

Streamlining Illinois' Regional Offices of Education Commission

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Minutes

Attendance

Commission Members:

Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia
Dr. Brent Clark
Dr. Norm Durflinger
Sen. William Haine
Dr. Michael Jacoby

Dr. Michael Johnson
Dr. Vanessa Kinder
Scott D. Kuffel
John Meixner
Susie Morrison

Mike Nekritz
Dr. Darlene Ruscitti
Jane Russell
Meredith Byers

Guests:

Gus Bishop
Dr. Robert Daiber

Becky Densmore-Stoll
Sen. David Luechtefeld

Dick Spohr

Notetakers:

Sheila Rodriguez
Rachel Trimble

Welcome, Introductions, and Consensus Recap

The fifth meeting of the Streamlining Illinois' Regional Offices of Education Commission was called to order at 9:32 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. Commission members introduced themselves, and Dr. Durflinger stated that the first item was to approve the March 15 minutes.

Approval of March 15 Minutes

Dr. Durflinger called for a motion to approve the minutes. Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia motioned to approve, and Dr. Brent Clark seconded the motion to approve the March 15 minutes.

Decision and Discussion on Accountability

Dr. Durflinger stated that in the last commission meeting, there was some discussion on the accountability on regional superintendents. He turned the meeting over to Susie Morrison to introduce the next presenters. Ms. Morrison introduced Becky Densmore-Stoll from AdvancEd. Ms. Densmore-Stoll introduced herself and her colleagues, Gus Bishop and Dick Spohr. She stated that they will talk about AdvancEd's processes and protocols, and she handed the meeting over to Dick Spohr.

Mr. Spohr thanked everyone and said that in the next few minutes, he will explain AdvancEd's quality assurance protocol. He stated that Educational Service Agencies (ESAs) are similar to Regional Offices of Education (ROEs). He added that he will try to give the explanation in terms of design and talk about AdvancEd and its protocol for implementation. Mr. Spohr stated that in Michigan, Gus Bishop has been the key person in implementing this model for ESAs—much like the ROEs in Illinois.

Mr. Spohr stated that in 1895, Congress established six regional accrediting agencies in the United States and that those six agencies were successful for more than 100 years. He stated that in recent years, states have become outspoken in establishing standards and expectations for their students. He stated that the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) came together to form AdvancEd. AdvancEd now represents 39 states and works with school districts in 70 countries. Its model is in 30,000 districts around the world. He stated that AdvancEd is the world's largest educational organization and continues to push research and development. He added that the protocol they will share today is a system of accountability that focuses on ESAs. AdvancEd is looking to establish standards, make the standards operational through indicators, and make them consistent. He stated that there is a desire to have a measure of consistency in order to ensure quality and maintain trust.

Mr. Spohr gave the commission members a document and stated that on the first pages there is a list of five standards. He stated that less than 10 years ago, the National Study of School Evaluation (NSSE) developed standards with 50 indicators. Those standards are not equal, however; some are more or less meaningful. He pointed the commission to page 6 of the document and asked them to look at leadership and governance. He also asked them to look at the second indicator on page 7, in which the standard states ~~agency.~~” The indicator states that the governing boards operate responsibly. How do they know they are doing that as they look at the rubric? The model is created with standards, which are the behaviors and actions, along with carrying a rubric so that schools and agencies are able to make a measure or self-assessment. He stated that this situation led them to a protocol for quality assurance, which is conducted by an in-depth self-assessment, and identify how they know the evidence. The external review is conducted once every five years. In this external review, educators come in and evaluate the evidence. They use any number of focus groups, and they watch the agency in operation. He stated that he thinks it's important to recognize that at the end of the day, they all need to keep the focus on student performance and growth. He stated that this explanation is just an overview of the model. Mr. Spohr then introduced Gus Bishop, who shared information on model implementation.

