



2018 RSAI ANNUAL MEETING

October 24, 2018

**FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus
Ankeny, IA**

4:30 – 7:30 p.m.



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Oct. 24, 2018 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus

1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway, Ankeny, Iowa 50023

There will be a working dinner during the meeting.

1. Call Annual Meeting to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Introduction of attendees
4. Annual Meeting Business: Duane Willhite, Secretary/Treasurer, RSAI Leadership Group
 - 2017-18 Annual Audit
 - 2018-19 Budget & Professional Advocate Payment
 - 2018-19 RSAI Membership Dues
5. Results of Election of NE Region Representative to the Leadership Group for three-year terms through Sept. 2021
6. Introduction of the 2018-19 Leadership Group
7. Election of RSAI At-Large member for a three-year term
8. Report from NREA Annual Conference
9. Status of RSAI 2018 Priorities
10. Report of Aug. 10 Legislative Group meeting
11. Consideration of Proposed Amendments to RSAI Bylaws
12. Establish RSAI legislative priorities for the upcoming Session
13. Focus Area Prioritization
14. Strategic Advocacy Group Conversations– plan for grassroots advocacy / legislative contacts
15. Any other business
16. Adjourn (please note: Leadership Group convenes short organizational meeting upon conclusion of the Annual Meeting.)



RSAI Essential Values

Background: The following themes provide a concise 30,000-foot view to help define the organization and drive lobbying responses to proposals outside the boundaries of defined RSAI legislative priorities.

RSAI Essential Values: (Considerations when formulating positions on Legislative Issues):

- **Students First:** State policies and resources should be designed to support schools in providing equal opportunities and success for students in **all districts of all sizes and locations**.
- **State Mandates:** Any new mandates ought to be founded on a principal of state public purpose. If the state compels school district action, the costs of that action must be initially funded and continually supported with a long-term sustainability plan.
- **Flexibility:** In education policy, one size does not fit all school districts, classrooms or students. District leaders need maximum flexibility to provide a great education to all students. The state role is to define what outcomes are necessary for all students, leaving flexibility to schools in expenditures and policy to best determine how to deliver those intended outcomes.
- **Recognize Need and Capacity:** Formulas for funding should be based on student needs rather than exclusively defined based on enrollment. Per pupil funding alone does not recognize the challenge of maintaining capacity for supporting and improving education during continuous enrollment decline.
- **School General Fund Revenues Drive Instruction:** General Fund dollars pay for education. Any inequities on the expenditure side of the General Fund deprive districts of resources to pay for education. School transportation costs are a prime example.
- **Local Control:** Local leaders will typically make the best decisions for students, especially when they have adequate flexibility and resources to make those decisions. The state should exhaust other tools to correct local district mistakes when they believe those happen, rather than legislating for all districts (such tools may include but are not limited to DE review, set accreditation expectations, AEA support, SBRC request for a conversation, etc.)
- **State Program Sustainability:** Funding for state initiatives should be defined and planned, including providing a plan for adequately funding the basic cost of education along the way, while defining sustainable sources of revenue for new state reforms and initiatives.
- **School Sustainability:** Decisions about school sustainability should be based on the inability to deliver student success, rather than assumptions about the size of a school district. Sharing, reorganization, consolidation and dissolution decisions are best made locally. The state provides support through the provision of incentives to help eliminate barriers to those conversations.



RSAI Leadership and Contact Information

RSAI Professional Advocate

Margaret Buckton, margaret.buckton@rsaia.org, cell: (515) 201-3755, office: (515) 251-5970

RSAI Leadership Group

Paul Croghan, Essex/East Mills CSD, Superintendent, (SW, Region 3 Director) paul.croghan@rsaia.org

Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD, Superintendent, (SE, Region 4 Director) laurie.noll@rsaia.org

Duane Willhite, North Fayette CSD, Superintendent (Secretary/Treasurer, At-large member)
duane.willhite@rsaia.org

Nick Trenkamp, Superintendent, Central CSD, (NE, Region 2 Director) Nicholas.trenkamp@rsaia.org
Nick's term will begin October 24, 2018!

