MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
COUNCIL OF BASIC EDUCATION

333 Market Street | 1st Floor Honors Suite
Harrisburg, PA 17126

March 16, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 am by Dr. James Barker, Acting Chairman.

Attending:

Jim Agras (via phone)
Jim Barker
Wendy Beetlestone
David Collins
Connie Davis
Sandra Dungee Glenn
Dan Fogarty (via phone)
Kirk Hallett
Francis Michelini
Ivory Nelson
Jon Peri
Shannon Sullivan
Karen Farmer White
Lee Williams
Larry Wittig
Andrew Youstic

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 12, 2011 meeting of the Council of Basic Education were approved on a **Farmer White/Davis** motion. Acting Chair Dr. Barker introduced the new Deputy Secretary for Elementary/Secondary Education, Carolyn Dumaresq.

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Larry Wittig reported that Deputy Secretary Dr. Dumaresq shared department-level efforts to implement the school safety provisions of last year's school code bill, Act 104. The committee reviewed the proposed membership for the statewide advisory committee established by the statute. Specifically, this committee will take the lead in designing the memorandum of understanding that will aim to improve the consistency of school violence reporting statewide. Act 104 included clear parameters for advisory committee membership, and, working within those parameters, Mr. Wittig reported that the State Board sought to assemble an advisory committee to reflect diversity of experiences as well as geographic balance. The proposed advisory committee included representation from rural, suburban and urban school districts, including both Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. In addition, it included a strong mix of leaders from the child advocacy, education and law enforcement communities.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee Chair Karen Farmer White reported that Leslie Best with the Pennsylvania Department of Health gave an update on the outcomes of the first year of its Active Schools Program, which provided support to 40 middle schools to engage students in 30-60 minutes of daily physical activity and served as the model for the physical activity component of the State Board's draft proposed Chapter 12 regulation. The program had a statistically positive impact on

the physical activity measurements assessed for both male and female students and results showed very positive progress in combating childhood obesity.

Ms. White also provided a status update on the Board's draft proposed Chapter 12 regulation. The Board received notice that the regulation was tolled by the Attorney General's Office. The Attorney General's office posed questions related to the composition of the school district wellness committee required by the proposal and whether student's participation in the school gardens encouraged by the proposal would be subject to child labor laws. Board staff are working with legal counsel to respond to the tolling memo.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Deputy Secretary Carolyn Dumaresq reported on the rollout of a new website providing public access to Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) data, as required by Act 104. Dr. Dumaresq then provided an update the Gates Momentum Grant Project, which is supporting work to design a new teacher and principal evaluation system. She was then joined by members of PDE staff who provided specific program updates.

Ms. Jennifer Waltz, special assistant to the Secretary of Education, provided an update on the new 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate, which Pennsylvania is now required to use by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). The Department will begin using this new graduation rate to calculate AYP in 2012. Mr. Wittig questioned whether the new graduation rate calculation provided an incentive for schools to move students out in four years and not provide a fifth year of instruction if necessary for the individual student. Ms. Waltz said the Department already has relayed that concern to USDE and hopes that federal rules will allow for the calculation of a 5-year rate in the future.

Rich Maraschiello then provided an update on the implementation of Keystone Exams. Dr. Maraschiello said full implementation of Keystones will be delayed by one year to allow districts time to adjust local curriculum to prepare for the increased rigor of the exams. However, Dr. Maraschiello reported that the spring 2011 administration of Keystones would proceed as planned and that approximately 476 school districts signed up to administer at least one Keystone Exam in spring 2011. In spring 2011, operational Keystone Exams will be available in Algebra I, Biology and Literature, along with field tests for Keystone Exams in English Composition, Geometry and Algebra II. Though scores from the spring 2011 exams will not count toward a student's graduation determination, the Department is encouraging districts to participate to help gain a sense of where local curriculum adjustments may be necessary. Dr. Maraschiello reported that work of the Chapter 4 implementation committees continues to move forward on the development of: a state-level validity study, handbook on local assessment validation, and Keystone performance level descriptors. Finally, Dr. Maraschiello was joined by Dr. Jean Dyszel and David Volkman who reported that the Department had released applications to solicit educators to serve on content area teams that will develop the project-based assessments related to the Keystone Exams initiative.

Dr. Dyszel then made a presentation on Common Core Transition and further alignment Review. She reported the the Department has completed crosswalk documents that show how

Common Core state standards align to current Pennsylvania standards by grade level. These crosswalks were used to provide training to Intermediate Unit curriculum coordinators and central staff in urban school districts to serve as regional resources for Common Core implementation. Board member Ivory Nelson noted that the crosswalks focused on content alignment and asked whether the Department was equally focused on ensuring the rigor of Common Core standards. Dr. Dyszel confirmed that rigor analysis was an equally important part of the Department's Common Core training.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Stephanie Jones

Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant