

Instructional Mandates Task Force

Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2011

10:00–12:00

In Attendance:

Melinda LaBarre, Committee Chair
Andrea Dinaro
Andrew Lehman
Lonny Lemon
Diane Robertson
Anne Roloff
David Shuler
Sandra Walden
Christopher Ward
Travis Wyatt
Steven Young

Visitors:

Bev Johns

ISBE Staff:

Marica Cullen, Curriculum and Instruction
Nicole Wills, Governmental Relations

Not in Attendance:

Representative Roger Eddy
Senator Susan Garrett
Rachel Resnick

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair LaBarre welcomed all attendees to meeting and invited all to introduce themselves. Nicole Wills and Marica Cullen, ISBE staff, were introduced as support for the team's work.

II. Review of Purpose and Timelines

All participants were reminded of the Task Force charge to explore and examine the propriety of instructional mandates, determine costs associated with existing mandates, and make recommendations by July 1, 2011, regarding both existing mandates and the imposition of future instructional mandates.

Discussion: Immediate discussion focused on requiring use of permissive language ("may" vs. "shall") for instructional mandates and the previous day's passage of a change allowing the Drivers' Education fee to increase to \$250 per students.

III. Comprehensive List of Instructional Mandates

Marica Cullen explained the process and referent documents for compiling the Instructional Mandates list. ISBE staff reviewed the School Code, the IL Administrative Rules, IL Association of School Boards materials, and ROE Compliance Monitoring Tools to develop the list. Staff was directed to focus only on instructional mandates.

Discussion: Task force members explained the ROE probe document was generally used every 3 years and felt about 30% of it served a useful purpose. They felt the monitoring they had experienced contained many redundancies and was reliant on producing paper to prove compliance. Additionally, many of the instructional mandates on the list represented an important “erosion of instructional time” for students.

The requirement for offering Behind the Wheel instruction for drivers’ education was thoroughly discussed. Despite the previous day’s passage of legislation allowing the fee for such instruction to be increased to \$250, most members commented the fee was insufficient. Costs for meeting the mandate ranged from \$700 - \$1,400 per student. Several members commented the inability to use simulators, allow students to proficiency out of required hours, recover the full costs from students, or only offer instruction outside the school day were of increasing concern to districts.

Chair LaBarre asked members to divide into small groups and review the mandates to locate those which were graduation requirements. Each group was asked to report out on its work.

Discussion: Members found repetition among the mandates and asked if ISBE could seek “clean up” legislation to combine and streamline mandates. A discussion was held on the requirement for districts to offer all electives in light of current budget conditions. Suggestions were made to have more permissive language for districts in the elective offerings they were required to provide.

Further discussion focused on the number of topic specific mandates (e.g. consumer education, health education, acts of genocide, history of women) which were already met by the Illinois Learning Standards (ILS). ISBE staff will prepare a report showing such alignment for the next meeting of the mandates covered by the ILS for the members. Members felt if the content of a proposed mandate was already covered by the ILS, it was a burden to districts and should not be allowed.

IV. Future Meeting Dates

Future meeting dates proposed were:

May 27, 2011 9:00 – 3:00 (or earlier if that much time is not needed)

June 8, 2011 9:00 – 12:00

June 21, 2011 9:00 – 12:00 (will work until 3:00, if needed)

ISBE staff will attempt to schedule the meetings by v-tel if possible to reduce the travel time for task force members as much as possible.

V. Further Questions

Members asked for common messaging for media queries. The committee decided the message would be the work has begun, the purpose is to review existing mandates and make recommendations, no decisions have been made, and a report will be produced by July 1, 2011.

Members asked for minutes to be taken of each meeting and for written instructions for using technology to share documents.

VI. Nex Meeting's Agenda

Chair LaBarre asked each member to consider ways to determine the costs to schools of instructional mandates, taking into consideration human resource costs, materials costs, and time costs. Each member should bring the information to the next meeting.