Robert Olson, Clarion-Goldfield/Dows CSD, Superintendent, (NW, Chair, Region 1 Director)
robert.olson@rsaia.org

Dennis McClain, Clay-Central-Everyly CSD, Superintendent (Vice Chair, At-large member)
dennis.mcclain@rsaia.org

Dan Smith, Harmony CSD, Board President (At-large member) dan.smith@rsaia.org

Lee Ann Grimley, Springville CSD, Board President (NE, Region 2 Director) leeann.grimley@rsaia.org
Lee Ann's term is through October 24, 2018. Thank you for all you've done, Lee Ann!

RSAI Legislative Group

*At-large members of the Leadership Group above plus:

Southwest - Tim Mitchell, Superintendent, Riverside CSD tmitchell@riverside.k12.ia.us

Northeast - Darrin Strike, Superintendent, West Fork CSD darrin.strike@westforkschool.org

Southeast - Sandy Dockendorff, Board Member, Danville CSD sandy.dockendorff@danvillecsd.org

Northwest - Dan Frazier, Superintendent, Belmont-Klemme CSD dan.frazier@bkcsd.org



Memo re Financial Statement Audit

June 30, 2018

TO: RSAI Leadership Committee

FROM: Duane Willhite, RSAI Treasurer

DATE: September 20, 2018

RE: RSAI Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018

1. SUMMARY

Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI) concluded its most recent fiscal year on June 30, 2018. During the 2017-18 fiscal year, RSAI consisted of 93-member districts, up from 72 members during 2016-17 and 67 members during 2015-16. Revenues for the fiscal year came entirely from membership dues which totaled \$63,125. Total expenses for the fiscal year were \$62,145, with payments for association management and professional advocate services totaling \$53,656. Net revenue for the fiscal year was positive \$980. RSAI assets as of June 30, 2018 totaled \$13,666. Due to the limited number of transactions during the fiscal year, it was decided by the RSAI Leadership Committee to forego the expense of a formal external audit and instead conduct an internal review of the financial transactions.

2. SCOPE

As RSAI Treasurer, I have conducted an internal review of the financial transactions of the Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI). The time period covered by this review is July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. In my opinion, the internal review procedures conducted are sufficient to evaluate the accuracy of the financial report that follows this memo.

2. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

RSAI day-to-day financial transactions are performed by staff members and contractors of Iowa School Finance Information Services (ISFIS). The financial review was conducted on the basis of questionnaire, inquiry, observation, and verification of supporting documentation and identified processes.

3. FINDINGS

After the internal review was conducted, I have identified no significant findings requiring adjustments to the financial statements presented.



RSAI Financial Statements

June 30, 2018

Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI)

Balance Sheet

June 30, 2018

Current Assets

Cash - Wells Fargo Checking	13,666	
Accounts Receivable	-	
Prepaid Items	-	
Total Current Assets	13,666	13,666

Other Assets

Other	-	
Total Other Assets	-	-

Total Assets

13,666

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	-	
Advances from/Amounts Due to ISFIS	1,888	
Deferred Income	11,375	
Total Liabilities	13,263	13,263

Equity

Retained Earnings	(577)	
Net Income	980	
Total Equity	403	403

Total Liabilities & Equity

13,666



Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI)
Income Statement
For the Twelve Months Ended June 30, 2018

	Actual 2017-2018	Annual Budget 2017-18
<u>Income</u>		
Membership Dues	63,125	56,250
Other	-	-
Total Income	63,125	56,250
<u>Expenses</u>		
Advertising/Promotion	1,091	2,000
Postage	150	150
Supplies/Printing/Signage	817	1,000
Computer Hardware/Software	540	479
Insurance	712	400
Dues, Subs & Ref Matls	750	750
Consultation Fees - Assoc Mgmt/Prof. Advoca	53,656	47,813
Consultation Fees - CPA Services	-	250
Legal Fees	640	250
Hosting, Domain & Website Fees	650	550
Travel Expenses	42	-
Annual Conference	1,103	1,500
District Workshops	795	1,000
Member Benefit Program Fees	1,200	-
Other	-	108
Total Expenses	62,145	56,250
Net Income	980	-



