MINUTES

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF BASIC EDUCATION

Honors Suite, 1st Floor
333 Market Street
Harrisburg

November 17, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m. by Ms. Karen Farmer White, Acting Chair.

Attending:		Absent:
Connie Davis	Edward Sheehan, Jr.	James Barker
Daniel Fogarty	Shannon Sullivan	
Travis Gilbert	Joseph Torsella	
Kirk Hallett	Karen Farmer White	
Mollie Phillips	Larry Wittig	

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the September 15, 2010, meeting of the Council of Basic Education were adopted on a Sheehan/Phillips motion. All were in favor as indicated by voice vote.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Deputy Secretary Amy Morton noted items that were presented in her written report to the Board. She highlighted the reorganization of the deputate and the creation of a new division of School Options and Safety which will deal with all non-public school issues.

Implementation of the 4-year cohort graduation rate policy, new system of state graduation requirements, and the Common Core Pennsylvania standards initiatives are well underway.

OESE and PDE legal staff are exploring ways in which multi-district collaboratives can operate alternative schools for non-disruptive youth.

Deputy Secretary Morton provided an update on new additions to the Standards-Aligned System web site. She briefly listed the initiatives, policy or guideline changes and professional development opportunities outlined in her written report.

REPORT OF THE STATE ASSESSMENT VALIDATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dr. Lee Burket, Bureau Director of Career and Technical Education, and Dr. Clyde Hornberger, Executive Director of the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute, presented the recommendation of the State Assessment Validation Advisory Committee, established under the state's new system of graduation requirements. The committee was charged with investigating the use of the NOCTI—the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute—as an alternative pathway to meeting graduation requirements.

Dr. Burket provided a summary background on NOCTI exams and Dr. Hornberger outlined the requirements students must meet under the technical skill standards, essential academic skills, and employability skills that undergird career education. Dr. Burket and Dr. Hornberger noted that while NOCTI is a rigorous assessment of occupational skill, it does not assess academic content that is essential for postsecondary success. Discussion followed concerning how strong performance on a NOCTI could substitute for **one** subject area requirement for the first two classes that will graduate under the new system of requirements (2015 and 2016); under no circumstances could NOCTI substitute for the Algebra I, Biology and English language arts requirements. The Board would revisit this issue after two years.

CHAPTER 4 PILOT PROGRAM

Mr. Christopher Wakeley, Executive Director of the House Education Committee; Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter, Director of State Government Relations for the Middle States Region of the College Board; Ms. Catherine Nti, Executive Director K-12 Services Middle States Regional Office; and Ms. Nikia Owens, PA College Access Challenge Grant Program/Project GRAD USA presented a proposal for infusing college readiness initiatives into existing Chapter 4 requirements for completion of a culminating project. The initiative would specifically focus on increasing college readiness support for disadvantaged students.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jackie Cullen, Executive Director of the PA Association of Career and Technical Administrators, spoke in support of the recommendation of the State Assessment Validation Advisory Committee. She remarked that her view of this proposal is that it is a "last chance" for CTE students who cannot pass all of the Keystone Exams. Ms. Cullen emphasized that she hopes this will be an alternative for a very small number of students and that most students should be required to pass the Keystone Exams.

Mr. Travis Kilpatrick, northeast representative for ACT, supported the initiative to increase efforts to improve student readiness for college.

ACTION ITEMS

A motion to recommend approval of the policy recommendation from the State Assessment Validation Advisory Committee was approved on a Wittig/Sheehan motion. All were in favor as indicated by voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Adam Schott

Adam Schott, Executive Director