ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Tony Sanders, State Superintendent of Education
Dr. Steven Isoye, Chair of the Board

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ILLINOIS STATE EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND LICENSURE BOARD

Illinois State Board of Education
Board Room, Fourth Floor
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois

September 5, 2025

Minutes

Call to Order/Roll Call:
Emily Fox, secretary of the Illinois State Educator Preparation and Licensure Board (SEPLB), called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. A quorum was present. She called the roll.

Members Present:

Karen Englemann
Shannon Fehrholz
Mari Garvonado
Nicole Gas
Dr. Malki Henfield
Dr. Christy Hooser
Rachel Juarez
Danny Kim
Bridget Lahart
Dr. Jay Mehta
Dr. Jennifer Olson
Dr. Tom Philion
William Marion Polasky III
Kristen Ryan
Dr. Arturo Senteno
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle
Jeannine Woods

Secretary of the Board: Emily Fox
Chair designee representing the State Superintendent of Education: Jason Helfer, Ph.D., Chief Education Officer – Instruction, ISBE
Ex-officio member appointed by the State Superintendent of Education: Nkechi Onwuameze, Ph.D., Interim Director of Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education

Members Absent:

Monica Rojas
Dr. Josephine Tabet Sarvis

Others Present:

Sabrina Ollie, ISBE
Emma Bandy, ISBE
Morgan Bahnsen, ISBE
Delaney Strukely, ISBE
Madelyn Rizner, ISBE
Mary Karagiannis, ISBE
Ashley Hommert, ISBE
Sasha Villagrana-Frost, National Louis University
Connor See, National Louis University
Jamal Scott, National Louis University
Jill Donnel, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Jordy Lucas, National Louis University

Kavita Venkatesh, National Louis University
Kristi Stricker, National Louis University
Leslie Ellis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Maureen Hunt, University of Saint Francis
Mindy Fiala-Leaven, National Louis University
Nancy Barrett, University of Illinois Springfield
Shawn Prakash Reddy, National Louis University
Suzanne Lee, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Troy Hinkel, Illinois State University
Alex Rosen, City of Chicago School District 299

Azita Kakvand, ISBE Assistant Legal Counsel
Andrea Dinaro, Concordia University
Dr. Joao Goebel, Northwestern University
Wendy Weber

Secretary Emily Fox let each new member introduce themselves.

Review of Meeting Agenda

Ms. Fox reviewed the meeting agenda. She noted that there are no proposed changes.

Public Participation

Ms. Fox transitioned to public participation either in person or online. No public participation was requested.

Legal Cases

Ms. Fox noted that there were no legal cases on the agenda for review.

Training

Ms. Fox transitioned to training for the members. Azita Kakvand, Assistant Legal Counsel at ISBE, provided training for the members that included an overview of rulemaking and the rulemaking process. Members were able to ask clarifying questions. No one requested to speak.

Ashley Hommert, Principal Consultant in Educator Effectiveness at ISBE, provided training for members about the role of the SEPLB member and other general training topics. Members were able to ask clarifying questions. No one requested to speak.

Mary Karagiannis, Assistant Legal Counsel at ISBE, provided general legal training for the SEPLB members. Members were able to ask clarifying questions. No one requested to speak.

ISBE Essential Updates

Morgan Bahnsen, Principal Consultant in Educator Effectiveness at ISBE, introduced the ISBE Essential Updates document to the board and provided an overview.

Dr. Tom Philion asked if ISBE is currently tracking which institutions will continue to require student growth in their teacher evaluations. The university considers this aspect of the evaluation when assessing the effectiveness of the educator preparation program. Ms. Bahnsen responded that she was not sure if ISBE was tracking but could find out. Members of SEPLB that work in districts stated that they were not aware of any tracking at this time.

During the discussion, Ms. Fox had to step away. Ashley Hommert a Preparation Team member, facilitated the meeting starting at approximately 11:52 a.m.

