

**KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Pre-Meeting Activity**

**April 7, 2003**

Board members Gamble, Morris, Van Meter, Wagnon, Waugh, Willard and Wyatt toured Bertram Caruthers Elementary School, USD 500, Kansas City, in the afternoon.?? Dr. Abrams joined the group and they toured the Kansas Speedway and met with a representative of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County.? At 6:30 they met at Chairman Waugh?s home for dinner.

**KANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**April 8, 2003**

Prior to the beginning of the formal Board meeting, members toured Muncie Elementary School with Turner School District staff.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Waugh called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 8, 2003, in the Turner High School Multi-Media Room, 2211 S. 55<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, Kansas.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present were:

Steve Abrams	Bill Wagnon
Sue Gamble	Janet Waugh
Connie Morris	Ken Willard
Iris Van Meter	Bruce Wyatt

Mr. Bacon and Mrs. Rupe were not present for the meeting.?

The Board stood for recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Waugh asked that an executive session be added to the agenda as item 15 after conclusion of regular business.? Mrs. Gamble moved, with a second by Dr. Abrams, that the agenda be approved as amended.? The motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Chairman Waugh asked for approval of the minutes of the March meeting.? Dr. Wagnon moved, with a second by Mr. Wyatt, that the minutes be approved as submitted.? The motion carried.

**COMMISSIONER?S REPORT**

Dr. Tompkins reported that the consolidation issue on the ballots in the Atwood and Herndon school districts had passed in the election held April 1<sup>st</sup>.? He noted that the Department had received a petition for a land transfer from Southern Cloud County, USD 334, and provided Board members with information on the upcoming public hearing on the matter.? Dr. Tompkins reported that the Department had received approval from the U.S. Department of Education on the State Accountability Plan and that approval of the Reading First grant was expected soon.? In addition to indicating that the Board would be deciding on a cut score on an assessment for paraprofessionals as required by NCLB, he reported that the

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law would also allow local para assessments and that the use of Work Keys and the Master Teacher test would be considered.? Dr. Wagnon commended the staff and fellow Board members for the excellent work that had led to the approval of the Accountability Plan.? He also stated how important he felt it was that the public be made aware of the significance of the plan?s approval and the fact the Board was carrying out its responsibilities.? He further expressed his concern about changing public perception of the Board and communicating the outstanding achievements of Kansas education.? Mr. Wyatt and Mrs. Gamble also discussed the need for informing the public about the work being done and that will need to be done to address NCLB requirements. A suggestion was made that discussions across the state with editorial board might again be helpful.

Dr. Tompkins provided an update on the high school assessment program which includes single tests in reading and writing with the option that they be given as early as 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but no later than 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Mathematics assessments would be given in two parts, the first to include the algebra standards and one of the other standards and the second part would include the geometry standards and one of the other standards, with the assessments given as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> grade but no later than the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.? He noted that the mathematics standards writing committee would prefer one assessment which would be foundational in nature, adding that with proper staff development over the next three years one test might work, but schools must still have the flexibility regarding the year the assessment is given.? The science assessment would also be divided into two parts.? One part would include primarily physical science and the other part would include primarily life science.? He indicated a decision would need to be made about which part would include assessment of earth-space concepts.? Schools would also have the option to give the science assessments as early as the 9<sup>th</sup> grade but no later than the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.? He reported that plans were underway to develop a high school history/government assessment to be given in two parts as early as 10<sup>th</sup> grade and no later than 12<sup>th</sup> grade.? In the discussion that followed, Board members explored potential problems that might arise for students of differing abilities if any of the high school assessments were given too early with no opportunity to demonstrate learning at a later time.

Dr. Tompkins reported that he and Chairman Waugh had attended a meeting with the Chair and the Chief Executive Officer of the Board of Regents, at which an agenda for a joint meeting of the two boards was established.? He noted the meeting would be held from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> and would be followed by a dinner hosted by Governor and Judge Sebelius.? Dr. Wagnon stated the need to engage the Board of Regents in a serious dialogue about K-12 education and asked that the Board devote time on the Board?s May agenda for a discussion of issues that will be addressed in the joint meeting.

