Morrison thanked Mark Williams for his leadership and guidance throughout the phases of the report’s recommendations.
The Education Policy Planning Committee accepted the report and Dr. Fields thanked Mr. Williams and the other task force members for their work.

6. DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT AND ACHIEVE: Dr. Fields asked for additional questions and indicated that the agenda item was going to plenary on Thursday for approval. Ms. Karon moved to recommend the item be forwarded for approval in plenary session. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. Following a brief discussion regarding the inclusion of science, it was determined that science was to be included. The motion was approved with a voice vote.

7. CALUMET PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT 132 UPDATE: A District 132 update was provided by Dr. Chris Koch, Mr. Darren Reisberg and Mr. John Perkins. Mr. Reisberg spoke regarding the intergovernmental agreement that was entered into in 2006. The initial term of the agreement ends on June 30th, 2008. If the State Board feels the district is in compliance and that it is in the best interest of the students, they can take action to terminate the agreement now. Otherwise (with no action by the State Board to terminate), the agreement will automatically renew for at least another year.

Superintendent Koch and staff believe that the district has made progress as a result of this partnership. The members of the local board have pursued professional development and have hired a competent business manager. They have cleared the majority of their special education compliance issues. However, Dr. Koch commented that it is his recommendation that the State Board not take action at this time, allowing the agreement to continue for another year, as state oversight was a significant factor contributing to the district's gains over the past two years.

Mr. Gary Leider, ISBE Administrator for Calumet Park S.D. 132, spoke regarding substantial gains the district has made over the past year, but commented that there are still major hurdles to clear. They have worked with the oversight board and the local board to identify what goals should be achieved within the next year. Two of the hurdles still to clear are facilities issues and personnel management. The biggest gain has been in board training and non-compliance issues.

Linda Mitchell added that the facilities concerns present a financial challenge to the district going forward. The district has exhausted their long term debt and recently entered into additional debt. Last fall, Calumet Elementary experienced flooding which resulted in problems that still need to be addressed and will have financial ramifications. The district has entered into a performance contract to address building repairs at Burr Oak. The hiring of a strong business manager has proven most effective. The business manager works as an effective business partner to the superintendent. Together they have addressed many previous audit concerns. However, there are still concerns regarding the process for procurement which could have financial ramifications.

Mr. Reisberg commented that while we are not recommending contract termination now, the oversight board and district representatives should develop benchmarks that can be included in the intergovernmental agreement by way of an amendment. The amendment could allow for transitioning the administrator progressively out of the district over the course of the year as long as the district was meeting the agreed-upon benchmarks.

Superintendent Koch commented that this takeover of a struggling district was an important endeavor of the Board and the Agency. Cost estimates were prepared to indicate what costs the state incurred. He added that significant staff time is not reflected in the cost estimates. It would be useful for the Board to reflect on this process for a potential duplication at some point. We have learned what does and does not work. Putting two
boards in play (local board and oversight board) at the same time can be burdensome. Both Dr. Koch and Dr. Fields thanked the staff for their involvement.

Joyce Karon added that significant board training was done. She feels that developing this for any ongoing process is essential.

Dr. Fields restated that the recommendation is that the State Board take no action with regard to this agreement, thus ensuring the continuation for at least an additional year at Calumet Park. Dr. Ward moved that the State Board take no action on this agenda item during plenary session on Thursday. Ms. Koster seconded the motion. It was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

8. SES Provider List Update – Dr. Gary Greene and Ms. Gina Hopper reported.

Dr. Brown asked for clarification regarding the timeline as two sets of test scores came out so close together, causing people to be confused of when they were moving into sanctions and when they were not.

Dr. Connie Wise responded that most elementary and middle schools have their AYP status now. Dr. Greene added that districts are notified over the summer as to the status of their schools. The districts then should contact providers who are already on the approved ISBE list. There are currently approximately 38 approved providers for every district in the state. Dr. Brown commented that some small districts may have limited availability.

Dr. Fields stated that very small districts may have a more difficult time finding providers than Chicago suburban districts simply because of the numbers.

Ms. Koster asked if there is data reflecting the impact that these providers have had on students. Dr. Greene responded that we have received a draft of the effectiveness report which covers the 2005/2006 school year. Superintendent Koch commented that the findings of the SES Evaluation will be presented to the Board at the September Board meeting.

Mr. Ruiz asked how many programs are online. Dr. Greene responded that approximately ten are online and indicated that the companies are domestic but some of the tutors may be in India. There was significant discussion approximately 18 months ago regarding criminal background checks for the tutors of a particular provider. Mr. Ruiz asked if there were monitors or audits to make sure the providers are compliant. Dr. Greene stated that this particular provider posted transcripts online so that parents could monitor conversations.

Dr. Koch suggested that a more efficient process of approving providers might be for the Board to direct the Superintendent to review and approve the providers.

Joyce Karon moved to carry the motion forward with a revision to authorize the Superintendent to review and approve the providers. Dean Clark seconded the motion. There were no objections.

9. Proposed Comments Regarding NCLB Title I Regulations - Superintendent Koch initiated the dialogue stating that these proposed comments were discussed at the May board meeting. Comments were solicited from stakeholders and adjustments were made accordingly. Dr. Koch turned the floor over to Melina Wright to discuss the changes from what the Board reviewed last month.

