



RSAI Agenda - 2024 Regional Meetings

RSAI Region	Meeting Date	AEA Partner	Meeting Location	Meeting Time	Regional Representative
NE Region	04/02/24	Keystone AEA	1400 N 2nd St NW Elkader	11:45 Lunch; 12 Meeting	Nick Trenkamp
SW Region	04/03/24	Green Hills AEA	212 E Coolbaugh St Red Oak	11:45 Lunch; 12 Meeting	Paul Croghan
SE Region	05/01/24	Great Prairie AEA	Fairfield Arts & Conv Center, 200 N Main St, Fairfield	12 Lunch; 1 Meeting	Dan Maeder
NW Region	05/07/24	Prairie Lakes AEA	500 NE 6th Street Pocahontas	12 Lunch; 12:30 Meeting	Justin Daggett

1. **Call to Order and Welcome** by RSAI Regional Representative
2. **Approval of the Agenda**
3. **RSAI Overview and Processes** (Margaret Buckton)
4. **Election of Regional Representative to the RSAI Leadership Group**, if term expires Sept. 2024, see chart to the right.

Term is 3-years, no term limits. RSAI Leadership Group meets virtually most months for approx. one hour, has responsibilities at the RSAI Annual Meeting in October, sets date/location and hosts this Regional Meeting, assists with staffing the RSAI tradeshow booth at IASB Convention, and supports advocacy efforts throughout the year.

- a. Nominations
- b. Election

5. **Election of Regional Representative to the RSAI Legislative Committee**, see chart on the following page.

Annual Election, representative(s) attend Legislative Committee Meeting in Des Moines during August, attends the Annual Meeting in Ankeny during October, and supports legislative advocacy efforts during the 2025 Session.

- a. Nominations
- b. Election

6. **Review of RSAI Bylaws** (*Amendment recommendation require 2/3 vote to move to the RSAI Bylaws Committee*)
7. **Brief Review/Update of the 2024 Legislative Session** and Supporting Data by Margaret Buckton and Dave Daughton, RSAI Professional Advocates
8. **Discussion and Vote on Recommendation of 2025 RSAI Legislative Priorities** from the Region (*Requires simple majority vote to forward recommendations to the RSAI Legislative Committee*)
9. **Brainstorming/Networking Discussion**
10. **Other Business**
11. **Adjourn**

RSAI Region Representatives

NE Region (Nick Trenkamp)
term expires Sept. 2024

SW Region (Paul Croghan)
term expires Sept. 2025

SE Region (Dan Maeder)
term expires Sept. 2026

NW Region (Justin Daggett)
term expires Sept. 2026

Save the Date: 2024 RSAI Annual Meeting

Oct. 15, 2024 4:30-7:30PM (includes working dinner)

FFA Enrichment Center (DMACC Campus)

1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway, Ankeny, Iowa 50023
Conduct annual business, set Legislative Priorities, and
plan for successful advocacy.

Register at: <https://www.rsaia.org/annual-meeting.html>

RSAI Leadership Group – 2023-24

Position	RSAI Region	AEA	District	First Name	Last Name	Term Expires
Regional Rep	NE	Keystone	Central	Nick	Trenkamp	Sept. 2024
At-Large & Legislative Committee	NW	Northwest	Central Lyon	Brent	Jorth	Sept. 2025
Regional Rep	NW	Prairie Lakes	Manson Northwest Webster	Justin	Daggett	Sept. 2026
Regional Rep	SE	Great Prairie	Davis County & Moulton Udell	Dan	Maeder	Sept. 2026
Vice-Chair, At-Large & Legislative Committee	SE	Great Prairie	Eddyville Blakesburg Fremont	Scott	Williamson	Sept. 2026
Secretary/Treasurer, At-Large & Legislative Committee	SE	Mississippi Bend	Central DeWitt	Dan	Peterson	Sept. 2024
Chair Regional Rep	SW	Green Hills	Nodaway Valley & CAM	Paul	Croghan	Sept. 2025