Mr. Bishop stated that he is going to share what it's like in Michigan, in which they have Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) in their regional service areas. In 1962, ISDs were formed in Michigan with appointed elected boards. Theirs was the first one chartered in Michigan. It has three counties and serves Beaver Island. Those ISDs were formed to provide some consolidation of services that local school districts could not do on their own. Their Intermediate Service Center (ISC) had 11 employees and now is at 240 employees. Of their 57 ISDs, five have gone through their accountability process with AdvancEd and two are currently going through the

process. He stated that trust has to be built on some form of accountability. A number of years ago, when funds were tight and when the focus became how to properly serve students, the ISDs were invisible; but now they are not. A number of people at the state Legislature started looking at ISDs. Some ISDs volunteered to go through the accountability process. During that process, the five standards were redeveloped from the original seven standards.

Mr. Bishop stated that he previously was a superintendent, and one of his challenges was telling those districts that they needed to look at their different departments. He stated that it's not enough to go to stakeholders and that this process requires the agency itself to go to everyone in its department. They found that in their ISDs, they didn't know how those programs coordinate; the first stakeholder they worked with was their own staff. Mr. Bishop stated that the one issue that came into place when they went around to the different departments was looking at the situation as a monitoring process. The key aspect of accountability is that they are not just an intermediary but that they are responsible for student achievement. He stated that he attended an ISD in southern Michigan. Because of its tax base, they are able to have a lot of that tax. The southern ISD had less money; they had to handle it differently, but they met the standards with what they had. He stated that they were validated, and it brought their staff closer. The process put them in a position where they could focus on the five standards.

Dr. Darlene Ruscitti stated that accountability is something the ROEs are looking at. They also looked at another instrument and put together a client survey. Then they took it a step further by being more responsive, and the survey currently is being piloted in a number of ROEs. She stated that they also would like to see how their services are aligned. She stated that Alaska's model is decentralized, and they do all the accounting, payroll, bilingual, inservices and professional development, and school management training. She stated that the document challenges them because three or four of the items are focused there and other agencies provide a lot of professional development in the state of Illinois. They need to look at standardizing this process and at the service agencies that provide professional development. She stated that regional superintendents need to look at accountability. She would welcome the opportunity to talk further but would argue that it is a task that the commission is not looking at. She stated that there is some disconnect on student success, and they need to start at the state level as opposed to starting locally.

Mr. Bishop stated that in his state, the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators has formed a partnership with AdvancEd to have this model be more of a statewide model. Those partnerships are important. Mr. Spohr stated that it's only the first six indicators that pertain to the agency, and the indicators themselves were determined through research to be those things that correlate highly with effective organizations. The second indicator is on teaching and learning; the regional offices are involved with that and, whenever one looks at self-assessment, it's in that context. John Meixner stated that they have been talking about it for a while, and he would like to know the cost. He stated that some offices were willing to jump on board, but the cost was too much. Ms. Densmore-Stoll stated that the annual accreditation fee is \$2,000, in addition to the quality assurance that is done every five years, and the agency would be responsible for the team member's travel expenses. Dr. Michael Jacoby asked what would happen if the ISD cannot meet accreditation standards. Mr. Spohr stated that they use the same standards, indicators, and protocols in all states and schools; it's the context

that leads to a change in implementation. He pointed to the indicators and stated that they will give direction; in some states, they use the process required for all of their schools. The expectation is that this is voluntary for schools, and they will approach it professionally and utilize all resources to achieve a high level; if they do not meet these expectations, they may not be accredited or recognized, or they go into advisement for two years.

Sen. William Haine asked if the ISD superintendent runs for office. Mr. Bishop stated that they are appointed by the board. Sen. Haine asked how their board is elected. Mr. Bishop stated that some boards are appointed and others are elected. Sen. Haine stated that superintendents' duties to supervise local school provides a check on what they do. Mr. Bishop stated that in certain areas, they are obligated to monitor by state law. Over time, this responsibility has expanded to the dropout-prevention processes, early childhood, and technology purchases for students. The superintendents monitor and audit but are now providing professional development.

