

Illinois State Board of Education
Streamlining Illinois' Regional Offices of Education Commission

Monday, March 5, 2012

Minutes

Attendance

Commission Members:

Dr. Brent Clark	Dr. Michael Johnson	Mike Nekritz
Dr. Norm Durflinger	Dr. Vanessa Kinder	Dr. Darlene Ruscitti
Rep. Roger Eddy	Scott D. Kuffel	Jane Russell
Sen. William Haine	John Meixner	
Dr. Michael Jacoby	Susie Morrison	

Representing Commission Member:

Meredith Byers (for Jim Tammen)

Guest:

Dr. Robert Daiber

Notetakers:

Sheila Rodriguez
Rachel Trimble

Welcome and Introductions

The third meeting of the Streamlining Illinois' Regional Offices of Education Commission was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Dr. Norm Durflinger, chair of the Commission. Dr. Durflinger welcomed everyone and had the Commission members introduce themselves because he saw new faces in the room.

Approval of February 27 Minutes

Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission members if they had any changes or additions to the February 22 meeting minutes. Dr. Darlene Ruscitti indicated a necessary change to page 3 of the notes regarding the statement on building inspections being funded through a 5-cent levy; she said that this statement is incorrect and that it should be eliminated. Dr. Durflinger asked for this statement to be removed and asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Michael Johnson motioned to approve, and Scott Kuffel seconded the motion to approve the February 22 minutes.

Dr. Durflinger then asked if there should be any changes or additions to the February 27 meeting minutes. Referring to page 8 of this document, Dr. Vanessa Kinder stated that 70 percent of the Intermediate Service Center (ISC) funding is through grants in general, not federal grants. Dr. Durflinger asked for that language to be corrected and requested a motion to approve. Dr. Brent Clark motioned to approve the minutes, and Dr. Johnson seconded his motion to approve. Both meeting minutes were approved by the Commission.

Discussion on Elected vs. Nonelected

Dr. Durflinger began facilitating a discussion on the issue of an elected versus a nonelected regional superintendent. He stated that this was a request from the Governor's office, and staff from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) would like to hear the pros and cons of having an elected and nonelected regional superintendent. He then stated that a decision needs to be made in the next meeting regarding whether this should be part of the report, but today they are just going to have a discussion. Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if anyone wanted to begin the conversation. Dr. Johnson had some thoughts on more or less how this issue should be treated. He stated that perhaps rather than a recommendation, the Commission can provide the pros and cons and use them as the basis of discussion, which would be fruitful. Sen. William Haine stated that it all depends on what the mission is of the Regional Offices of Education (ROEs); maybe it should be elected, and some states elect their ROE from their school boards. He stated that in Illinois, it has been a historic custom and urges that it should stay that way. Sen. Haine further stated that having this public office determined by the voters is an important thing to do because it helps the educational system and provides accountability. He stated that if the Governor appoints the regional superintendent, then the direct connection to the citizens is lost.

Dr. Durflinger asked for two or three positives of this office being elected. Sen. Haine stated that it provides accountability, it provides function of the ROEs, and the trouble is that citizens do not know the mission of the ROEs. Historically it's been elected, and citizens are well served if high officers are responsible. He stated that not many people take part in school board elections; he does, but not voting in any election is difficult for him to comprehend. Dr. Ruscitti added that at least 30 percent of her time or her assistant's time is devoted to addressing the issues of education. They are the go-to entity when districts and schools are frustrated with their local boards. They are the voice of authority and statute, and that gives them credibility and greater accountability. She stated that she was a little concerned that they had this issue on the plate when one of the charges is to examine the region's duties and State Board duties, which is the issue they should be discussing. John Meixner stated that he agrees with Dr. Ruscitti, that they have not spent time on the duties and they should focus on that instead. Since they have a short time, they need to focus on the other recommendations.