## **2002-2003 CERTIFIED PERSONNEL REPORT**

Mr. Tom Petz, Certification and Teacher Education, reviewed the Certified Personnel Report which reflected data for certified personnel working in accredited Kansas schools during the 2002-2003 school year.? He

reported that there had been a 100% response from public schools, special education cooperatives, and interlocals, and a 98% response from others, such as special purpose schools, juvenile correction facilities, and accredited non-public schools.? Though there was little change in demographics, such as gender, race, age, entrance code, experience and assignment by qualification level from the 2001-2002 report, there was a slight increase in the number of returning teachers and a slight decrease in the number of new teachers.? Additionally, a gradual downward trend could be seen in teachers newly hired from college after a peak in 2000.? Asked about the decrease in new teachers, Mr. Petz suggested that factors to consider included fewer going into teaching and more teachers staying in existing positions.? Asked if colleges were keeping up with the demand, he noted that there was not a problem in the state currently, though there were some shortages in certain licensure levels and subject areas. ?He added that as more teachers retire, more problems might arise, stating that Kansas has a highly qualified, but aging education workforce.? Reporting on new teacher retention, Mr. Petz indicated that there was an 84%

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retention rate for the first and second year of teaching; 76% after two years; and 60% over a six-year period in Kansas schools.? Mr. Petz defined the certification levels used, reporting that 94.5% of certified personnel are fully qualified, with an additional 2.5% provisionally qualified.? 2.3% were categorized as unqualified, but Mr. Petz explained that the number did not represent individuals without any teacher preparation training, but were certified teachers serving outside their subject or grade level endorsement.?? Subject areas with less than 94% fully-qualified personnel included special education at 83.4%, foreign language at 88.7%, bilingual/ESL at 89.5%, followed by computer studies, natural science, agriculture and language arts.? Mr. Petz indicated that special education showed an increase over past years in qualified and provisionally qualified teachers.? He also reported there was a slight decrease in certified personnel waivers.? Tracking those granted waivers, 77% of those receiving special education waivers and 57% of those receiving general education waivers obtained the endorsement in the waiver area within three years of gaining the waiver.?? He also indicated that of those tracked who had received waivers, 57% in special education and 37% in general education continued employment in those areas four years after obtaining the waiver.?

### **CITIZENS? OPEN FORUM**

Chairman Waugh opened the Citizens? Open Forum at 11:04 a.m.? Those addressing the Board were: John Martello, Lenexa, representing Kansas Families United for Public Education; Keaton Kelso, Newton, representing Communities in Schools; Florentine Comacho, Jr., Kansas City, and Ascension Hernandez, Shawnee, representing the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC); and John Richard Schrock.? Chairman Waugh declared the open forum closed at 11:22 a.m. and took a break until 11:30.

### **PRESENTATION BY USD 202 TURNER**

Turner Superintendent Harry Austin welcomed the State Board and shared demographic information about the district and the Turner area.? He reported that, with 3,600 students, Turner was the 21<sup>st</sup> in size of the 303 districts in the state.? Covering 17 square miles, Turner is surrounded by some of the largest districts in the state.? Begun as a working class railroad community and part of Kansas City, Turner residents view themselves as a community separate from the surrounding Kansas City area, he reported.? He explained that Turner is a population in transition with a white population of 70% that is decreasing and a Hispanic population of 10-15%, which is on the rise.? He noted that the African?American population remains static at approximately 10%.? Dr. Austin also reported that 50% of the students in the district are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and that the median individual income for the area is \$10,000 compared to \$25,000 nationwide.? He further noted that

Wyandotte County, in which Turner is located, is one of the lowest income counties in the state, and that adjoining Johnson County is one of the highest.?

Dr. Austin introduced several individuals to discuss the academic challenges faced by the district and strategies being implemented to address them.? First, was Dr. Don Fast of Greenbush, who reported on Virtual Prescriptive Learning, VPL, a system that uses diagnostic and prescriptive software to create individualized learning plans to address skill gaps.? He reported that the project was begun as a drop-out recovery program targeting twenty at-risk middle school students performing in the bottom quartile on reading and math assessments.? The program has been expanded as Piloting Your Future (PYF), with the use of grant funds and is available for the entire student population at Turner Middle School.? Kim Anderson of Turner Middle School reported on components of the program.? She reported that historically, many Turner students have not seen the value in post-secondary learning, and part of PYF is focused on increased expectations of parents and students for higher levels of learning, with mastery objectives set at 80%.? She indicated that 43% of the middle school students were participating in PYF, and that 24% are participating in both math and reading.

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Alan Day reported on the extended day program offered at each of the Turner elementary schools.? The focus, he reported, was on student reading and math competence skills with intervention strategies to prevent retention and prepare for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade Kansas assessments.? Selection for the program is based on teacher recommendation, grades, test scores and parental requests.? The summer school program, added for 2003 with students in K-6 eligible, will be used as a prerequisite for promotion for some students, he reported.? Pam Hargrove reported on Project Essential, a character education program being piloted at Muncie Elementary.? She reported that the core ideas built into many of the school's activities focus on the positive use of errors as tools for growth; development of an understanding of the difference between emotion and reason; developing an understanding of one's responsibilities; and the need for understanding one's rights and the rights of others.? Ms. Hargrove reported that adults in the school community were expected to be role models and that the program offered a way for adults to grow along with the students.? Craig Shove, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, reported on the district wide focus on reading and math.? He noted that common elements employed by the district for improvement in reading and closing the achievement gap included strategies at the elementary level based on research-based programs.? Those include the Success for All program, implementation of guided reading, and a programmed reading project through a grant at the University of Kansas.? He indicated the district was also working on reading programs for middle school and high school.? Mr. Shove indicated that the district would implement new elementary level math strategies in the Fall of 2003.? With assistance from a grant from the National Science Foundation, the district examined practices employed by schools that have performed well in math and used those in the development of new strategies.? The key to their successful implementation, he noted, was strong professional development for teachers.? He reported that the next step would include implementation at the middle school level.

The Board recessed for lunch at the school at 12:46 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 1:36 p.m.?

## **CURRICULAR STANDARDS**

Dr. Pochowski reviewed the requirement of the "No Child Left Behind" legislation for states to develop grade level expectations and develop assessments in reading and mathematics in grades 3-8 and one grade in high school.? She noted that because of the mandate it was necessary for Kansas to review and revise the Kansas

Mathematics and Communication Arts Standards.? To report on the Communication Arts standards, Dr. Pochowski introduced Veronica Williams, Department of Education Reading Consultant, and Dennis Kear, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Wichita State University and Co-Chair of the writing committee for reading and writing.? She introduced Betsy Wiens, Auburn Washburn USD 437, and George Abel, Emporia USD 253, Co-Chairs of the mathematics standards writing committee, and Ethel Edwards, Department of Education Mathematics Consultant, to report on the revised math standards.? She also introduced Mr. John Kendall of the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL), to summarize the findings of the McRel external review of the revised standards.

Ms. Williams described the make-up of the writing committee and explained the initial charge given to it to review of the current standards, review the modified and extended standards, determine the level specificity of skills assessed, make recommendations for essential indicators to be assessed and, review the format for usability.? She reported that the purpose of the standards and assessments had been expanded to include measurement of individual student proficiency in addition to measurement of program effectiveness and improvement.? Added to vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, the three original content strands, were alphabets, including phonics and phonemic awareness.? The writing standards, she noted, would not be changed.? Ms. Williams explained how feedback on the standards had been solicited and would be incorporated into the final version.? She noted that goals of the committee had been to provide a teacher and parent friendly document, tools for learning and teaching, a user-friendly glossary of terms, and accessibility grade-by-grade, standard-by-standard and scope and sequence.?

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Mr. Abel and Ms. Wiens reported that the mathematics writing committee had agreed that it was important to maintain continuity in the standards and the content strands had not changed.? They had moved existing benchmarks to appropriate grade levels or to where it was sensible for sequence of learning.? They reported that they had solicited feedback from all schools in the state on the first draft and had received 1,500 responses.? Notable in the responses from the field was the expressed desire for more specificity and examples.? Another draft was sent to the field in February with 300 responses received to date.? Current comments received included requests for new math assessments.? They noted that staff development on the new standards would be essential.

As he walked the Board through the McRel evaluation of the reading standards, Mr. Kendall explained the indicators marked for assessment in reading and mathematics standards had been evaluated on a four-point scale on eight criteria:

- ? clarity about what students should know and be able to do;
- ? specificity regarding whether the skills and knowledge to be assessed are adequately described;
- ? ?measurability so that it is clear how a student might demonstrate mastery of the skill or knowledge described;
- ? guidance in providing a curricular focus or guide for curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- ? high expectations exemplified by important academic content;
- ? rigor focused on whether students are appropriately challenged;
- ? appropriate content that reflects the shared and unique experiences and contributions of individuals and groups without bias in favor or against a particular group; and
- ? whether the needs of all students are adequately addressed, including those who are disadvantaged, limited English proficient, or have a disability.