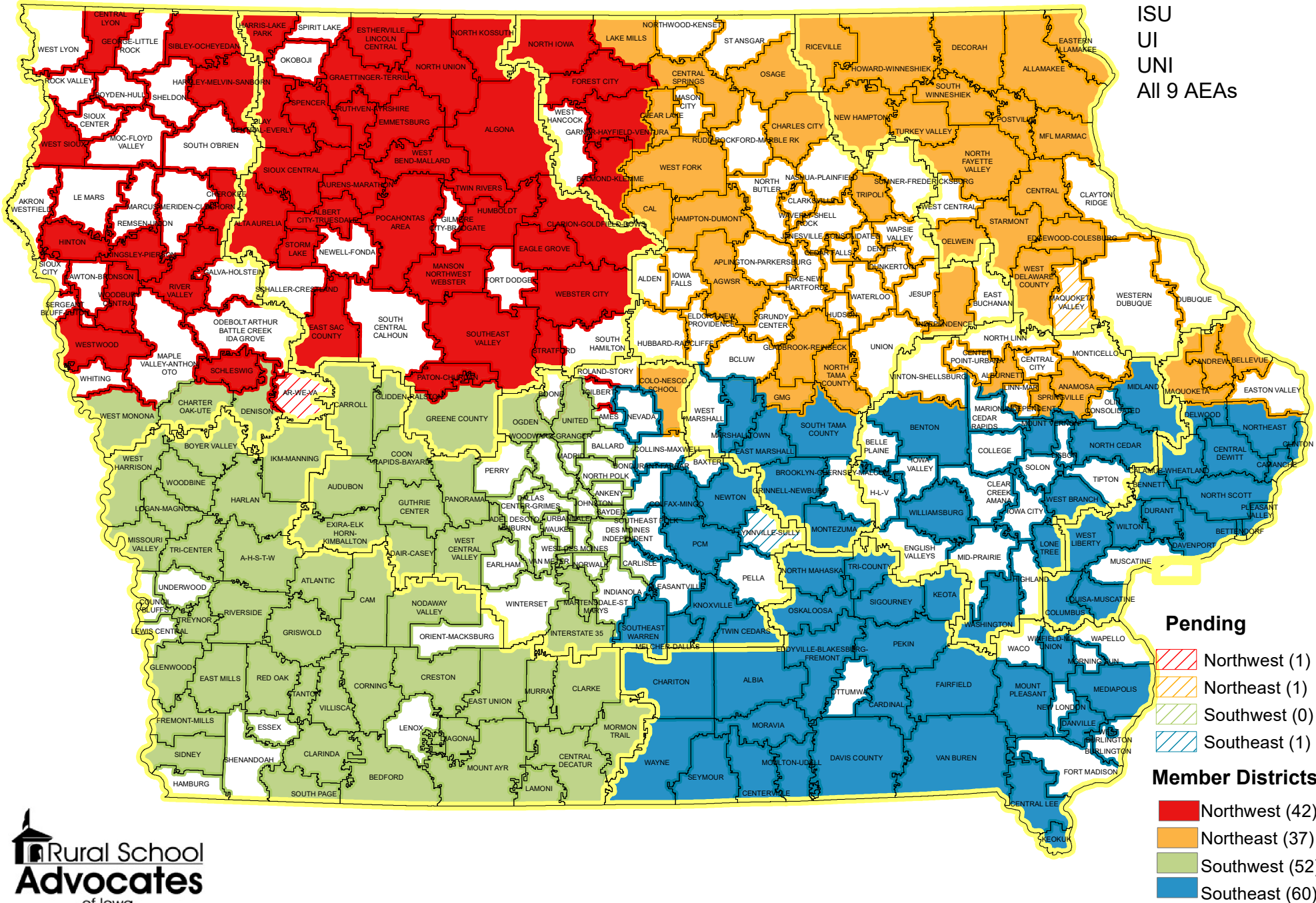
RSAI Legislative Committee – 2023-24

Position	RSAI Region	AEA	District	First Name	Last Name
	NE	Central Rivers	Tripoli	Jay	Marley
	NE	Keystone	Osage & Riceville	Barb	Schwamman
	NW	Central Rivers	Garner Hayfield Ventura	Ken	Kasper
At-Large	NW	Northwest	Central Lyon	Brent	Jorth
	NW	Northwest	Denison & Schleswig	Mike	Pardun
	NW	Prairie Lakes	Southeast Valley CSD	Brian	Johnson
	SE	Central Rivers	Montezuma	Rich	Schulte
	SE	Grant Wood	North Cedar & Olin	Mark	Dohmen
Committee Chair At-Large	SE	Great Prairie	Eddyville Blakesburg Fremont	Scott	Williamson
	SE	Great Prairie	Centerville	Mark	Taylor
	SE	Heartland	PCM	Michelle	Havenstrite
At-Large	SE	Mississippi Bend	Central DeWitt	Dan	Peterson
	SE	Mississippi Bend	Louisa-Muscatine	Mike	Van Sickle
	SW	Green Hills	Creston	Deron	Stender
Committee Vice-Chair	SW	Heartland	Interstate 35	Sharon	Dentlinger