Rep. Roger Eddy stated that this isn't a resolution, it is law. He has served on a number of task forces and wanted to know if this Commission was the appropriate venue to discuss this issue; he feels uncomfortable that they are not following the law.. Dr. Durflinger stated that there seems to be a consensus that because this is not part of the law, it should not be discussed. Rep. Eddy stated that this may not be the proper venue based on what the law says. Dr. Durflinger asked if they have consensus. Dr. Johnson concurred and asked if the real question should be on the role

of the ROEs. Dr. Johnson stated that in terms of election, what does one run into in terms of policy decisions if the primary role is compliance? He stated that in the end, it's the local district's responsibility, and what are people actually voting for in terms of policy? Dr. Ruscitti stated that they see themselves as ISBE's partner. There's a debate that ROEs see themselves in a partnership role because they are dealing with local issues and servicing the community. She stated there's a lot of involvement and it's more than just saying how does the ROE support policy and practice? Dr. Durflinger asked if there is consensus among the group that they are not going to go there. The Commission agreed to move on and not discuss this issue any further.

Dr. Durflinger stated that he has asked Dr. Ruscitti to give a short report on the process they use in DuPage County, which is somewhat summarized on pages 6 through 7 in the ROE report on their systems approach.

DuPage County Process: Dr. Darlene Ruscitti's Presentation

Dr. Ruscitti stated that this was the second commission she has served on and that she is hopeful that they can work together as a system and move forward with public education in Illinois. She stated that they have done a lot of work as an ROE and ISC in moving forward into the 21st century and making sure that every child is successful. She stated that she hears from parents, and they just want to make sure that their child has a better life and quality education. Dr. Ruscitti stated that they can do that by partnering and working collaboratively with ISBE and that they are their eyes and ears, and at times, there are issues that fall on deaf ears. She stated that the bullying issue and other issues are being brought to regional superintendents and that they also are being approached about how the ROEs are going to help with the Race to the Top work.

Dr. Ruscitti stated that she wanted to refer to a plan to align efficient and effective excellence and that they recognize that the state of Illinois does not have money but that there are ways to make things work that have to do with collective entities working together, with the State Board being the central entity. She pointed out Appendix F, right after page 46 of the ROE report, and stated that they had discussions on the roles of ISBE and the ROEs. She stated that they see ISBE as the entity that does policy, research development, and mining the data. The role of the ROE is more one of providing customer service, and there needs to be a dotted line between the role of ISBE and other entities. She stated that first and foremost, they need to define their relationship with ISBE, and she believes that they don't have great alignment among education entities. She argued that if they want to talk about efficiencies and effectiveness, the arrows have to be going both up and down. She stated that the context is not just coming from the DuPage ROE, but she talked with others about ideas and perspectives.

Dr. Ruscitti pointed to page 25 and stated that is the goal of any good government. She then explained what the ROE does. She stated that their ROE helps to build capacity and build compliance because it's tough in the classrooms because the schools are so diverse. She stated that they ROE visits all 262 schools in its district in regard to the compliance issue. They meet monthly and talk about safety, which has cut their health and life violations in half. She continued to state that compliance and compassion are most important in building capacity. She stressed that the most important thing is the relationship between the education system in Illinois and the ROEs. She stated that ISBE and others have to let go of some authority and allow ROEs

to be creative, and there isn't anything wrong with a single system, but they need to focus on the outcomes. She then stated that the focus should be on empirical data and stated that there are a lot of mandates. Once this Commission is complete, they should meet on a regular basis because they are relational and responsive to school districts, and they are results driven and hold themselves accountable. She concluded her presentation by stating the importance of having a systems approach and making sure that every child is achieving.