Mr. Kendall also reviewed the McRel evaluation of the mathematics standards.? Discussion of the standards followed.? In addition to providing additional clarification, questions regarding alignment with NAEP standards and higher education expectations, and professional development to ready teachers to address the standards in both math and reading were discussed.? The mathematics co-chairs were asked if the committee had considered lowering the math standards since proficient and above on the Kansas math assessments is approximately 50%.? Ms. Wiens responded that rigor had been lessened but expectations had not been lowered.?? Mr. Abel also reported the position of the mathematics writing committee in support of high school math testing being given as one assessment at one grade level.? Commissioner Tompkins reported that a bill had been passed by the legislature requiring the addition of financial literacy to the math standards or any other appropriate curricular standards and that work on the task had not yet begun.

### **APPROVAL OF ASSESSMENT FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS**

Dr. Pochowski explained that NCLB requires paraprofessionals who provide instructional support to students in Title I schools to have completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; have an associates degree or higher; or have passed an assessment that assesses their knowledge and their ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics.? She presented information about the ParaPro Assessment which Kansas and several other states will use to meet the assessment option.? Dr. Pochowski reported that the test had been developed by ETS (Educational Testing Services) with Kansas paraprofessionals and teachers involved in the development, piloting, and standard setting process.? Scores from the piloted test ranged from 420-480 points and Dr. Pochowski stated that staff recommended that the State Board set the passing score on the ParaPro Assessment at 455.? Mrs. Judi Miller, Coordinator for the State and Federal Programs Team joined the discussion that followed.? The issue of who would be affected by implementation of the assessment and in what ways was raised, with? particular concern that it might affect the supply of qualified paraprofessionals.? It was noted that new hires after January 8, 2004 must meet one of the three requirements.? Mrs. Gamble moved, with a second by Mr. Wyatt, that the Board approve a passing score of 455 on the ParaPro Assessment.? The motion carried 8-0.

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### **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES COMMISSION**

Dr. Abrams moved, with a second by Dr. Wagnon, that that the Board adopt the findings of fact and conclusions of the Professional Practices Commission and approve the recommendations of the Commission in cases 02-O-21, 02-FC-23, 02-FC-24, 03-FC-02, 03-FC-03, 03-FC-04, and 03-O-05.? The motion carried.

The Board took a break from 2:35 until 2:45 p.m.

### **2003-2005 BOARD GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Commissioner Tompkins reported that he had revised the 2003-04 State Board Goals and Objectives based on Board member input at the March meeting had sent them to the Board with their materials for the April meeting.? Revisions had been made to the objectives listed under the goals the Board had approved in March.? Dr. Tompkins asked for Board approval.? Dr. Abrams moved, with a second by Mr. Willard, that the Board approve the objectives as presented.? The motion carried.

### **LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

Mr. Dennis handed out a summary of 2003 education bills and reviewed their status.? He also handed out information as of April 1<sup>st</sup> on the recommendations from the Governor, the Senate and the House for the FY

2003 and FY 2004 budget.? In addition, Mr. Dennis reviewed the Governor?s revenue enhancement package that had been proposed to address a cumulative state general fund deficit of \$230 million projected by the end of FY 2004.? He mentioned a proposal to delay state aid payments to schools until after the end of the fiscal year.? Districts would be allowed to record the payment as an FY 2003 receipt.? By posting the expenditure in FY 2004, the state would avoid an end-of-FY 2003 deficit in the state general fund.? The state?s credit worthiness and the impreciseness of estimated state general fund receipts were discussed.?

## CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Abrams moved, with a second by Mrs. Gamble, that the consent agenda be approved.? The motion carried.