**Rural School Advocates of Iowa (RSAI)
2018-19 Budget - Approved**

	Budget 2018-19
<u>Income</u>	
Membership Dues	\$ 65,000
Total Income	<u>\$ 65,000</u>
 <u>Expenses</u>	
Advertising/Promotion	\$ 1,500
Postage	\$ 300
Supplies/Printing/Signage	\$ 1,000
Computer Hardware/Software	\$ 540
Insurance	\$ 725
Dues, Subs & Ref Matls	\$ 750
Consultation Fees - Assoc Mgmt/Prof Advocat	\$ 55,250
Consultation Fees - CPA Services	\$ 250
Legal Fees	\$ 250
Hosting, Domain & Website Fees	\$ 650
Annual Conference	\$ 1,300
Regional Meetings	\$ 1,000
Program Fees	\$ 1,200
Other	\$ 285
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 65,000</u>
 Net Income	 <u><u>\$ -</u></u>



2018-19 RSAI Membership Pricing
(July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019)

Standard Annual Dues: \$750 per district

Whole Grade Sharing: \$550 per district if both join
(approx. 25% discount)

Final Year of WGS before Reorg: \$375 per district if both join
(approx. 50% discount)

DUES WAIVER

Negative Spending Authority 100% discount off membership fee
(fee waived with approval from RSAI Leadership Group for financial hardships)

SERVICE FEE DISCOUNT

ISFIS Policy/Negotiations Subscriber Discount \$100 discount off membership fee
(discount paid by ISFIS on district's behalf)

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

NASDTEC Licensure Check Free member benefit for RSAI Members
Includes licensure check of prospective employees through the 50-state NASDTEC licensure clearinghouse.

Contact Marissa Gaal at ISFIS for more information marissa@iowaschoolfinance.com



2018 RSAI By-Laws with Proposed Amendment Annotated

Name: The name of the organization shall be the Rural School Advocates of Iowa and shall be referred to below as "RSAI".

Mission:

RSAI will advocate for students in rural schools to assure a fair, equal, and quality education.

Vision:

Member schools will collaborate to promote legislation that strengthens rural education for students, by;

1. Educating others about the value of rural education to the state’s economy and future of Iowa as an educational leader in the nation and the world and unique challenges rural schools and communities face;
2. Building the capacity and understanding of other groups with similar interests on legislative and educational issues to build a stronger voice;
3. Securing adequate resources, academic and financial, to provide first class educational opportunities for ~~rural~~ students; and
4. Maintaining local control through the flexibility and authority of locally elected School Boards.

Membership:

Membership of RSAI shall be open to School Districts in Iowa that share the values and mission of RSAI in advocating for students in rural schools to assure a fair, equal, and quality education. Affiliate membership is extended to other organizations/entities sharing the values and mission of RSAI, as approved by the RSAI Leadership group. Input from affiliate member organizations is valued but such organizations are non-voting affiliate members of RSAI.

Membership in RSAI shall not be considered in lieu of membership in other organizations serving students in the state of Iowa. RSAI will work closely with all organizations sharing its Mission, Vision and Legislative priorities.

Member School Districts shall be responsible for advocating for students attending Iowa’s rural schools; creating local networks to support RSAI identified Legislative priorities; and assisting Legislators in gaining a better understanding of rural student and school needs.

Member School Districts are encouraged to create a Liaison responsible for Legislative advocacy from

Legislative Group discussed by-laws committee recommendation to strike “rural” from the mission, but believe that “rural” in the mission is the driver for this organization. The concepts of advocating for all students and further clarifying that rural doesn’t mean “small” school is a communications or marketing issue. Further clarification below.



among its Board members to fulfill its RSAI responsibilities and act as a direct contact within the School District for RSAI.