Discussion on Dr. Ruscitti's Presentation

Dr. Durflinger asked if anyone had any questions for Dr. Ruscitti. Sen. Haine stated that on page 26 of the document, Dr. Ruscitti quotes the task force of 1980, arguing that the systems were duplicative, and he asked her to rectify. Dr. Ruscitti responded by stating that was the first streamlining task force. Sen. Haine stated that to him, they seemed like duplicative structures, and he asked why they need a coordinating council. He further stated that he thinks they are searching for a mission of the ROEs, which should be simple—to be effective locally—and that a simple mission should be established. Dr. Ruscitti stated that the coordinating council was speaking to the lack of communication in Illinois, and the intent of the coordinating council is to have all entities represented. Mr. Meixner stated that the coordinating council will take care of the communication issue and that the third recommendation states that the ROE would be the point person for all services and the accountability portion. Sen. Haine asked how that would be fleshed out. Mr. Meixner stated that the accountability and accreditation would solve a lot of issues. Dr. Johnson stated that he had a concern about going back to the old ROE model. Dr. Ruscitti stated that they approve an institute day, and when she thinks of the administrator academy, she thinks of leadership and looking at the role of leadership. Dr. Johnson stated that part of the problem on the side of the school board is that we are training superintendents without going to the school boards, who have no say. Dr. Ruscitti stated that they have a professional development training module for school boards and superintendents that will be launched soon. Dr. Johnson stated that they have mandatory training, but the school boards are left out of the discussion, which is a concern that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Meixner stated that Dr. Johnson's recommendation is to have someone from the school board represented on the coordinating council. Susie Morrison stated that it would be good to bring all those people together, such as the school boards and professional development trainers. Dr. Johnson stated that he had a concern about the ROEs doing all of the professional development; he felt the ROEs do not have the capacity. Dr. Ruscitti stated it wasn't the idea to have ROEs provide all of the professional development, but there needs to be more coordination. Dr. Michael Jacoby stated that there seems to be a standardization of roles and putting everyone in a box. He thought that the ROEs want the professional development to be more standardized so that ROEs can be more consistent. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she partly agreed that there needs to be some standardization but didn't agree on standardizing the superintendent role because superintendents manage districts that are very different. She used the example of a DuPage County superintendent who has a large portion of Latino students, which is very different from other districts. Mr. Meixner stated that there is value added to that because there are differences throughout the state, and there should be some freedom to apply certain grants. Dr. Jacoby stated that there needs to be a core set of expectations; otherwise it will be hard to compare to other accountability models. He wanted to be clear that there should be a set of core services offered at every ROE.

Dr. Ruscitti stated that the “how” needs to be identified and that she is big on having a coordinating council to make sure that the ROEs are doing those core services. Mr. Meixner asked if there should be just one coordinating council. Scott Kuffel stated that it could stop at Recommendation 1 and that he appreciated the commentary about value added, but that should come after Recommendation 1 is fulfilled. Dr. Kinder commented that they have a statewide council, which is taken to the region and then gets taken to the local level, so she saw it differently. Dr. Ruscitti added that the intent was that the bullying policy could go through the coordinating council. Rep. Eddy stated that he envisioned an organization chart, which includes an advisory group such as the P-20 council that is making various recommendations. He stated that school districts are constantly watching all these moving parts, and if there is a way to have this coordinating council replace all of the moving parts, then he can see some value. He also stated that the role of this coordinating council needs to be clearly defined to districts because it can add more confusion. Dr. Durflinger stated that Recommendation 1 falls back to the original recommendation of the original task force and that they are going to have to have a council. Mr. Meixner stated that they can better identify the coordinating council. Dr. Johnson stated that to him, it has a different charge, and it’s going back to their mission, and the coordinating council is much larger than what they are looking for.

Dr. Durflinger stated that in going back to the law, the first step is to determine the duties of the State Board and ROEs. He stated that he would like to have everyone go back to what the duties and responsibilities of the ROEs are. He asked the Commission to turn to page 14 of the ROE report and look at the mandates that are required. He then told the Commission that they are going to be looking at all of the mandates and value-added activities and determining which mandates and activities should be the responsibility of the ROEs. Dr. Durflinger began going down the list of mandates, which were then discussed in detail by the Commission.

