MINUTES
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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

March 16, 2011

The 299th meeting of the State Board of Education was convened on Wednesday, March 16, 2011. Public notice of the meeting was made in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. by Dr. James Barker, Acting Chair.

Attending:

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

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

Acting Chair Dr. Barker welcomed Acting Secretary of Education Ronald Tomalis. A moment of silence was observed in honor of Tim Allwein, Assistant Executive Director of PSBA, who passed away in February.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the January 12, 2011, meeting of the State Board of Education were approved unanimously on a **Peri/Davis** motion.

REPORT OF THE ACTING SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

Acting Secretary Tomalis stated that it was a great pleasure to be back serving the Commonwealth and all students in all corners and sectors. Mr. Tomalis noted that the state faces a daunting challenge, but looks forward to partnering with the Board to confront the issues ahead. Secretary Tomalis stated that his work will be guided by four priorities: first, the children of the Commonwealth; second, parents who entrust us with shaping the future of their most precious resource; third, the taxpayers who provide significant public resources and expect us to responsible stewards of those funds; and fourth, the dedicated professionals and teachers who do difficult and important work daily.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

PSPC Executive Director Carolyn Angelo highlighted several items the commission is currently studying, including an online curriculum for educator ethics that will be available to all Pennsylvania teacher preparation programs and a comprehensive effort to revise the Educator Discipline Act. This effort is guided by the following goals: to expand mandatory reporting by administrators; prohibit confidentiality agreements among school districts; impose a self-reporting requirement on educators when they are arrested or convicted of certain crimes; and clarify that private academic school certificate holders are under the PSPC's jurisdiction.

The PSPC's Annual Report will be shared with Board members at the next meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Adam Schott reported that the Bureau of Assessment will need the Board's approval on a set of PSSA-Modified cut scores and Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) for both the reading and science assessments. Mr. Schott recommended a special meeting of the Board, convened via conference call. Members were advised to hold the date of May 26 on their calendars. The Department will provide the necessary data and briefing materials ahead of the call.

Mr. Schott also provided an update on the school library study being conducted as required by House Resolution 987.

Mr. Schott introduced Stephanie Jones, who joined the State Board as its new Administrative Assistant on January 1. Schott noted that Ms. Jones is off to a fast start.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

0316.1 RATIFICATION OF MEMBERS NOMINATED FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL SAFETY REPORTING AND RESPONSE

A motion to approve members of the Advisory Committee on School Safety Reporting and Response was made by Larry Wittig and seconded by Jonathan Peri.

VOTE: All were in favor as indicated by unanimous voice vote. (Nelson – by proxy)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Davis asked for a "Board" comment. She wanted to say how amazed she was at the level of knowledge and the work ethic of PDE staff. She doesn't think everyone realizes how much work they perform, and wanted them to know how much their efforts are appreciated.

Mr. Peri renewed his comments regarding H.R. 987 and encouraged attention to potential connections to recommendations related to the state library code in finalizing the study.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Adam Schott
Executive Director