In the consent agenda the Board:

- ? Received the monthly personnel report.
- ? Approved school construction plans for Wichita, USD 259; Topeka, USD 501; Ft. Leavenworth, USD 207; Coffeyville, USD 445; Wellington Christian Academy; Emporia, USD 253; De Soto, USD 232; and Crest, USD 479.
- ? Approved the renewal of the Northeast Kansas Education Service Center Interlocal Agreement No. 608.
- ? Approved accredited status for the following schools: USD 222 Washington Elementary, Washington High; USD 225 South Barber Elementary, South Barber Middle; USD 259 Linwood Elementary; USD 362 Fontana Elementary; USD 368 Hillside Elementary; and USD 421 Lyndon Elementary.
- ? Approved Quality Performance Accreditation waiver requests for waiver of Kansas Administrative Regulations (K.A.R.) 91-31-16(a) -- "Accreditation cycle" and 91-31-24 -- "On-site visits" from: St. John/Holy Family School to allow the extension of the accreditation cycle and on-site team visits; Rossville High School, to allow the onsite team visit to be delayed by one year and to begin a new accreditation cycle in 2003-04; and Roosevelt Elementary School, USD 489 to allow an extension of its accreditation cycle by one year and to delay the onsite team visits.

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- ? Approved the inservice education plan from USD 203 Piper.
- ? Approved requests for waivers for individuals to serve outside their area of endorsement in districts as follows: *Behavior Disorders*:? Tabitha Alexander, USD 453; *English (extend days on esub)*:? Terri Proffitt, USD 309; *Gifted Education*: Joyce Eckelberry, USD 320; and *Interrelated Special Education*: Danette Story, USD 475; and denied requests for waivers in order to extend days on emergency substitute certificates for Bridget Letourneau, USD 464, to teach 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; and Tim Jones, USD 497, to teach Orchestra.
- ? Issued an order granting the application from USD 462, Valley Center, for authority to hold an election on the question of issuing bonds over the school district?s bond debt limitation.



second by Dr. Abrams, that the agenda be approved as amended.? The motion carried.

## **BOARD REPORTS**

### **Chairman**

Chairman Waugh reported on her attendance at the NASBE legislative conference in Washington, D.C. in March.? She stated that other states report experiencing many of the same problems that Kansas has with NCLB, noting that Michigan reported it had 1,400 schools on improvement and that some of them are Blue Ribbon schools.? Chairman Waugh reported that she and Vice Chairman Gamble had met with members of the Kansas congressional delegation and discussed waivers regarding highly qualified teachers.? She also reported that she and the Commissioner had had a meeting with Jack Wempe, Chair of the Kansas Board of Regents on the agenda for the joint meeting in May.? She asked that Board members call her or Andy with any suggestions they may have for the meeting.

### **Legislative Coordinator**

Mr. Wyatt reported on legislative activity on a constitutional amendment which would require that three members of the state board of education be appointed by the Governor.? He reported that in his testimony before the Senate Education Committee he had stated that if the resolution passed it would make the Board the issue over the next two years instead of the education of Kansas children.? Mrs. Gamble, Assistant Legislative Liaison, suggested the Board may need to build bridges with the legislature and maintain a focus on core issues.? Mr. Wyatt also reported that there had been a meeting with Sylvia Robinson, the Governor?s Director of Education Policy, and that a meeting had been scheduled with the Governor in May.? He noted the importance of establishing a relationship with the Governor to communicate the Board?s activities and goals.

### **Board Policy Committee**

Dr. Abrams, Chair of the Board Policy Committee, moved that the Board approve the revised policies for the Kansas State School for the Blind and the Kansas State School for the Deaf.? Mr. Willard seconded the motion, which carried 9-0.

Dr. Abrams also reported that Board policies were reviewed on a biennial basis and that meetings of the Policy Committee had been scheduled for June and July for that purpose.? He stated it was the Committee?s intent to have revisions ready for the Board?s review in August and asked members to contact him, the Commissioner, or Rod Bieker with any concerns or suggestions.

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### **Board Attorney**

Mr. Biles reviewed his written report. He indicated that, with the agreement with USD 423 Moundridge approved by the Board on Tuesday, activity on that matter should be wrapped up by the end of the week.? He reported that discovery had been active in the federal school finance case and that numerous depositions had been scheduled.? He further reported that the Attorney General had announced that he was separating the legal representation of the governor and state treasurer and would be hiring outside counsel to represent the State of Kansas.? He also noted that the state court case has been set for trial at the end of September.? This would result in the state court considering the state constitutionality of the school finance formula prior to the federal court trial.? If the state court declares the statutes unconstitutional, the federal court would have nothing to decide.? The schedule would also result in a decision from the state court before the 2004 legislative session. ??Mr. Biles noted that he would

like to have an executive session at the May meeting to further discuss the state case with Board members.? Dr. Abrams moved, with a second by Mrs. Gamble, that Mr. Biles? fees for services for the month of March be approved for payment as submitted.? The motion carried.