Program Review and Discussion

Ms. Hommert transitioned the meeting to the program review and discussion portion. She invited board members to ask questions of the institution on the agenda: National Louis University.

Ms. Hommert reminded attendees that this segment of the meeting is designated for board members to discuss the programs under consideration.

Christy Hooser asked how the institution is ensuring their students have experience across age ranges and licensure.

Dr. Jay Mehta asked about technology and artificial intelligence (AI). He specifically asked about privacy issues especially with students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP).

There was no further discussion.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Hommert transitioned to items on the Consent Agenda, and she asked for a motion to approve it.

Approval of Business Meeting Minutes and Closed Session Meeting Minutes – May 4, 2025
Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule for Licensure Board
Approval of 2026 Meeting Schedule for Licensure Board
Approval of Licensure Sanctions: Reinstatements, Suspensions, and Revocations

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has revoked the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-80 of the School Code:

Braxton Allen, STS ID # 2476937
Julio Mora, PEL ID # 1795985
Trevor Minogue, PEL ID # 2600372, SUB ID # 2620382

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has suspended the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-80(b-5) of the School Code:

Isaac Murray, ELS (PARA) ID # 2618004
Elizabeth Bengtson, SUB ID # 2641238
Trevon Jackson, PARA ID # 2611056
Lisa Jacobs, PEL ID # 1830740
Rachel Degroot, STA ID # 3734081
Todd Fowler, PEL ID # 101773

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has reinstated the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-80(b-5) of the School Code:

Victor Baker, PARA ID # 2151911
Robert Craft, SUB ID # 2458434

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has revoked the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-45 of the School Code:

Jesus A. Sanchez, PEL ID # 2094295
Justin C. Tarrillion, PEL ID # 1918528
Benigno Marquez, ELS (PARA) ID # 2446383
Terence White, PEL ID # 1894995 and PARA ID # 2168293
Christina Formella, PEL ID # 2384901
Joshua Hughes, PARA ID # 2636883, SUB ID # 2709536, STS ID # 2636885
Nancy A. Sweeney, PEL ID # 1834516
Elizabeth Bengtson, SUB ID # 2641238

Enza Levar, STA ID # 3654751
Deanne Brown, STA ID # 3556085
Diego E. Saucedo, PEL ID # 2288585, SUB ID # 2297605

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has revoked the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-75 of the School Code:

Jenithxia Sanchez, STA ID # 3420905

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has suspended the following license(s) pursuant to Section 21B-75 of the School Code:

Nicole Picchi, PEL ID # 2892888
Eugene Jo, PEL ID # 1881697
Charles Abbott, PEL ID # 1925718

Rebecca Luri, PEL ID # 1958564
Rebecca Forgy, PEL ID # 2315405
Shane Wehrheim, PEL ID # 2479026, SUB ID # 2371592

Please be advised that the State Superintendent of Education has suspended the following license(s) pursuant to Section 24-14 of the School Code:

Wendy Gatewood, PEL ID # 2020762
Dalia Mena-Mares, PEL ID # 2441495

Ms. Hommert asked for other questions or comments.
Discussion was had about the 2025 Meeting Schedule change for the October meeting.
Rachel Juarez asked about the meeting schedule that says October 10, which is a holiday weekend. The Board can remove or keep October 3rd. The board decided to not update the 2025 calendar and leave as is.

Bridget Lahart moved that the Board removes the following items listed under the Consent Agenda: The 2025 meeting agenda for the Licensure Board. Danny Kim seconded the motion.

Ms. Hommert called the roll call vote.

Karen Englemann - yes
Shannon Fehrholz - yes
Mari Garvonado - yes
Nicole Gas - yes
Dr. Malki Henfield - yes
Dr. Christy Hooser - yes
Rachel Juarez - yes
Danny Kim - yes
Bridget Lahart - yes
Dr. Jay Mehta - yes
Dr. Jennifer Olson - yes
Dr. Tom Philion - yes
William Marion Polasky III - yes
Kristen Ryan - yes
Dr. Arturo Senteno - yes
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle - yes
Jeannine Woods - yes

The motion passed.