Melina Wright stated the draft is similar to what the Board initially reviewed, with a few minor modifications. The comments are due to the Department of Education on Monday, June 23.
Ms. Holmes questioned the possibility or probability that the proposed regulations might not go in effect until after January 20th? Ms. Wright stated that the Department of Education’s intent is that they would like to have the final regulations issued by November 2nd which corresponds to the election. They must respond to every comment they receive. The final release is dependent upon how many comments are received and the extent of those comments.

Mr. Clark commented that a new administration would not likely undo changes in a timely fashion. It is also likely that we will have these issues for some time.

Dr. Brown stated that she has spoken with Todd Seelbach of the U.S. Department of Education office in Chicago about Illinois’ Differentiated Accountability proposal and he indicated that Illinois’ proposal is very strong. Dr. Brown complimented staff on a very thorough proposal.

Ms. Wright indicated that the United States Department of Education (Department) issued these proposed regulations and the Department believes these regulations must be in place to further the objectives of NCLB. The comment period provides the public an opportunity to share their views and then the Department will issue the final regulations.

Mr. Reisberg commented that there is no JCAR equivalent in the federal legislature that would put a block in the way.

Dr. Fields suggested that the comments be approved. All were in favor. There was no opposition.

10. Committee Agenda Planning - Superintendent Koch asked the committee to review the Gates MOU with the Governor’s Office. The expiration of the current agreement is June 30, 2008. It will be time to look at the provisions and language and there is a need to itemize directional goals for the future.

Dr. Field added that we need to stay on track with the Charter School issue.

Dr. Brown advised that discussion should take place regarding the NCLB determination of persistently dangerous schools.

Superintendent Koch stated that today’s work study went well. If there are other topics for which that forum is best suited, we can plan accordingly. Dr. Fields stated that he felt it worked exceptionally well.

Ms. Holmes indicated she would like to see policy-type issues continue to be discussed in this manner.

Ms. Karon moved to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Ward seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:39 P.M.
ILLOINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
September 18, 2008

TO: Illinois State Board of Education  
FROM: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Education  
       Linda Tomlinson, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent

Agenda Topic: Determine Passing Scores for New Arabic Content Test (137) Administered by the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS)

Materials: Passing score recommendations

Staff Contact(s): Linda Jamali, Division Administrator, Educator Certification  
                 Laurel Lee Gibler, Principal Consultant, Educator Certification

Purpose of Agenda Item
- Review data that has been provided by Evaluation Systems group of Pearson
- Review recommendations made by panels of Illinois educators who are experts in the designated field of study
- Discuss recommendations made by the STCB relating to the panel-based decisions
- Determine appropriate passing scores for this test

Relationship to/Implications for the State Board’s Strategic Plan
Goal 2: Every student will be supported by highly prepared and effective teachers and school leaders. On September 6, 2008, the new Arabic content test was administered for the first time. Evaluation Systems developed this test at the request of the State Board. The test will determine whether candidates meet the standards located at 23 Illinois Administrative Code, Section 27.340. The passing score has not yet been determined for this test, and the official score report date is October 3, 2008.

Expected Outcome(s) of Agenda Item
The State Board of Education will determine the passing scores for this Illinois teacher certification test.

Background Information
On July 15 and 16, 2008, a panel of Illinois educators, the Content Advisory Committee, met with representatives from Evaluation Systems group of Pearson, the contractor for the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS). These educators reviewed the Arabic content test. They participated in a multi-step, standard-setting process and then provided a panel-based decision for passing scores for this test. In addition, the bias review committee conducted a teleconference on July 22, 2008, to review outcomes from the conferences held on July 15 and 16 and to then make panel-based recommendations on the passing scores.

On September 5, 2008, the STCB reviewed data supplied by Evaluation Systems, and they also discussed recommendations made by the panels of educators. Following this review, the STCB reached consensus regarding recommended passing scores for the Arabic content test.
It is the responsibility of the Board to make a final determination of the passing scores in all sub areas for the Arabic foreign language content test.

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

The Arabic foreign language content test is a new certification requirement for individuals who plan to teach Arabic as a foreign language. Also, teachers seeking an endorsement in Arabic will need to pass this test. Once the Board determines the passing score in each sub area of the test, Evaluation Systems will be able to score the tests administered on September 6, 2008, and all future Arabic content tests.

Policy Implications: Not applicable

Budget Implications: Not applicable

Legislative Action: Not applicable

Communication: Details of the test are available on the ICTS Web site at www.icts.nesinc.com.

**Pros and Cons of Various Actions**

Pending a decision by the Board, Evaluation Systems group of Pearson will plan to release scores on October 3, 2008.

**Superintendent’s Recommendation**

I recommend that the following motion be adopted: Motion to approve the Certification Board’s passing score recommendations for the Arabic foreign language content test.

**Next Steps**

After the Board makes a final determination of the passing scores for the ICTS Arabic content test (137), Evaluation Systems will score the tests that examinees took on September 6, 2008. The testing company plans to report the scores on the official score report date of October 3, 2008, when score reports will be sent to examinees, selected institutions, and ISBE.