Membership dues shall be provided each year at the Annual meeting of RSAI. Dues shall be the same for all member school districts regardless of certified enrollment. However, school districts engaged in whole grade sharing prior to the final year preceding reorganization may receive a discount of 25% each. Districts sharing in the final year prior to reorganization may each receive a 50% discount. In both cases, the two districts may determine the ratio of responsibility for payment. The leadership group may waive dues for districts with financial hardship.

Member School Districts can withdraw membership at any point through written notification to the RSAI Leadership Group. Dues paid are non-refundable.

Member School Districts shall be entitled to participation in RSAI as follows in these By-Laws.

Voting:

Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, all voting is to be done in person. Active electronic attendance is permitted via internet technologies or in response to survey or other electronic communication as approved by the RSAI Leadership Group. Proxy voting between and by School Districts is not allowed. Each District in attendance shall be entitled to one vote on all issues addressed at the RSAI Annual Meeting or as needed between RSAI Meetings as determined by the RSAI Leadership Group.

Quorum:

Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, Quorums are not required.

Meeting Procedures:

The latest version of Roberts Rules of Order shall be used to determine procedural questions except as otherwise directed by the membership.

Agendas:

Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, agendas must be forwarded to participants no later than 7 days prior to meetings and must include a date, time and location in addition to actions required at each meeting as per these By-Laws. Unless otherwise specified, creating agendas will be the joint responsibility of the Secretary/Treasurer and Chair of the Leadership Group and must be posted by the Secretary/Treasurer or the Secretary/Treasurer’s designee.

Vacancies:

If the Leadership Group determines it is unnecessary to appoint to fill a vacancy, a vacancy shall remain



vacant until the next election cycle.

Consideration Representation:

~~Consideration should be given to equal~~ RSAI shall strive for diversity in representation of all leadership and elected positions within RSAI, including both for ~~equal distribution of~~ elected Board members and Superintendents.

Legislative group used the word “diversity” since it is more inclusive and gets to the role differences as well.

Good Standing:

Only School Board members and Superintendents in Good Standing in their respective School Districts are eligible to hold elected office in RSAI. Changes in status such as but not limited to failure of Board members to gain reelection to their local School Board or changes in School District employment in the case of Superintendents shall be deemed vacant.

RSAI Regions:

Member School Districts shall be divided into 4 Regions known as RSAI Regions. These Regions shall be defined as per the map in Appendix A - “RSAI Regions”. Should a merger between one or more districts occur and both districts do not occupy the same RSAI Region, the reorganized district shall be included in the RSAI Region of the district which had the greatest land area prior to the reorganization.

RSAI Regions shall meet annually in the summer and as deemed appropriate and necessary by the RSAI Leadership Group. Each District shall be entitled to one vote on all issues addressed at RSAI Regional Meetings. A shared superintendent present at the meeting may cast one vote for each member district he/she represents.

The RSAI Region meeting participants shall elect an RSAI Region Representative to serve a term as specified later in these By-Laws on the RSAI Leadership Group and shall act as Chair of the Region meetings during their term. The RSAI Region Representative will be responsible for making all arrangements necessary for RSAI Region meetings during their term, including ensuring that staff the ~~sharing of~~ an Agenda with members at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

The RSAI Region meeting participants shall elect an RSAI Region Liaison to the RSAI Legislative Group. It shall be the responsibility of the RSAI Region Liaison to present the RSAI Region’s Legislative priorities at the Legislative Group meeting each year. The term of office of the RSAI Region Liaison shall be one year.

At the RSAI Region meeting, amendments to these By-Laws may be presented for consideration. In order for an amendment to move forward to the RSAI Legislative Group for consideration, a 2/3 majority is required.

At the RSAI Region meeting, Legislative priorities for the upcoming Iowa Legislative Session shall be established and forwarded for consideration to the RSAI Legislative Group. Determination of Legislative



priorities shall be based on a simple majority vote.

RSAI Legislative Group:

RSAI Region Liaisons shall gather with the At-Large Leadership Group members as the RSAI Legislative Group annually, but in no event later than 4 weeks prior to the RSAI Annual Meeting.

The Legislative Group will select a Chair and Vice-Chair/Secretary from among its members to conduct the RSAI Legislative Group meeting. The term of office for both will be one year.