### **Other Board Member Reports**

Dr. Wagon reported on an Education Commission of the State Steering Committee meeting he had attended in Atlanta.? He noted that a report concerning a study on school improvement since the early 1980?s had been received and that the report had concluded that school systems were collapsing and there was a need for vouchers and charter schools.? He indicated that comments were also received from others with different views, including Jim Hunt, former governor of North Carolina, who stated that investment in improvement is being demonstrated in schools.? Dr. Wagon also mentioned several other studies and reports that are available on the ECS website at <http://www.ecs.org> and encouraged Board members to visit the site and review them.??

Mrs. Gamble, reporting on the NASBE legislative conference, noted that only Congressman Moore had voted for the NCLB legislation and that he had stated he did so because states would receive more education funding.? She reported that now that NCLB is the law, it was important that members of the Kansas congressional delegation who voted against it to not now use that as a reason for voting against funding the Act.? She also indicated that all members of the congressional delegation were on record in support of full funding of IDEA and that their continued support was needed.? Mrs. Gamble discussed the issue of special education paraprofessionals and the possibility that they will have to meet the same education requirements or pass the same knowledge assessment as Title I paraprofessionals.? She also discussed teacher quality waivers under NCLB for Kansas teachers currently practicing.? She indicated there was a question about whether it was advisable at this point to raise the issue with the U.S. Department of Education, particularly before results from a pilot survey of the field to determine highly qualified staff were compiled.

Mrs. Rupe reported on her attendance at a McRel meeting.? She reported that others states were also have difficulties with the loss of surplus funds and trying to meet the requirements of NCLB.? She indicated that though states must implement research-based improvement strategies, the states? financial difficulties may affect research conducted by organizations such as McRel.? Discussing implementation by other states, she noted that Nebraska will allow local assessments for determining AYP.? The decision had the potential to affect how other states will handle state assessment requirements.? Mrs. Rupe also discussed the need of the U.S. Department of Education to address the issue of how to deal with assessment data on small subgroups.

Mr. Willard reported on his experience with review of Byrd Scholarship applications.? He noted how remarkable the Kansas applicants were.

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### **Board Members Requests for Future Agenda Items**

Mr. Wyatt asked that the Board revisit new teacher support programs to ensure that Kansas is doing all that can be done.? Dr. Wagon added that the focus should be on professional development for existing teachers, not the five percent entering the profession.? A May meeting discussion of the issues on the agenda for the joint meeting of the Board and the Board of Regents was requested by Dr. Wagon.? Dr. Wagon also requested a discussion about how the Board communicates and works with the Kansas legislature, the Governor, and the Kansas

congressional delegation.? Mrs. Morris asked for update on web-based teacher preparation programs.

### **Board Communications Committee**

Mrs. Gamble stated her interest in Board members meeting with editorial boards across the state in order to communicate the Board?s goals and objectives and the key components of the Kansas NCLB Accountability Plan.? She questioned whether the public was aware of some of the nuances of the state budget problems, and mentioned the importance of communicating education?s needs before the end of the legislative session.? In the discussion that followed, Chairman Waugh suggested that the matter be referred to the Board Communication Committee.? Mrs. Rupe also stressed the need for individual Board members to communicate with the public.? Mrs. Gamble moved, with a second by Mr. Willard, that the Board refer the development of a plan to inform the public about Kansas? NCLB accountability plan requirements and the State Board goals and objectives to the Board Communication Committee.? The motion carried on a vote of 6-2-1, with Dr. Wagnon and Dr. Abrams voting ?no?, and Mrs. Van Meter abstaining.

The Board took a break from 10:15 to 10:25 a.m.