Bridget Lahart moved that the Board approve the following items listed under the Consent Agenda: Approval of Business Meeting Minutes – May 4, 2025, 2026 Licensure Board Meeting Schedule, and Notice of Licensure Sanctions: Reinstatements, Suspensions, and Revocations. Dr. Tom Philion seconded.

Karen Englemann - yes
Shannon Fehrholz - yes
Mari Garvonado - yes
Nicole Gas - yes
Dr. Malki Henfield - yes
Dr. Christy Hooser - yes
Rachel Juarez - yes
Danny Kim - yes
Bridget Lahart - yes
Dr. Jay Mehta- yes
Dr. Jennifer Olson - yes
Dr. Tom Philion - yes
William Marion Polasky III - yes
Kristen Ryan - yes
Dr. Arturo Senteno - yes
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle - yes
Jeannine Woods - yes

The motion passed.

Items for Immediate Action

Ms. Hommert transitioned to items for immediate action starting with the new program proposal recommendations.

New Program Proposal Recommendations

Ms. Hommert transitioned to the review of new program proposal recommendations. She invited representatives from National Louis University to introduce themselves and present their proposal for the National Louis University, Learning Behavior Specialist I (K-22), Undergraduate, Blended, Residency Program.

Dr. Sasha Villagrana-Frost and Mr. Connor See introduced themselves as representatives of National Louis University. Online individuals were also introduced by Dr. Villagrana-Frost.

Dr. Villagrana-Frost provided an overview of National Louis University's current education programs and the new proposals under consideration. She highlighted the institution's capacity to support these programs. She flagged the need for LBSI with residency. They are hoping to expand to have LBSI as an additional endorsement. Mr. See highlighted two years of coursework and residency, assessment, low and high incident instructional instances, math, reading methods, etc. He highlighted the shortage of special education positions across Illinois that have been unfilled. He stated that 66% of educator leaders indicated a need for LBSI leaders. He stated it is essential to have this partnership with City of Chicago School District 299.

Mr. See addressed the Board's question about field work and indicated field work placement is across grade ranges. He said field experiences will relate to each courses topic and help determine where placement is.

Dr. Kavita Venkatesh explained that candidates would first take part in a year-long student teaching experience in City of Chicago School District 299 and then move into the residency program with City of Chicago School District 299. National Louis University has discussed split placements and are offering opportunities for candidates to swap placements with peers to get more diversity and grade ranges addressed.

Mr. See addressed the Board's technology question about AI. He mentioned incorporating AI, such as Magical AI. He stated when students are doing this, it will not be real students or their data. It will also be discussed ethically with students and what is correct protocol.

Dr. Jamal Scott discussed how there will be no personal identified information, no real-time information or names. National Louis University stated they have a policy in place addressing this.

Board members were then given the opportunity to ask questions.

Following the discussion, Ms. Hommert asked if there were any additional questions.

Christy Hooser asked, “Who is the targeted demographic group for this program?”

Mr. See stated these are paraprofessionals or Special Education Classroom Assistants (SECA) in City of Chicago School District 299. Ms. Hooser asked about an agreement with City of Chicago School District 299 addressing grade ranges and diversity across grade ranges.

Dr. Venkatesh mentioned more conversations being had surrounding this.

There was no further discussion, and Ms. Hommert called for a motion.

Dr. Mehta moved that, pursuant to Title 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code, Section 25.120(b)(1), the Licensure Board recommend that the State Superintendent approve National Louis University’s Learning Behavior Specialist I (K-22), Undergraduate, Blended, Residency Program. Dr. Philion seconded the motion.

Ms. Hommert called the roll call vote.