The RSAI Legislative Group will be responsible for reviewing, amending as necessary and finalizing the Legislative Priorities as identified at the RSAI Region meetings.

The RSAI Legislative Group shall present a set of recommended Legislative Priorities for consideration at the RSAI Annual Meeting. The recommended legislative priorities are presented as a draft with responsibility for finalizing the determination of RSAI's legislative priorities on the body of the RSAI annual meeting participants.

The RSAI Legislative Group shall present any Amendments to these By-Laws for consideration at the RSAI Annual Meeting. In order for an amendment to be included on the agenda at the RSAI Annual meeting for consideration, a 2/3 majority of the RSAI Legislative Group is required. Such proposed amendment shall be submitted to the RSAI Leadership Group at least 14 days prior to the Annual meeting.

RSAI Annual Meeting

All member School Districts shall gather annually as determined by the Leadership Group. This meeting shall be known as the RSAI Annual Meeting. An Agenda of the Annual meeting shall be sent to all member school districts no less than 30 days in advance of the Annual meeting by the RSAI Leadership Group Chair.

At the RSAI Annual meeting, three At-Large members will be elected for membership in the RSAI Leadership Group who in conjunction with the 4 RSAI Region Representatives shall comprise the RSAI Leadership Group. RSAI Region Representatives and At-Large members will take office at the conclusion of the Annual meeting in the year in which they were elected.

At the RSAI Annual meeting, members will approve a slate of Legislative Priorities for the upcoming State Legislative Session.

At the Annual meeting, amendments to these By-Laws may be adopted by a 2/3 majority vote.

At the Annual meeting, the budget for the upcoming fiscal year shall be shared with membership. The budget shall include the payment for association member services including advocacy for the upcoming year



At the Annual meeting, the RSAI Leadership Group Secretary/Treasurer shall present an Annual Audit or an annual financial report for the most recently completed fiscal year.

RSAI Leadership Group:

As specified, 4 Region Representatives and 3 At-Large members shall comprise the RSAI Leadership Group.

The Election cycle shall be:

RSAI SW Region & 1 At-Large: upon ratification, 3-year term; 3 years thereafter

RSAI NE Region & 1 At-Large: upon ratification, 2-year term; 3 years thereafter

RSAI NW Region, RSAI SE Region & 1 At-Large: upon ratification, 1-year term; 3 years thereafter

It shall be the responsibility of the RSAI Leadership Group to direct operations of RSAI; select, retain and evaluate the services of the Professional Advocate; establish dues for the upcoming fiscal year, coordinate local network efforts with member school districts and the Professional Advocate; create and conduct School District network training; conduct the RSAI Annual Meeting; coordinate annual ~~Legislative day~~ legislative activities and encourage membership in affiliate associations where appropriate.

Members of the RSAI Leadership Group will select the following positions from among its membership by vote annually: Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary/Treasurer.

It shall be the responsibility of the Chair to create agendas for meetings as required in these By-Laws; act as the official spokesperson for RSAI; sign warrants and preside at meetings.

It shall be the responsibility of the Vice-Chair to act as temporary Chair when the Chair is absent.

It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary/Treasurer to monitor all appropriate records and warrants or drafts drawn from the treasury; conduct an annual audit or annual financial report for presentation at the Annual Meeting; maintain minutes of each meeting; and file any reports necessary with the Iowa Secretary of State and State Legislature regarding non-profit status and lobbying activities as required.

A majority of members is required in order to conduct business at the RSAI Leadership Group meetings.

A vacancy in the Leadership Group shall be filled by the Leadership Group at its next regular meeting by majority vote. Vacancy of a Region Representative must be filled by a member school district in the same RSAI Region. At-Large vacancies may be replaced by any member school district. Notice of vacancy and intent to appoint a replacement shall be sent to all appropriate member districts soliciting interest.



The RSAI Leadership Group shall be responsible for determining legislative positions responding to legislation that arises between annual meetings that the RSAI Legislative Group and list of legislative priorities did not anticipate or address.