Discussion on Mandates

The following mandates were on the list to be discussed:

1. Truancy/dropout students—Truants’ Alternative and Optimal Education Program (TAOEP)
2. General equivalency diplomas (GEDs) awarded
3. Hearings for chronically truant students
4. Regional Safe Schools Program (alternative school) students
5. Teachers, school service personnel, and administrators registered
6. Substitute teachers registered and FY10 teachers, administrators, and substitutes recertified
7. Criminal background checks
8. Professional certificates
9. Teacher endorsement and certificate applications
10. Bus driver initial training and annual training

11. Educator professional development workshops
12. Administrator academy workshops
13. Gifted education seminar (ISBE designation) teachers
14. Annexation/detachment petitions filed and hearings
15. Schools served through Regional System of Support Provider (RESPRO) Services (Year 3+ schools not meeting No Child Left Behind [NCLB] adequate yearly progress)
16. Schools served through Statewide System of Support Services (SSOS) (Year 1 or 2 schools not meeting NCLB adequate yearly progress)
17. School buildings inspected for safety (Health/Life Safety)
18. Building amendments processed and permits issued
19. School evaluations of districts for recognition status (compliance)

1. Truancy/Dropout Students

Dr. Durflinger asked if truancy should be handled by the ROEs. Mr. Meixner stated that by statute, ROEs have to handle this issue and that they do a good job in rural areas. Dr. Durflinger asked about urban areas. Dr. Kinder responded that ROEs handle truancy in suburban areas and that this role has value. Rep. Eddy asked if there should be some intermediate step to determine if a child is truant and if it's the responsibility of public policy. He stated that without the ROEs, he would call the State Attorney's office to determine if the law has been broken. Mr. Meixner stated that the ROEs are the intermediate center, and they don't take a punitive approach but try to have remediation. Rep. Eddy stated that Mr. Meixner may do the task differently, but other ROEs do it more punitively and that it would need to be described how it's done everywhere. Dr. Johnson stated that there are cases in which the school does not want the students back, and if it weren't for the ROEs, those students would fall through the cracks, which makes the case for having checks and balances.

Dr. Johnson stated that ROEs can handle truancy for certain areas, such as rural. In other areas, this responsibility can be combined—where they would have a truant office—or, in some cases, it can be handled by the ROEs. Dr. Durflinger asked if anyone else had a different view, and there seemed to be consensus that truancy should be handled by the regional superintendent and it can become part of the accountability process.

2. GEDs Awarded

Dr. Durflinger asked Dr. Robert Daiber to talk about GED awards. Dr. Daiber stated that community colleges made the decision that the GED should be computerized, and there will need to be a registered site and proctors will be needed. He stated that historically, ROEs are the recordkeepers of GED records and that will not change, but the role of the ROE as the GED examiner and main test site will go away. Dr. Durflinger stated that in 2014, the ROEs will no longer be the chief examiners but will continue to be the recordkeepers. Dr. Daiber agreed that statement is true. Rep. Eddy asked why the recordkeeping couldn't go to the local school recordkeeper. Mr. Meixner stated that the student seeking a GED may not be a regular student all

the time; instead, the person may be a home-schooled student. Dr. Ruscitti stated that they get thousands of requests for these records. Dr. Daiber stated that the test results will be held in a database moving forward and that the ROEs will have access to that database. Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if they agreed that this mandate should stay with the ROEs, and the Commission agreed.

3. Hearings for Chronically Truant Students

The Commission also agreed that the mandate on chronic truant students should stay with the ROEs.

4. Regional Safe Schools Program

Next, Dr. Durflinger asked who should handle the mandate on the Regional Safe Schools Program. Mr. Scott Kuffel asked if the ROEs play a different role in different areas. Mr. Meixner stated that the ROEs are the administrative agent for the regional safe school program. The Commission agreed that this mandate should stay as is.