Karen Englemann - yes
Shannon Fehrholz - yes
Mari Garvonado - yes
Nicole Gas - yes
Dr. Malki Henfield - yes
Dr. Christy Hooser - hesitant yes
Rachel Juarez - yes
Danny Kim - abstain
Bridget Lahart - yes
Dr. Jay Mehta - yes
Dr. Jennifer Olson - yes
Dr. Tom Philion - yes
William Marion Polasky III - yes
Kristen Ryan - yes
Dr. Arturo Senteno - yes
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle - yes
Jeannine Woods - yes

The motion passed.

Ms. Fox returned as secretary of the meeting at 12:37 p.m.

Extension of Deadline for the Alignment Committee

Ms. Fox transitioned to the extension of the deadline for the Alignment Committee that will determine whether the Illinois Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards and the Illinois Professional Educator Standards align with the six focus areas outlined in Section 21B-12 of the School Code. Ms. Delaney Strukely, Educator Effectiveness Department Lead, was introduced to present the change to the members.

Mari Garvonado moved, pursuant to Section 5 of the resolution SEPLB adopted on May 9, 2025, creating the Alignment Committee, to extend the deadline for the PELRC report to November 21, 2025, and the presentation to the December 5, 2025, meeting of the SEPLB. Ryan seconded the motion.

Ms. Fox called for a vote.

Karen Englemann - yes
Shannon Fehrholz - yes
Mari Garvonado - yes
Nicole Gas - yes
Dr. Malki Henfield - yes
Dr. Christy Hooser - yes
Rachel Juarez - yes
Danny Kim - yes
Bridget Lahart - yes
Dr. Jay Mehta - yes
Dr. Jennifer Olson - yes
Dr. Tom Philion - yes
William Marion Polasky III - yes
Kristen Ryan - yes
Dr. Arturo Senteno - yes
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle - yes
Jeannine Woods - yes

The motion passed.

Items for Information/Discussion

Pearson New Test Passing Rates

Ms. Fox again introduced Morgan Bahnsen to provide an informational presentation on Pearson's new test passing rates. Dr. Phillion and Ms. Juarez confirmed SEPLB would like to review.

Dr. Phillon shared that their institution just completed its accreditation review with the use of AI, and the review was enhanced. SEPLB has the opportunity to do the same.

Mr. Polasky also agreed and shared the direction that the College Board is moving in to review its cut score.

Dr. Phillion stated that he preferred data that spanned multiple years, the longer the better, focusing on the areas of highest need.

The group also discussed what criteria the group would like to look at. Mr. Polasky said in addition to what is listed please include region. He confirmed the goal is that the cut scores would be reflective of the group.

Dr. Phillon stated that one goal may be to think about how programs prepare students. Dr. Hooser added that it is important to establish subtest trends to potentially assist with remediation. Ms. Bahnsen concluded the conversation and thanked the members.

Ms. Fox transitioned to the topic of advisory work for the upcoming year.

Advisory Work for Upcoming Year

Ms. Fox provided an overview of the upcoming advisory work for the Board and directed members to Public Act 104-0128, which was provided in the meeting materials.

Announcements

Ms. Fox made an announcement that City of Chicago School District 299 is taking a pause on pursuing its teacher leader professional development sequence. Dr. Malik Henfield asked for reasoning. Ms. Bahnsen stated that capacity was a current issue.

Ms. Fox asked for any other announcements. No one requested to speak.

Adjournment

Ms. Lahart motioned for adjournment. Seconded by Ms. Gas.

Karen Englemann - yes
Shannon Fehrholz - yes
Mari Garvonado - yes
Nicole Gas - yes
Dr. Malki Henfield - yes
Dr. Christy Hooser - yes
Rachel Juarez - yes
Danny Kim - yes
Bridget Lahart - yes
Dr. Jay Mehta - yes
Dr. Jennifer Olson - yes
Dr. Tom Philion - yes
William Marion Polasky III - yes
Kristen Ryan - yes
Dr. Arturo Senteno - yes
Dr. Kristen Kendrick-Weikle - yes
Jeannine Woods - yes

The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

Jason Helfer, Ph.D.
Chair, State Superintendent's Designee

Emily Fox
Secretary of the Board