Dr. Durflinger asked Dr. Vanessa Kinder if their election is similar. Dr. Kinder stated that it is similar. Mr. Spohr stated that they are finding that other states do it differently. Sen. Haine asked if citizens are happy with that process: Do they know about it, and do they care? Mr. Spohr stated that in one of their districts in Arkansas, the mayor was involved and added that stakeholders get involved. Sen. Haine asked if Mr. Bishop is an ISD superintendent and if he is the facilitator of the discussion on how well the school is doing. Mr. Bishop stated that his role in AdvancEd is to work with the school districts in improvement and accountability. Mr. Bishop stated that once the ISDs are involved with their organization, they must meet those expectations. Sen. Haine asked how they relate to the state board. Mr. Bishop stated that the ISD reports to the Michigan Department of Education, which is the state board.

Sen. Haine asked if Michigan wants to abolish its ISDs. Mr. Bishop stated that there was a time when there was a discussion of abolishing them; but since then, the ISDs have taken on more responsibility because the Michigan Department of Education has decreased its staff. Sen. Haine asked how the ISDs are funded. Mr. Bishop stated that they are funded by local property tax, some from federal special education funds and grants. A little less than half of the funding is flow-through dollars from the state, and the other half is property tax.

Dr. Brent Clark asked Mr. Bishop what determines the geographical boundaries of the ISDs. Mr. Bishop stated that in some cases, it is the county. In 1962, certain counties came together; there is some preference around counties. They have 57 ISDs.

Dr. Durflinger stated that Dr. Ruscitti is correct and that this is not part of the commission's charge, and he was hoping to get consensus that they will support Recommendation 5. He stated that he heard from the ROEs that they are working toward that. Mr. Meixner stated that the money issue should be discussed under necessary funding and that if they are going use that model, someone needs to pay for it; it cannot be added to everyone's list. Dr. Durflinger asked if he has consensus on Recommendation 5, and the commission members had consensus.

Decision and Discussion on Boundaries

Dr. Jacoby stated that he requested his previous motion to be removed because they looked at it in theoretical terms. He stated he would like to dialogue on that topic but not necessarily move that motion. He stated that in their initial discussion on boundaries, they had talked about having a more equitable property base and had emphasized the importance of this recommendation of regional superintendents and geographic issues. Dr. Jacoby stated current statistics of ROEs. The smallest ROE population is 41,472, and the largest ROE population is 916,924, which is 22 times larger than the smallest ROE. The average ROE is 173,000 with the median being at 91,000. Their first recommendation is to establish a minimum population for an ROE to be 150,000 residents. He stated if they use the 150,000 number, they would end up with about 27 to 30 ROEs based on consolidation. Dr. Jacoby showed the commission a map of what the breakdown would look like. He stated that this particular map has 28 ROEs. Part of the recommendation had to do with county budgets, and that he would recommend that they maintain the existing number of assistant regional superintendents and the offices themselves. Several offices will come under that regional superintendent. Maintaining this number would allow for more practical oversight of multiple service centers and would not diminish the current service network.

Dr. Jacoby continued and stated that in terms of money, he is not thinking that the amount would be so dramatic. He believes there are inequities in the salary base of regional superintendents and they should keep the same money but have larger oversight. He suggested that they should take the remainder of the funds saved and move it toward having a larger salary bracket for regional superintendents, which can mean about \$30,000 to \$50,000 in salary increases. Dr. Jacoby further stated that with the county issue, they need to make a strong relationship with the county. There could be a recommendation on proportional funding on counties and the need for consistency in support. He stated they cannot compare one ROE to the next because the county funds them in different ways. He stated that the hearings would begin on July 1, 2012, with resolutions passed by June 1, 2013. He then stated that he would like to introduce another recommendation. Dr. Durflinger asked if they can have a discussion first on the proposed recommendation from Dr. Jacoby.

