



# Indiana State Board of Education

Room 225 State House  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2798

## MINUTES

### INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 5, 2011

Department of Education

James Whitcomb Riley Conference Room

151 West Ohio Street

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

The meeting of the Indiana State Board of Education convened at 9:03 a.m. Board members Dr. Tony Bennett, Dr. Gwendolyn Griffith-Adell, Jo Blacketer, Mike Pettibone, Steve Gabet, David Shane, Sara O'Brien, and Neil Pickett were present. Board members James Edwards, Vicki Snyder, and Daniel Elsener were not present.

#### I. **Call to Order**

Dr. Bennett led the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a moment of silence in honor of Dr. Ken Oppel, Assistant Superintendent North Harrison Community Schools. Dr. Oppel passed away from cancer on December 31, 2010. Dr. Bennett said Ken was a very well liked and respected local educator, a rising star in the education community, and a personal friend.

Dr. Bennett thanked Mr. Pettibone for leading the December Board meeting in his absence.

## II. Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Pettibone moved for approval of the minutes. Mr. Pickett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## III. Statement of the Chair

Dr. Bennett discussed the Department's legislative agenda. It has been presented to the Education Roundtable; conversations have been held with Mr. Nate Schellenburger, President, ISTA; and two direct e-mail blasts have gone out to educators across the state. Dr. Bennett said the department wants to communicate in the most direct manner what the intentions are regarding education reform, and, to that end, has reached out to over 4,000 educators in the last month at the DOE road show stops. The Department is listening to comments, concerns, frustrations, about where educators see Indiana education going and dealing with a tremendous amount of misinformation and a fear that the department is trying to do things that really weren't true. What is being heard, time and time again, is that it is time for a change in education in Indiana and it is time to reform Indiana education. Dr. Bennett said the legislative package is focused on putting students first.

Dr. Bennett discussed myths regarding the legislation being presented to the General Assembly:

1. The DOE intends to repeal collective bargaining in K-12 education (P.L. 217) – FALSE. Collective bargaining should be focused on wages, and wage related benefits.
2. Indiana education agenda deducts money from teacher retirement funds to avoid further cuts to Indiana schools – FALSE. This has never been discussed nor will it ever be.
3. Indiana's education agenda mandates an evaluation system that will evaluate teachers based solely on students' ISTEP+ scores – FALSE. Indiana does not support evaluation tools that only take into account student performance on standardized tests. The state will not determine the evaluation tool or process. That will be done at the local level. The Department will adjust the legislative language so it enables school corporations to have the freedom to use multiple measures and to

come up with locally driven evaluation and compensation models that we can then spread as best practice throughout the state. Teacher evaluations should be based on multiple measures.

4. Indiana's education agenda mandates that equal percentages of teachers be placed into four performance categories during the evaluation process or places them into categories using a bell curve – FALSE. The Department advocates creating four evaluation categories for teachers and principals (highly effective, effective, improvement necessary, and ineffective). While teachers will be placed into categories based on several performance indicators, there is no model that mandates 25 percent of teachers be placed into each category or that teachers be placed into those categories based on a bell shaped curve. Currently, 90 percent of teachers are ranked as effective or above. This is a statistical impossibility.
5. Indiana's education agenda forces schools and school corporations to use a one-size-fits-all evaluation tool – FALSE. Indiana's education agenda aims to increase local control by allowing school corporations to use evaluation tools that work best within their school communities. DOE will provide helpful guard-rails that focus on educator qualities that drive student success. But, there will not be a one-size-fits-all tool or rubric. We have developed a template. Some schools and school corporations have asked to use that template in its entirety. Other schools and corporations have used pieces of it and others have said this doesn't work for them.
6. Indiana's education agenda reduces teacher salaries – FALSE. Our legislative proposals do not aim to reduce teacher salaries. Rather, the proposals seek to enable school corporations to set up systems to reward teachers for driving student growth. School corporations should have the opportunity to reward their best teachers and the policies supported by DOE will allow them to do so.
7. Indiana's education agenda takes tenure away from teachers who already have it – FALSE. There is no plan to take away tenure from teachers who have earned it under the current system. Dr. Bennett said he does believe that tenure should be earned and it should be earned on performance. Teachers should also be able to "earn their way out" of tenure if performance declines. The department has no plans to take tenure away from teachers who have earned it under the current system.

Dr. Bennett said more details will be coming out on the legislative agenda in the days ahead.

Dr. Bennett recognized a special visitor, former Indianapolis Star education reporter Andy Gamil, visiting from law school at The Ohio State University.

**IV. Spotlight on Learning**

There was no Spotlight on Learning.

**V. Board Member Comments**

There were no Board member comments.

**VI. Adjudications and Hearings**

A Mr. Zaring presented LSA Document #09-502, Accountability Measures for School Performance and Improvement, along with proposed amendments.

Mr. Pickett moved to amend the rule and adopt the rule as amended, along with the fiscal impact statement. Mrs. O'Brien seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VII. Public Comments**

**VIII. Discussion**

Wes Bruce, Director of Assessment, discussed online testing in late April and early May. The DOE has gone through the data from the capacity testing determined that, through the course of the December 6-10 week, 53,000 separate machines were used for online testing. The capacity test was done by using a self-running test loaded onto computers. The computers could still operate and do their normal things, but the regular work load was interrupted. Mr. Bruce said school technology folks have been really great to work with and are very dedicated to making sure we know well in advance which schools will be able to test online. The Department also is working to resolve problems with Thin Client applications to ensure that this cost effective way of connecting to networks is compatible with testing requirements.

The first part End of Course Assessment (ECA) Early Winter test window (spans the winter break) was concluded. Schools that administered online tests by the 17<sup>th</sup> of December will have their ECA results by January 7, 2011.