5. Teachers, School Service Personnel, and Administrators Registered

In regard to the teachers, school personnel, and administrators registered mandate, Mr. Meixner stated that this is all encompassed in one thing. Dr. Kinder stated that they just did a survey, and they get about 100 calls a day regarding certification. Dr. Durflinger asked if the State Board can handle this mandate. Ms. Morrison stated that the State Board cannot handle it and that she thinks that the ROEs and ISCs play the troubleshooting role because they need to help people view the online system. Therefore, the role of the ROE is important. Dr. Kinder stated that they encourage people to use the online system, but they still get a lot of other questions on how to get certified. She stated the questions are far beyond the online system, and they are still taking in a lot of phone calls. Ms. Morrison stated that they play the role of troubleshooting but that it will eventually need to turn to mediation. Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if they agreed that this mandate should still be handled by the ROEs. The Commission agreed. Dr. Ruscitti asked if there are duties that can be taken from the State Board that can be handled by the ROEs. Ms. Morrison stated that she thinks there may be some duties that can be handled by the ROEs.

6. Substitute Teachers Registered; Teachers, Administrators, and Substitutes Recertified

The Commission agreed that the mandates on substitute teachers registered and on teacher, administrator, and substitute recertification should stay with the ROEs.

7. Criminal Background Checks

Dr. Durflinger asked if there's a better way to do criminal background checks. Mr. Meixner asked if there's a more cost-effective way to handle background checks. Dr. Johnson stated a human resources company handles their background checks. Mr. Meixner stated that it was more expensive to have a human resource company handle the background checks, and they collect the fingerprints and do the background checks for their substitute teachers. Dr. Durflinger stated

that when he was a superintendent, his ROE handled background checks for substitute teachers. Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if this mandate could be handled elsewhere. The Commission agreed that this mandate should stay with the ROEs.

Additional Thoughts on Some Mandates Already Reviewed

Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if they could go over the mandate list from the beginning again and see if the mandate is majority local or state handled.

1. Truancy/Dropout Students. Dr. Durflinger asked if the mandate on truancy/dropout students is local or state. The group stated that it's both. Dr. Ruscitti stated that they need to define that relationship. Dr. Jacoby stated that if it means it's the state, does it mean that it's a mandated responsibility? Should it be exclusive or shared? Mr. Nekritz stated that in Lombard, they are dealing with 99 percent of truancy issues without involving their ROE, and they have to make sure that their actions are consistent within their district. He stated that he thinks they need to define "local" and what percentage of the districts are handling this duty. Rep. Eddy stated that he was looking at the statute and that if they go through the list, it may be efficient for the Commission to look at what costs it entails. He stated that if the ROEs are carrying out something that is beneficial as a service, school districts would be responsible for funding. Or is this something created by the state and expensed by the state? He stated that for the first mandate on the list (on truancy), districts still have a duty and responsibility to report chronic truancy, but there needs to be an alternative for students to return to school, and this responsibility is shared.

Mr. Meixner stated that it's different because the compulsory attendance law applies only to public schools and that parochial and home-schooled students don't count. Rep. Eddy asked if that means that home-schooled students can't be truant under the definition of the law. Mr. Meixner stated that is correct. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she asks the parents to show them evidence that they are educating their children; if they don't, then the ROE takes the parents to court. Rep. Eddy stated that the responsibility of the local school district is to report and asked if this mandate is funded by the state with some local funds, and if so, what is the percentage? He stated that the recommendation should derive from who is being served. Dr. Ruscitti stated that it has to do with the previous streamlining commission. They did the research and found out that in Illinois, the truancy dollars are distributed to seven community colleges, 37 ROEs, and 36 school districts. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she does not receive any truancy grants and that it gets muddy on who is accountable for truancy. Rep. Eddy stated that it should be a partnership and that the mandate itself should be carried out as a state mandate and should be funded by state funds.

