**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**
**COUNCIL OF BASIC EDUCATION**
**Conference Room A, Administration Building**
**Pittsburgh Public Schools**
**September 15, 2010**

The meeting was called to order at 11:20 a.m. by Dr. James Barker, Chair.

*Council Members Attending*:

Dr. James Barker
Mr. Daniel Fogarty
Mr. Travis Gilbert
Dr. Arnold Hillman (via telephone)
Ms. Mollie Phillips (via telephone)
Mr. Joseph Torsella
Ms. Karen Farmer White
Mr. Larry Wittig

Connie Davis

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 30, 2010, Council of Basic Education meeting were adopted unanimously on a Wittig/Phillips motion.

## REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Deputy Secretary Amy Morton updated the Council on initiatives such as the transition to a **Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate**; implementation of the **Common Core State Standards** and the state's new system of **graduation requirements**; build-out of the **Standards-Aligned System** to include Curriculum Mapping and Diagnostic Assessments tools; and use of **PAIU Net** as a platform for pod casts on topics of current interest.

Dr. Arnold Hillman updated the Council via telephone on his work with PDE staff to review applications submitted by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) seeking approval to continue as accreditation authorities in Pennsylvania. Applications from Middle States and PAIS were submitted on March 31, 2010. Both agencies were originally approved by the State Board of Education on November 17, 2005 with approvals set to expire on November 18, 2010. Dr. Hillman reported that both applications were rated as high quality and recommended that the Board approve the applications of Middle States and PAIS, which would grant the entities authority to serve as accrediting bodies in PA for another five years.

The Council discussed Persistently Dangerous School determinations and the completion of safety audits for each of these schools.

Dr. Richard Maraschiello, Special Assistant to the Secretary, provided an update on implementation of the new system of high school graduation requirements. Dr. Maraschiello reported on the work of the stakeholders committees, including a recommendation from the Local Assessment Validation Advisory Committee concerning the use of proficiency on a Keystone Exam as an acceptable standard for meeting state graduation requirements. Dr.

Maraschiello also noted that the State Assessment Validation Advisory Committee is currently exploring whether a certificate based on industry-approved standards and performance (i.e., the NOCTI exams) could serve as another pathway to a diploma. The committee is also developing plans for collecting data that will inform future validation studies for the Keystone Exams.

Dr. Maraschiello also reviewed the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content Standards for Keystone Exams that will eventually be used for AYP determinations at the secondary level.

Ms. Linda Balmer-Lupp, Special Education Advisor, and Dr. Naomi Zigmond, PASA Project Director from the University of Pittsburgh, presented the revised and proposed cut scores and performance level descriptors for reading and mathematics for the PA Alternate System of Assessment (PASA).

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Linda Hippert, Executive Director at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, spoke in support of proposed guidance on use of Keystone Exams in local assessment systems for purposes of meeting state graduation requirements.

## ACTION ITEMS

### ACCREDITATION

A motion was made by Mr. Wittig to recommend approval of the renewal of accreditation status for both Middle States and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS). The motion was seconded by Ms. Farmer-White. All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### PASA CUT SCORES/PERFORMANCE LEVEL DESCRIPTORS

A motion was made by Mr. Wittig to recommend the approval of the proposed PASA cut scores and performance level descriptors. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farmer-White. All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### KEYSTONE ASSESSMENT ANCHOR CONTENT STANDARDS

A motion was made by Ms. Farmer-White to recommend approval of the proposed Keystone assessment anchor content standards. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wittig. All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

### LOCAL ASSESSMENT VALIDATION

Ms. Farmer-White moved, and Mr. Fogarty seconded, that the Council of Basic Education accept the statement of policy as presented by the Local Assessment Validation Advisory Committee. All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Gilbert noted efforts in his school district to increase physical activity for students.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Barbara Baker

Barbara Baker
Administrative Officer