Mr. Zaring gave an update on accountability and said work has been ongoing on some joint efforts. One has to do with ISTAR-IMAST and the fact that in some corporations there appears to be consideration of a policy that limits the number of students that can take the alternate assessments. The concern is the federal rule that only three percent of the students in the tested grade levels can be counted as proficient, based on those assessments. Some corporations are responding by limiting the number of students that take them. The DOE believes students should take the appropriate assessment. The Department is working on some language to communicate with some schools and school corporations about this issue. Mr. Pettibone commented on the dilemma faced by schools as they try to meet federal Adequate Yearly Progress requirements.

Lee Ann Kwaikowski, Director of School Turnaround, gave an update on DOE turnaround work. A Request for Proposals for turnaround school operators was released in December. Eleven proposals were submitted. An internal team is evaluating the proposals, and the department is determining which proposals will move on for oral presentation. The oral presentations will be heard by a committee of representatives from DOE staff, federal comprehensive centers, and community members.

Meetings will be held with community groups from the schools that may be subject to state takeover. The goal to inform them about what is happening at the state level and to try to help parents and others understand what this means.

Ms. Kwaikowski introduced Matt Voors, new member of the school turnaround team.

Mr. Zaring said a final topic related to accountability deals with the question that was posed last month. Can the State Board of Education conduct the hearings they must

have in each community before interventions are imposed prior to actually having the spring 2011 assessment results? The department believes the Board may conduct the hearings prior to actually having the assessment results, so it could be in April – May timeframe. The Board cannot, however, decide on any consequences prior to actually having the results from the 2010-2011 assessments.

Mr. Zaring discussed legislation. The preliminary bill drafts seems to be a little slow in coming, so we do not have any bill drafts or bills that can be shared with the Board. As bills become available, that information will be shared with the Board.

Mr. Zaring discussed graduation rates and said that there were significant increases for specific student groups – African American students, Hispanic students, free and reduced price lunch students, limited English proficient groups – as well as an increases for the overall group.

Mr. Zaring said a project request has been filed with the Department’s IT folks for the graduation rate audit. The statute requires this be done whenever the reported graduation rate varies by more than 5 percent from an estimated rate computed under the statute. The process will be similar to what we used for the “not-tested” student reports. School corporations can download a list of students for whom the department does not have an STN record verifying a transfer, and indicate that it has documentation of the transfer. If there is no documentation to support removing the students from the cohort, the graduation rate will be adjusted and that adjusted rate will be published by the school. The Department believes that in cases where there are fairly dramatic differences between the published rate and the estimated rate, there will be onsite audits. The number of audits is not known at this time, but this information will be provided to Board members at a later date. Mr. Zaring said graduation performance reward program uses the non-waiver graduation rate (students who graduate having passed both English and math tests).

**IX. Consent Agenda Items**

- A. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of Common School Fund technology and construction loans. [Agenda item X, A]
- B. Mr. Zaring presented a request for approval of 2011 Summer School program. [Agenda item X, B]

Mr. Gabet moved for approval of the consent agenda items. Mr. Pickett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**X. Action**

Mr. Zaring said the Department has continued its work with accountability models. The elementary and middle school model uses growth as the improvement measure. The high school model, in the absence of a growth measure, is based on improvement. The original elementary and middle school concept was a “GPA” framework that gave points for performance and improvement in two subject areas and then combined the points into a single letter grade.

Dr. Jonathan Plucker, Director of Center for Evaluation of Education Policy (CEEP) and a member of the elementary and middle school committee, presented a “letter grade” framework for grading elementary and middle schools as an alternative to the GPA model. This proposal comes from the working committee assembled by the Department. Dr. Plucker discussed a three-step process:

- Set the starting point – The starting letter grade is determined by overall ISTEP+ passing rate in a given subject area.
- Adjust for growth – The grade in each subject area can increase by one grade or decrease by one grade based on growth.
- Add a bonus – If low-performing students show high growth in a subject area, add a “plus” to the letter grade in that area.

Dr. Plucker gave examples of the process, showing data from five different schools throughout the state.

The Board recessed at 10:30 a.m. and reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Dr. Plucker continued his presentation. He pointed out that the model balances the relative importance of performance and growth. It is scalable in the sense that content areas, like science and social studies, can be added, as can other considerations – financial efficiencies, for example, without changing the model. Dr. Plucker said no matter what happens in light of the reauthorization of NCLB, it is important to be able to come up with one defensible grade.

The Board discussed the procedural status of the process and if the Board can move forward in terms of initiating a rule making process with what has been presented today. Mr. Shane suggested the Department send the rule to the board in draft form, and then this would enable people to be able to say yes, it looks great, or suggest changes be made.

Mr. Shane made a motion that the Department draft a new proposed rule, based on all the input so far, and send it to the Board. Board members will have the opportunity to look at it, review it, and give feed back as necessary in order to move it forward. Mr. Gabet seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zaring discussed the proposed accountability framework for Indiana high schools. Mr. Zaring said improvement is used in the absence of absolute growth measures. End of Course Assessment results, graduation rate, and college and career readiness indicators are used in the model. This model takes the absolute performance in each measure, translates performance into a numerical value, modifies the numerical value based on improvement, and translates the modified numerical value into a letter grade.

Mr. Shane suggested that the Commission for Higher Education be asked to weigh in. This should be looked at as a starting point, not a finished product, and it would be helpful to have the Commission's endorsement.



Mr. Shane made a motion to move forward. Mr. Pickett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**XI. Board Operations**

Mr. Zaring said a public hearing will be held on January 20, at 10 am at the State Library on LSA Document #10-635, which implements the state reading plan.

Mr. Pickett moved for adjournment. Mr. Gabet seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.