Sen. Haine asked why community colleges are involved. Rep. Eddy responded by stating that they get involved as a resource. Sen. Haine asked if they provide the resource but are not the focus of truancy, and Rep. Eddy stated that is correct. Sen. Haine further stated that some communities in his county have an ordinance that anyone less than 16 years of age has to be in school, and if they are, not, then they are considered truant. Dr. Ruscitti stated that the judges in the courts do not want to see these students. When a judge

encounters a student who has one credit and is in his or her senior year, the judge can require the student to attend the DuPage alternative school so that he or she can get a GED, or we need to enroll them in a community college. Dr. Durflinger stated that this mandate (dropout/truancy) is shared.

2. GEDs Awarded. Dr. Durflinger brought up the mandate on GEDs awarded and asked the Commission if they agree that this mandate should be handled by the ROEs and if it's a local or state function. Dr. Jacoby stated that the mandate is shared between community colleges and the ROEs. Dr. Durflinger reiterated that it is still a local function. Rep. Eddy stated that the records function is local, and if it goes to the community college, then it is a state-created cost. The Commission agreed.

4. Regional Safe Schools Program. Dr. Durflinger moved on to the regional safe schools mandate and asked if this was a shared or state function. Rep. Eddy stated that public school students go to these schools in lieu of expulsion; therefore, it is serving a school function. He stated that he would agree that a large part of this mandate benefits the local districts. Dr. Johnson stated that he would argue that it's a state issue because the board would expel those students under statute. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she would say it's shared because the DuPage ROE has lost a lot of its funding and the burden is across the state. Dr. Kinder stated that the loss of funding is more than 50 percent. The DuPage ROE's budget went from \$2.2 million to \$500,000. Dr. Durflinger stated that the Commission then agrees that it is shared.

6. Substitute Teachers Registered. The Commission then agreed that the mandate on substitute teachers registered is a state function.

10. Bus Driver Initial Training and Annual Training

Dr. Durflinger then went on to discuss the mandate on bus driver training and stated that it is a state-funded mandate. He then asked if anyone else can handle that responsibility, such as the Illinois Department of Transportation or the Secretary of State. The Commission agreed that this is a state function that should continue to be handled by the ROEs.

11. Educator Professional Development Workshops

The Commission then discussed the mandate on professional development workshops for educators. Dr. Clark stated that the ROEs are part of the process. Dr. Durflinger asked if this is a local or state function. Rep. Eddy stated that if it's mandated, then it becomes a state function. Dr. Clark stated that ROEs are doing a lot of training. Mr. Kuffel asked if the question is whether this training should be handled by the ROEs. Dr. Kinder stated that one of the charges for ISCs in the law is that they are mandated to provide professional development, and he thinks there's a combination of both state and local. Ms. Morrison stated that part of the issue is that professional development is not exclusive, so is it a mandate or should it become a service? Mr. Kuffel stated that his district provides required trainings, such as diabetes training, but they don't call those professional development activities.

12. Administrator Academy Workshops

Dr. Durflinger discussed the mandate on the Administrator's Academy workshops and asked the Commission if this is mandated. Dr. Ruscitti stated that school districts will go wherever they need to get the job done. She stated that it's about the implementation and not the law and how can they best implement it, which is one of the roles that is seen by the ROEs. She then stated that the real issue is the issue of dollars: they compete for dollars, and it should be a factor that needs to be laid out. Dr. Kinder stated that it's a duplication of services and that conversations need to happen to find out what everyone else is doing. Dr. Durflinger asked if they would be doing an Administrator's Academy workshop if the state did not mandate it. He then asked if there was an administrator workshop before the mandate. The Commission stated that there wasn't one before the mandate. Dr. Durflinger stated that to him, it is a state function. Dr. Kinder stated that there's enough work for everyone and that they really need to get together and talk about how these duties can be done more efficiently. Dr. Durflinger asked if this is a state or local function. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she sees this as professional development. Dr. Durflinger then stated that the academy, then, is both a state and a local function; the Commission agreed.

Sen. Haine asked Ms. Morrison if the State Board has the capacity to provide the Administrator's Academy. Ms. Morrison stated that the State Board does not have the capacity; she stated that the State Board asks the ROEs and ISCs to help them in many ways, and the funding is inadequate. She asked how they can end up in a better place than they have been in the past.