### **DISCUSSION OF DISTRICT REORGANIZATION ISSUES**

To assist the Board with its exploration of school district reorganization issues and the relationship of district size and its effect on student achievement, Assistant Commissioner Pochowski presented data regarding the lowest performing schools/districts in the state and related characteristics.?? Included was data based on district size, with districts with less than 400 students, districts with 400-800 students, districts with 801-1700 students, and districts with over 1700 students. Those categories were compared to the average percent of students scoring in the lowest twentieth percentile or less in both reading and mathematics.? District size by student performance was also compared to socioeconomic status, as well as the percent of minority students in a district.? Based on the data, Dr. Pochowski noted that it was apparent that the greatest percentage of students performing in the lowest twenty percent in reading and/or mathematics were from districts with an enrollment larger than 1700.? Additionally, districts with an enrollment greater than 1700 with minority students at 41% or higher had the highest percentage of students performing in the lowest twenty percent in reading and/or mathematics.? The largest districts with the highest percentage of students in poverty also had the highest percentage of students performing in the lowest twenty percent in reading and math.? Commissioner Tompkins noted, that because poverty was the key factor in low student achievement, reorganization decisions should not be based on student learning, because students in smaller districts are learning and perform well on assessments of core subjects.? A factor to consider when looking at optimum district size might be opportunities for program breadth at the middle and high school levels.? In the discussion that followed, factors and strategies that have an impact on achievement in high poverty, low performing schools were discussed.? Dr. Abrams asked for a presentation on the common characteristics of schools that have been effective in meeting the academic needs of low-income students.

Deputy Commissioner Dennis presented information on school districts in the state including the low, median, and high for areas such as enrollments, pupil-teacher ratios, teacher-administrator ratios, general and supplemental general fund budget per pupil, assessed valuation, mill levies, attendance centers,

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number of high schools, general and supplemental general state aid, size of district and number of students per square mile.? Mr. Dennis was asked to provide additional information on the number of free and reduced price

lunch students by district.

Dr. Tompkins asked Board members for additional information regarding the issues they wished to pursue in their discussion of reorganization. As a result of the discussion that followed staff was asked to organize available information relating to district reorganization, with consideration given to the validity of the cost-savings cited in the Kennedy & Little study; the correlation between effective building/district size and organization and meeting the performance goals established by the Board; cooperative activities in which districts are currently engaged; job descriptions for school administrators; the components of building and district administrative costs statewide; factors used by districts when considering building closings; and funding alternatives that address educational needs rather than district size. Also mentioned was a desire to explore ways that the Board could provide advice regarding changes in the school finance formula so that funding is directed at educational need instead of school size. During the discussion it was acknowledged that decisions made by the Board over the past two years and the inadequacies of the school finance formula were already influencing district consolidation decisions.

The Board took a break from 12:05 and returned at 12:20 p.m.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IDEA REAUTHORIZATION**

At the March Board meeting, further detail on the recommendations for IDEA reauthorization was requested. Dr. Pochowski reviewed additional information that had been developed regarding recommended changes in IDEA that the Board could share with the Kansas congressional delegation. Asked if the recommendations would be supported by other educational organizations and special education agencies, Dr. Pochowski indicated that they represent common issues being discussed across the country, adding that while most organizations are in support of the recommendations, parent advocates are concerned that some may result in a loss of due process rights. Support by the Kansas congressional delegation was also noted, except when it came to allocating funds. Lack of congressional consensus regarding federal funding for 40% of excess costs was linked to problems with over-identification. Dr. Pochowski reported that over-identification was not a problem across the state, though some districts have become centers for certain types of disabilities. She also indicated that there were problems in relying on a discrepancy formula for identification, as well as problems with funding based on census. Mrs. Van Meter left the meeting at the conclusion of the discussion on IDEA.

**APPROVAL OF BOARD TRAVEL**

Dr. Wagnon moved, with a second by Dr. Abrams, that the travel requests be approved as presented. The motion carried 8-0.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mrs. Gamble moved, with a second by Mr. Wyatt, that the Kansas State Board of Education recess into executive session for a period of 10 minutes to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel so the privacy, confidentiality and other rights of such personnel would not be violated and that the open meeting of the Board resume in the Board room at 12:45 p.m. The motion carried. At 12:44 p.m., the open meeting resumed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Waugh adjourned the meeting at 12:44 p.m.

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- ? Mr. Wyatt asked that the Board revisit new teacher support programs to ensure that Kansas is doing all that can be done.
- ? Dr. Wagnon requested a discussion about how the Board liaises with the Kansas legislature, the Governor and the Kansas congressional delegation.
- ? Dr. Abrams asked for a presentation on the common characteristics of schools that have been effective in meeting the academic needs of low-income students.
- ? Mrs. Morris asked for update on web-based teacher preparation programs.