The RSAI Leadership Group may appoint Committees as deemed necessary. These Committees shall be tasked with a specific objective. The duration of the Committee shall be limited and end with a report to the Leadership Group on a specific date to be established at their inception. Committees shall make recommendations to the RSAI Leadership Group, but shall not adopt policy, take independent action or endorse any entities that will do either.

Regular meetings of the RSAI Leadership Group shall occur monthly or as otherwise directed. A meeting schedule of all meetings shall be developed by the RSAI Leadership Group for the year following the Annual Meeting. At the discretion of the RSAI Leadership Group, regular meetings may be held electronically but must include an interactive format and may be recorded.

An Agenda including the time and location of a Regular meeting shall be forwarded to all members of the Leadership Group at least 1 week in advance of the meeting by the Chair of the Leadership Group or the Chair's designee.

Appendices:

- A: State wide RSAI Region map
- B. RSAI Organizational Flow Chart
- C. RSAI Professional Advocate Job Description

Adopted: 18 January 2014

Amended: 25 October 2014

Amended: 15 June 2015

Amended: 12 October 2016

Amended: 25 October 2017

[Proposed track changes from Legislative Group from August 10 meeting at ISFIS to Leadership Group with their final recommendations included in this amendment.](#)



2019 Legislative Priorities

Draft for Oct. 24, 2018 Annual Meeting

1. **Transportation and Formula Equity:** The Legislature should build on the commitment to minimize inequity of school transportation costs that compete with general funds otherwise spent on educating students and close the \$170 gap between the state cost per pupil and district cost per pupil in the formula. ([Groups two priorities from 2018 into one and shorter.](#))
2. **State Penny for School Infrastructure Extension:** The Iowa Legislature should extend or repeal the sunset of the state penny for school infrastructure. Since voters in Iowa's 99 counties approved the sales tax for public schools, any change in use of the revenue should be dedicated to educational purposes. ([Same language but shorter](#))
3. **Sharing Incentives and Efficiencies:** Rural students benefit from opportunities to achieve efficiencies, share capacity to operate, and redirect resources to educational programs. Whole Grade Sharing Incentives and Reorganization Incentives should be maintained and Operational Sharing incentives expanded to provide capacity to school districts to improve educational outcomes for students. ([New wording, adding WGS](#))
4. **Funding Equity for At-risk Students:** Resources for serving at-risk students should be based on need, such as the percentage of students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, in addition to enrollment of the district. The current disparity in dropout prevention capacity ceiling, with some districts held to 2.5% and others allowed to access up to 5% of regular program district cost is unfair, arbitrary, and based on old history no longer relevant to supporting student needs. ([Same language on equity but deletes flexibility focus](#))
5. **State Supplemental Assistance:** Formula funding is especially critical to students in rural Iowa due to transportation costs, economies of scale, unique needs of students, mandates and compliance, the need for quality AEA services, and the ability to attract and retain staff. The sustainability of a quality education in rural schools depends on the return of education as the state's top priority with an investment of meaningful new resources to improve opportunities for students. ([Same language but shorter](#))
6. **Teacher Shortage and Quality Instruction:** Rural school districts require maximum flexibility to provide great instruction to all Iowa students. RSAI supports 1) district flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, 2) reinstatement of the teacher shortage loan forgiveness program and additional incentives to encourage teachers to work in rural schools, 3) creation of a Public Service strand in Iowa's Career and Technical Education system to prepare Iowa's future teaching workforce, and 4) elimination of barriers to teacher licensure such as Praxis test requirements. ([New language and policy specificity](#))
7. **Quality Preschool:** RSAI supports full funding of quality preschool. Due to changing demographics in rural Iowa, significant transportation costs, and lack of quality day care access, preschool should be fully funded at the regular student count at 1.0 per pupil cost. ([Same language but shortened](#))
8. **Student Mental Health:** Given lack of access to mental health services and increasing mental health challenges for students, especially in rural Iowa, RSAI supports increased access to and funding for mental health services for children, including telehealth services as reimbursable in Iowa's Medicaid services plan. ([New language and policy recommendation](#))



Notes