13. Gifted Education Seminar

The Commission moved to the next mandate regarding the gifted education seminar and agreed that it should be handled by the ROEs.

14. Annexation/Detachment Petitions Filed and Hearings

The Commission discussed the issue of annexation and detachment petitions, and they agreed that this issue should be handled by the state and should stay as a state function.

15. Schools Served Through RESPRO Services

Next, the Commission discussed the mandate on schools served through RESPRO services. Dr. Durflinger asked if the ROEs are the only ones that can handle this service. Ms. Morrison stated that the State Board cannot handle it; because these services are mandated, they roll it out to the ROEs. Dr. Kinder stated that it is state mandated since it's rolled out by the State Board. Dr. Durflinger asked if anyone else can do it. Dr. Kinder stated that no one can do it as well; the Commission agreed that is a state/federal mandate.

16. Schools Served Through SSOS Services

The Commission continued and discussed the schools served through Statewide System of Support (SSOS) services. The Commission agreed that this mandate is also state and federal. Dr. Durflinger asked if the ROEs can say no to this mandate and if the State Board can decide to use

someone else to handle this service. Dr. Ruscitti stated that the DuPage ROE is the only one, by statute, that needs to provide those services; therefore, it is mandated in that particular ROE. Dr. Johnson stated that it's not necessarily mandated but a service. Dr. Durflinger then stated that this is technically not a mandated responsibility but a directed service. Dr. Ruscitti stated that there is conflict because the ROE is mandated by school code to provide these services.

17. School Buildings Inspected for Safety

The Commission continued and discussed the school building inspection mandate. Dr. Durflinger asked if anyone else can handle it. Mr. Meixner stated that ROEs are the only ones that have the capacity. Dr. Johnson stated that the Illinois Association of School Boards spoke with insurance companies, and the insurance companies are able to do it at a cost. Dr. Johnson stated that there needs to be someone else looking at it besides fire marshals and architects. Dr. Ruscitti asked which duties can be done more effectively and efficiently, especially with the current economic climate. Dr. Kinder stated that there is a compliance piece that cannot be done by insurance companies. Dr. Ruscitti stated that this is all part of the accreditation process and that they need to do it in one system. Sen. Haine asked what happens if an ROE does not do it. Dr. Ruscitti stated that the person would be removed. Ms. Morrison stated that those elements are part of an accountability process, which doesn't exist but needs to come out of these recommendations. Dr. Durflinger stated that consistency is huge, and there are a lot of inconsistencies throughout the state. Ms. Morrison stated that it should be clear what the expectations are and what happens if they are not met. The Commission agreed that no one can do it better than the ROE and that this is a state mandate.

18. Building Amendments Processed and Permits Issued

The Commission then agreed that the mandate on building amendments should stay with the ROEs because they do it best.

19. School Evaluations of Districts for Recognition Status (Compliance)

The Commission also agreed that the school evaluations of districts mandate is purely a state mandate.

Wrap-Up and Closing Comments

Dr. Durflinger then asked the Commission if anyone has an all-inclusive list of value-added services provided by the ROEs. Dr. Daiber stated that he gave that list to Dr. Durflinger. Dr. Durflinger stated that for the next meeting, they will send out that list, which will be reviewed. Sen. Haine pointed out that in the ROE report, it states that the ROE is the primary entity that enforces school code for public and private education. He would like to have this fleshed out to see how the ROEs handle private schools. Dr. Durflinger also stated that Dr. Ruscitti gave him some information and that one of the duties is to look at the duties of the State Board and decide if the ROEs can handle some of those duties. This issue will be discussed in the next meeting.

Dr. Durflinger told the Commission that they have some homework and that they will discuss the value-added services and move forward in defining the duties and responsibilities of the ROEs and State Board as well as look at boundaries for the next meeting. Dr. Durflinger asked the Commission if it was okay to change the time of the next meeting from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Commission agreed that they will meet at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, 2012.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.