Dr. Ruscitti stated that she had a discussion with Rep. Roger Eddy and that the discussion should center on services before numbers. She is not sure if they are there yet and that their role needs to be clearly defined. She stated they need to talk about services because there is a lack of clarity. Mr. Meixner asked if Dr. Jacoby is still recommending the 150,000 number of residents. Mike Nekritz stated that if they combine the three smallest ROEs, they would still have three service centers. Dr. Jacoby stated that they can be combined, but that would be discussed later. Mr. Meixner stated that Dr. Jacoby said the ROEs would not be affected, but the counties would; this situation would affect a quarter of the counties. Dr. Jacoby stated that the recommendation would be to keep all offices. Mr. Meixner asked if the funding would remain the same. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she would like to see the salary range of regional superintendents. Dr. Jacoby stated that the range of salaries is between \$90,000 and \$104,000. Mr. Jacoby stated that there are three salary tiers based on population. Mr. Meixner stated that what Mr. Jacoby is asking for is for more support from the counties, and he does not know if that would go well. Dr. Jacoby stated

that he thinks that there should be multiple supports from counties—a proportional standard that they would get with an equalized share of funding.

Dr. Durflinger asked if the regional superintendents can request amounts above that proportion. Dr. Jacoby stated that they would never tell a county how much money to spend; instead, they would tell them that they would need to work it out with their regional office. Sen. Haine stated that if they increase the number of inhabitants to 150,000, does that cause the cost of the county board hiring to increase? Dr. Jacoby stated that it depends on the behavior of that regional superintendent and maintaining their credence. There may be a situation throughout the state where they may have a larger jurisdiction. Mr. Meixner stated that he personally does all of the building inspections for his buildings. If he gets a larger region, there's no doubt he may have to hire someone and he doesn't know where that money will come from. The services have to be there, but they are going to need funds. He stated that he thinks the number of their offices is more of a political issue than an actual number, and they have accepted that. Dr. Jacoby stated that he understands the concern, but he added that there are other ROEs that are doing that with multiple counties and they are managing their efficiencies. The ROEs are probably going to have to change their managing of those services. Mr. Meixner stated that most of the counties are multiple counties and that this will affect most of the ROEs, which already have multiple counties.

Dr. Kinder stated that if this recommendation were to go through as it is, it would eliminate 10 to 14 ROEs. She stated that eliminating their salaries would not be a huge savings. It would be a concern to her if they got rid of those ROEs because it's reducing the number of superintendents. Dr. Jacoby agreed, but he said that he would like to have Dr. Clark present another proposal. Dr. Clark stated that he loves maps. In the last 3 to 4 days, he has looked at the map of Illinois and the counties. He stated that he thinks they were all put on this commission and were given the goals, but the problem is that they are shooting in the dark. He stated that this is about services that are going to be delivered, where the funding is coming from, and how the counties are going to support it. He stated that he became concerned when he looked at rural Illinois, where they have a sparse population area, and the size of those regions becomes a concern if they get too large. Dr. Clark stated that overall, they have offices that are trying to deliver state functions at the local level. When he tried to balance the issue of delivery of services and funding, he looked at several bands of population and determined that the ROEs would be affected.

Dr. Clark stated that it is as simple as taking the current census at 43,000 and doubling the number to 86,000, which would impact 18 different ROEs. This leaves 26 ROEs, which allow room for remote ROEs to reconstitute to new ROEs, which would bounce back up to 31 ROEs. He stated that this is a 32 percent savings, which financially is a savings of \$3.5 million. Dr. Clark put this recommendation on the table for discussion on the minimum population at 86,000 with one regional superintendent and one assistant, with room for merging, dissolving, and reconstituting. Dr. Durflinger stated they are now looking at that 86,000 number. Dr. Clark stated that there's no magic to it; they currently have 44 ROEs, and the proposal would impact 26 ROEs. But in looking at regions that will form new ROEs, the number of ROEs would go up to about 30. Sen. Haine stated that in their governmental system, they seem to have inefficiencies; the constitution requires one circuit judge. He stated that it's difficult for him to recommend imposing what others see as a problem and reducing the numbers radically. Any reduction would

be okay with him. If the number of ROEs is radically reduced, that would place a lot of burden on the ROEs that are left; for the average citizen, we are not saving anything. Second, he stated that by reducing the numbers radically, they are implying that they don't need the ROEs and they should get rid of them all; therefore, they have to be careful.

