Dr. Linda Tomlinson presented a PowerPoint presentation about the current state of student scoring on the state tests as a prelude to discussing the charge for this group (please see http://www.isbe.net/esd/psag.htm).

Dates were set for the forthcoming meetings:
- Wednesday, August 5, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., 4th Floor Board Room
- Thursday, August 6, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 4th Floor Board Room
- Thursday, August 13, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., 4th Floor Board Room
- Friday, August 14, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 4th Floor Board Room
- Monday, August 31, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 4th Floor Board Room

A discussion followed regarding the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS), English Language Arts for All Illinois Teachers. It was noted that there was little about reading or literacy and what was there is broadly written. Michigan has specific language divided into standards for elementary and secondary reading standards. Colorado also has performance based standards in reading. The core needs that general education teachers have regarding English Language Learners, special education children, and gifted children could be considered as a part of literacy or individualized instruction. It was noted that the general elementary teachers and content area secondary teachers need to have an understanding of reading diagnostics. They also need to be critical thinkers, to identify problems, do fundamental diagnostics, and see that the student receives the help s/he needs. They need to understand the concept of RTI and how to operationalize it. The group needs to take a holistic view as they decide what they believe that all teachers need to know and be able to do at the entry level in teaching. Perhaps these new standards need to be kept together instead of being spread out all over the existing standards. Differentiation needs to be understood as not just about special education students but about all children along the continuum.

The large group divided into two smaller groups along the lines of reading and individualized instruction to discuss the charge and come up with areas to be considered. The groups agreed that the collection and use of data would be fundamental to the standards that will be drafted. It was discussed that the group needed to identify the gaps and take a structured approach to the gaps.

The groups reassembled to discuss the outcomes of the separate group discussions.

Reading
Implementation is the key (the current problem)
Have knowledge and performance indicators in both IPTS and ELA Standards

Need specificity (all need to know what is meant by the indicators)
Need fewer statements/indicators
Simple things to make it make more sense, easier, and more effective (tipping point)
Separate Literacy Standards in IPRS
Strong note at the beginning of the IPRS
Sources – Current ELA, Reading Standards

ELL
Core areas re: ELLs for All Teachers
Knowledge of the Foundations of 2nd Language Education and factors that contribute to an effective multi-cultural and multilingual learning environment (TX)
Language as a system—Social/Academic purposes
Concepts of Language Acquisition
Major theories of the nature of culture and cultural groups
Designing and implementing culturally/linguistically appropriate instructional approaches and material choices
Understanding and utilizing a variety of Assessment strategies appropriate for ELLs

  - Understanding what data is needed for making instructional decisions
  - Understanding and selecting appropriate culturally/linguistically responsive assessment activities and instruments for differentiating instruction

Effective collaboration, communication, advocacy with students, families, communities, and schools

Gifted
IAGC has developed standards that align to teaching standards for all teachers. Those are divided into three levels: Novice, Experienced, and Expert. The novice level may be exactly what is needed to incorporate into the new all-encompassing standards.

All teachers should know what assessments mean and how to interpret them. They must know how to identify where students are on a continuum and how to properly challenge students who are underachieving. It is a concern that there is no coursework required for candidates who teach students with exceptional achievement, and the socio-emotional education (which is very important to these students) is not sufficient. There is room for growth of all teachers at all grade levels and abilities.

A brainstorming discussion followed about key concepts and will be reported as such.
  - Teachers need diversity of thought.
  - How does a teacher know how to do it all?
  - Secondary teachers can’t help children with reading problems.
  - Every teacher must be exposed to key concepts and able to help a child.
  - Need to identify key concepts and abilities that all teachers must know and be able to do.
  - Teachers need to understand universal screen at the early grades and know what to do with the data.
  - Teachers at the later grades need access to prior information about their students and what that information means.
There is an expectation that the experienced teachers will also be exposed to these new standards.

The IPTS is the most important set of standards in the pedagogical sense. The standards cover all pre-service programs and teachers and the full range of learners. Some of the standards could be rewritten to be more specific, especially concerning reading/literacy and individualized instruction.

The group will consider if literacy should be used in the language of the new standards or if reading will suffice. Literacy reflects the new SPA language.

Should the group consider elementary and secondary separately? Does the group need to recommend different approaches?

The group was reminded that the State Teacher Certification Board expects the group to produce explicit reading/literacy standards (and also individualized instruction) so that institutions and teachers can be held accountable for them.

It was suggested that the group needs to determine what students need to know and be able to do and then work backwards to determine what teachers need to know and be able to do to help students learn. Do the standards need to be rewritten or added to? First we need to know what is actually in the standards. The concern that the language may already be in the standards but the institutions of higher education (IHEs) have not adopted and operationalized these standards was expressed. If the group finds that this is the case, how can this be made to happen?

The suggestions were made that the group advise IHEs to strengthen the requirements for the gates (the points where applicants or candidates are assessed and/or recommended for entry/continuation in teacher education), the state to raise the cut scores on the basic skills test to bring stronger candidates into programs, and to rewrite the APT with an eye toward assessing literacy/reading and individualized instruction and removing cultural bias. It was pointed out that programs need to be strengthened with the highest gates at the beginning rather than the end of the program.

The group also discussed “differentiation” and how we think about dealing with every child. It was suggested that we may need a new word or a stronger, understood definition. The preamble to the IPTS probably needs to be rewritten in stronger language. IPTS standards 4 and 6 will either need to be rewritten or a new standard for literacy added. A recommendation will need to be made as to how IHEs implement and assess these standards.

Plan of Action: ISBE staff was directed to compose a table listing all references in the present IPTS and content standards to reading/literacy and individualized instruction so that the group can determine what is presently in the standards. From this, the group will determine if the standards need to be rewritten, strengthened, etc.

The group was also asked to send links to any other state standards, articles, papers, etc. that would be useful to the group to be placed on the website. It was determined that it might be
good to have principals and administrators who evaluate teachers in the group so current members were encouraged to nominate individuals with special knowledge to serve with the group.