MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

333 Market Street | 3rd Floor | eCenter
Harrisburg, PA 17126

July 6, 2011

The 302nd meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on Wednesday, July 6, 2011. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Larry Wittig, Chairman.

Attending:	**On Conference Call:**	
Kirk Hallett	Constance Davis	Jonathan Peri
Larry Wittig	Paul Ferrera	Mollie Phillips
	Dan Fogarty	Edward Sheehan
	Francis Michelini	Lee Williams
	Ivory Nelson	

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Chairman Wittig noted that the State Board is scheduled to consider Performance Level Descriptors and cut scores for the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Literature and Biology as an action item at its meeting on July 20, 2011 . Mr. Wittig explained that the Board's July 6, 2011 meeting was convened to comply with a provision in Chapter 4 that requires Keystone Exam cut scores be presented at a public meeting for the Board's review at least two weeks prior to scheduled action on the cut scores. He reiterated that the July 6 meeting was for informational purposes only and that no formal action would be taken.

PRESENTATION OF CUT SCORE RECOMMENDATIONS

Rich Maraschiello presented the Department of Education's recommended Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) and cut scores for the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Literature and Biology. Mr. Maraschiello was joined via conference call by Shaundra Sand, Dave Chayer, Ann Hu and Patty McDivitt from Data Recognition Corporation.

The Department presented recommendations for Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Literature and Biology because these were the first three rolled out as operational exams during the past school year; additionally, exams in these three content areas may replace the Grade 11 PSSA exams. Mr. Maraschiello noted that the PLD's presented to the Board were developed by the PLD committee that the Board established in Chapter 4 and they are narrative descriptors of the knowledge and skills expected to be achieved at the Basic, Proficient and Advanced levels. The PLDs are based on Pennsylvania's academic content standards as defined by the Keystone Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content. Mr. Maraschiello then reviewed the bookmark process used by teams of educators to define cut scores associated with the narrative PLDs, and made the Board aware of a recent announcement that NAEP cut scores will now be developed

using this same procedure. He then presented scaled cut score recommendations along with impact data based on the spring 2011 administration of the Keystone Exams. Impact data was based on exams administered to approximately 90,000 students for Algebra I, 40,000 students for Biology, and 42,600 students for Literature; approximately 475 LEAs were registered to participate in the spring 2011 administration.

Mr. Wittig then opened the meeting for questions from Board members on Mr. Maraschiello's presentation. Ivory Nelson asked whether the Department analyzed the recommended cut scores based on location and expressed a concern that circumstances in urban areas may reflect a larger proportion of students in the basic and below basic performance levels. Mr. Maraschiello said the scores had not been reviewed geographically and the information presented was based on statewide data. He also said LEAs will receive reports on their Keystone Exams scores in September which, combined with the one-year delay in full implementation of the initiative, can provide schools time and information to ensure local curriculum is aligned with the exams. Mr. Nelson requested that the Board continue to monitor the impact of the exams over time.

Dan Fogarty asked if the Keystone Exams' impact data was similar to the results seen on the current Grade 11 PSSA exam. Mr. Maraschiello said the educators engaged in developing the cut score recommendations were provided information on comparable PSSA data and that the Keystone Exams were more rigorous than the PSSA. Mr. Fogarty asked if the Department had information to show a correlation between the Keystone Exams and college and career readiness, similar to a previous study that looked at the relationship of the PSSA to the SAT and other assessments. Mr. Maraschiello said that Chapter 4 established a special committee that is working to design a validity study for the Keystone Exams, but it is not possible to conduct the study until more Keystone Exam data is available.

Finally, Kirk Hallett asked if educators involved in developing the cut score recommendations expressed concern at the percentage of students not proficient. Mr. Maraschiello said the teams recognized that and reacted by expressing that there is a lot of work to do to bring students to proficiency. Mr. Wittig reiterated that a focus of the Chapter 4 regulation is on providing students who are not proficient with mandated remediation rather than social promotion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Wittig reminded the Board of the upcoming meeting on July 19-20, 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Stephanie Jones

Stephanie Jones
Administrative Assistant