Sen. Haine stated that politically it's better to go with the small counties number and develop a mission for the ROEs. He likes the recommendation to have them nonpartisan. He also would recommend putting them on the ballot for the public to decide if they should get rid of the ROEs. He stated that he had no idea of what his ROE did until this commission was formed. He is conservative with these numbers, but he does not think it is a big deal in the voter's mind. The voters need to know the roles and mission of the ROEs. He stated that he does not want to go below what the recommendation states. Sen. David Luechtefeld stated that he thinks the commission needs to be careful—just because someone said that they need to make fewer ROEs. He stated he is from a rural area, and the ROE's area will get awfully big if they agree on the recommendation. He asked if anyone gave a target number of ROEs. He stated it has become an issue that the government in general has decided. This situation is looking like they are doing their job, and this particular cut means nothing compared to what the state of Illinois is currently dealing with. He stated that personally he would want more ROEs created.

Mr. Nekritz stated that they are paying for something now that they were not paying before. He stated if districts have to pay for this, what should the minimum amount be in terms of numbers? It's not just a drop in the bucket. Dr. Durflinger stated that in the first meeting, he said he would like to give options and that may be necessary. If this commission is split in their decision, they can give the Legislature two options. He stated that he actually heard three options: (1) having 39 offices and 3 ISCs, (2) having 27 to 30 ROEs with 150,000 inhabitants, and (3) having about 30 ROEs and 86,000 as the minimum number of inhabitants. Scott Kuffel stated if corporate money is open, it could change how they roll because for them the local education agency is an important factor. Dr. Clark stated that he tried to balance the rural concern against massive size structure. Mr. Meixner stated that they need to prioritize what is important: Is it services, boundaries, or funding? Dr. Kinder stated that she would propose they talk about the Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax (CPPRT) and if it should be taken out. Dr. Clark stated that if CPPRT is off the table, a lot of things will change. Mr. Kuffel motioned that no funding for the ROEs or ISCs be borne by CPPRT. Dr. Ruscitti seconded the motion.

Sen. Luechtefeld stated that he thinks that's off the table and doesn't see that as being an option anymore because it cannot be taken to the Legislature and it needs to be stated clearly. Mr. Kuffel motioned that all ROE funding from the state should come from general revenue, and Dr. Ruscitti seconded his motion. Dr. Clark stated that this commission can recommend a lot of things. What happens after the ROE decides that CPPRT is not to be used? If the stage is set and it gets zeroed out under the general aid, what are they gaining? Dr. Durflinger stated that he thought CPPRT would not be used and general revenue would be used instead; if that's the case, the superintendent proposal would be recommended and indicate that if CPPRT continues, it would be at a certain level. Dr. Ruscitti asked for the reduction number and asked where that funding is coming from. Dr. Durflinger stated that if CPPRT is the source of funding, the number of ROEs should be a certain number; if CPPRT is not used, then the superintendent association number would be reduced. Sen. Haine asked if the commission would be comfortable with the

150,000 number if the funding source is CPPRT. He stated if the funding is coming out of their direct money, he would want to pay less; he would go with that motion if they state that it comes out their money. He states that it should say that they don't want it from CPPRT—period.

Dr. Jacoby stated that as the commission, their role should be the general revenue funding (GRF). Dr. Durflinger asked if they have a motion and would like to go to a voice vote rather than a roll call. Dr. Durflinger wondered if they have consensus. There was a motion from Mr. Kuffel that CPPRT money should not be used to pay for ROEs. Sen. Haine asked what if they came up with a number that is lower than 39 and justify it? Mr. Meixner stated that he would recommend 61,000 as the population number. Sen. Haine stated that the target is to talk about consensus. Dr. Durflinger asked if the commission is comfortable with having 35 ROEs that are fully funded by GRF. He stated that the population base would be 61,000 and the maximum number of ROEs is 35. He asked the commission for consensus and stated that it would be 35 ROEs with the 3 ISCs. Jane Russell asked how that would change services and what the geography would look like. Dr. Clark stated that it would affect the western side of the state and maybe 9 is the number; the more one drops the minimum census number, the less impact one has.

Dr. Ruscitti asked what is going to satisfy the hungry beast? Dr. Clark stated he doesn't know, and Dr. Ruscitti stated that Sen. Christine Radogno wants the maximum amount of cuts. Dr. Durflinger stated that they need a number. Sen. Haine stated if they do it by services. They have to say 35 is the number that has the least affect, which is what the Legislature will give weight to. Dr. Durflinger stated that the positive side of this is that if the commission is agreeing with this number, that will feed a little bit of the beast. Mr. Nekritz stated that he would like a number where CPPRT or other funding sources would be less attractive. Dr. Durflinger stated that they still have a strong consensus on 35 with the minimum population of 61,000 and he would like a roll call of all commission members. Mr. Kuffel asked if they want to codify the services that are listed on the ROE book. Dr. Durflinger did a roll call of all the commission members. Rep. LaVia and Rep. Eddy were the only commission members not present for the roll call. Dr. Durflinger asked if there is consensus, and all present commission member agreed. Dr. Durflinger stated that they have one option and asked the commission members if they want other options.

Dr. Durflinger stated that there is a legal question about the present law in terms of the minimum number that they have approved, which is 61,000. If a region goes below that number, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) does not feel it is required to do a consolidation. He asked if there a problem with some sort of wording to indicate that if the region falls below the 61,000 number, ISBE consolidates. Dr. Jacoby would consider reviewing the number issue every 10 years with the census. Dr. Jacoby stated that he would like to discuss the whole idea of having a partisan or nonpartisan election. Dr. Jacoby stated that he would like to have a discussion on the election date and nonpartisan suggestion. He asked Dr. Robert Daiber if the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) has a problem with switching the election date or a stance on nonpartisan. Mr. Meixner stated that this is not the charge of the commission. Dr. Daiber stated that he would have to call a special meeting of IARSS and have everyone come from all over the state to vote on two items. They are filling out this particular term, and he feels those are issues if the commission wants to vote on it. Dr. Durflinger asked the commission if

they want to move forward with a recommendation or if they will just leave it. Dr. Jacoby noted that the report states that it should be further studied, which was discussed, but it's outside the role of this commission. Dr. Durflinger stated that they may have a discussion but should come to a consensus. Dr. Ruscitti stated that if there are other items that have been brought up, she would like to have the opportunity to bring up some items in the next meeting.

Decision and Discussion on Necessary Funding

Dr. Durflinger stated that funding is one of the commission's charges and, along this line, had a discussion on accountability. The question is as follows: If there is accountability, who is going to pay for that process? He asked if it should come out of the county budget, state budget, or general fund. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she would like to be afforded the opportunity to look at it because she won't be sure until she talks with all of the regional superintendents. She stated that any entity in Illinois that provides services also should have the opportunity to be funded. Mr. Kuffel stated that he doesn't think accountability is part of the commission's charge, and it is not stated that this commission needs to recommend an accountability system. Dr. Durflinger stated that his understanding is that they have come to consensus with Recommendation 5 from the 2010 report. What he wants to know is that if they have an accountability system, where would that funding come from? Dr. Ruscitti stated that a system is in place that already requires the Lieutenant Governor to administer some kind of accountability survey, which hasn't been used in the last couple of years. She thinks they can take a look at that survey and have it reflect the current need of services.

Dr. Jacoby stated that if the ROEs are not performing their role effectively, something should happen. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she thinks there are other entities that they can point out, so it's not about that. She stated that the DuPage ROE has state grants, and they follow through with what they have and are accountable to that and to the county. Dr. Jacoby stated that there are vast differences of what the ROEs are doing. Dr. Ruscitti stated that the DuPage ROE is in the process of doing it with other regional superintendents. Mr. Nekritz stated that if his Regional System of Support Provider (RESPRO) does not show up, who can he go to? Dr. Ruscitti stated that is a perfect example of the ROEs having the intent of the law to deliver those services. Dr. Jacoby stated that he supports the recommendation of having an accountability system. They dealt with this situation with ROE 14 where they had to get legislation to take care of the problem. Mr. Nekritz pointed to Recommendation 5 from the 2010 Streamlining Report; if they had a quality assurance for each ROE, they could do it once every five years and review performance. Dr. Ruscitti stated that no one has had the courtesy to tell them what they haven't been doing right and that they have never heard about it from IARSS. She stated that they ask for the courtesy, and it's never been given to them. She stated for DuPage, it is a lot easier for them to use funds cost-effectively because they have a larger population. They just want someone to listen to them and come with a compromise, and it's not fair when someone states that they are not doing their job.

Dr. Jacoby stated that he apologizes if he offended Dr. Ruscitti and that it was not his intention; if there was a process in place that would do it objectively, he would go for that. Dr. Durflinger read Recommendation 2 from the 2010 Streamlining Report. Dr. Ruscitti stated that she proposes that regional superintendents come up with solutions and work with the ISBE to address those

issues. Mr. Kuffel stated that they heard from AdvancEd, and he doesn't know if that has to be the only option; thinks that they need to leave it at Recommendation 5. Dr. Michael Johnson stated that he has worked in seven of the 44 ROEs. There are so many differences, and they have a lot of districts that don't participate. Dr. Durflinger stated that the commission then has consensus on Recommendation 5 from the 2010 Streamlining Report, but they are not sure if they are going to get anywhere with the accountability financing. He stated that he still believes that specific standards are needed for regional superintendents, unlike the mayor. Rules and regulations are needed on the process because it is too vague and almost impossible to do.

Decision and Discussion on Funding Sources

Dr. Durflinger asked the commission about what other financial things they should do. He asked if they are going to say that all the costs should be paid by the state of Illinois or if they are mandating that the state should pay for it. Dr. Kinder stated that somebody has to do the work; if it's going to be mandated, how is it going to be supported? Dr. Ruscitti stated that everyone knows there isn't money in the state and to ask for more is not a smart move. She stated that she could see that as a legislator and they can go back to the accountability issue, but it will get muddy down the road.

Dr. Durflinger stated that he wanted to broaden the option. He asked if they could have a statement at this point that any additional requirements be paid by the state or if they will leave it alone and not do as they were requested. Mr. Kuffel stated that maybe their tack is to indicate which mandates are not needed or should be mandated. Mr. Meixner stated that ROEs have taken a 70 percent cut in 10 years and are still functioning. Mr. Nekritz stated he would like to be cautious because the state has not paid them \$2.8 million. Dr. Durflinger asked the commission members what they want to do. Mr. Kuffel asked what the dollar figures are to carry out the mandated tasks on page 14 of the ROE report. Dr. Durflinger asked the commission to come up with the wording for the report. Dr. Ruscitti suggested they could say something about looking at greater alignment and then address the accountability and added services in the future. Mr. Kuffel stated that Recommendation 2 in the 2010 Streamlining Report said to fund services across the state. Dr. Clark stated that time does not permit them to fully discuss this issue and that they should go back to Recommendation 2 for the 2010 task force.

Wrap-Up and Closing Comments

Dr. Durflinger stated that the Legislature is in session next Wednesday, March 28. Should they meet at the state board office or should they change the date to Thursday, March 29? The commission agreed to meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, March 29, in the Stratton Building. Dr. Durflinger stated that a draft of the final report will be sent to the commission members on Wednesday.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m.