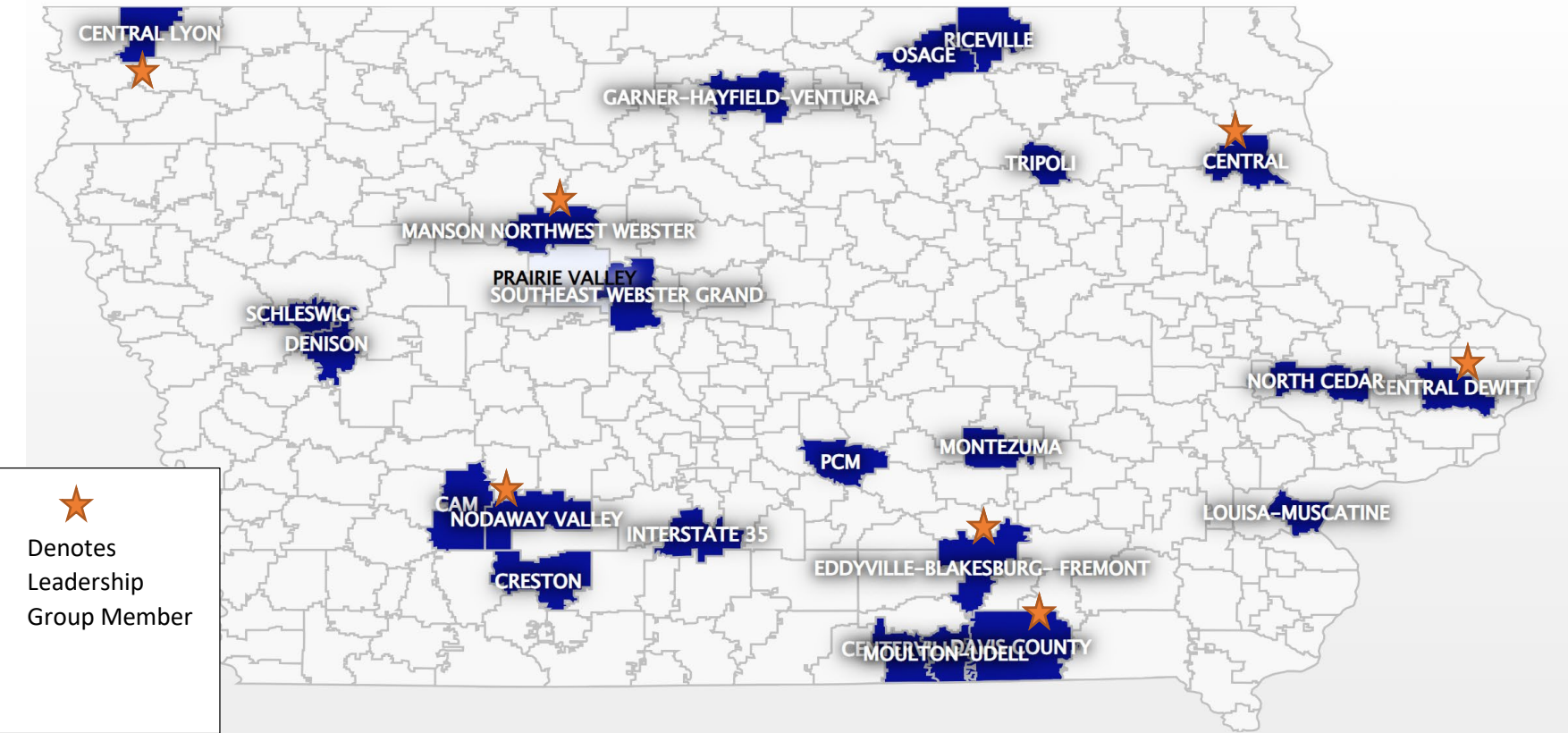
RSAI Members 2023-24

As of March 2024

Affiliate Members
 DMACC
 ISU
 UI
 UNI
 All 9 AEs



2023-24 RSAI Leadership Group and Legislative Committee



★
Denotes
Leadership
Group Member

Leadership Group Members			Legislative Committee Members		
Region	Name	District	Region	Name	District
SW	Paul Croghan	CAM/Nodaway Valley	NE	Jay Marley	Tripoli
At-Large	Scott Williamson	Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont	NE	Barb Schwamman	Osage/Riceville
At-Large	Dan Peterson	Central DeWitt	NW	Ken Kasper	Garner Hayfield Ventura
NW	Justin Daggett	Manson NW Webster	NW	Mike Pardun	Denison/Schleswig
At-Large	Brent Jorth	Central Lyon	NW	Brian Johnson	Southeast Valley
SE	Dan Maeder	Davis County/Moulton-Udell	SE	Rich Schulte	Montezuma
NE	Nick Trenkamp	Central	SE	Mark Dohmen	North Cedar
			SE	Mark Taylor	Centerville
			SE	Michelle Havenstrite	PCM
			SE	Mike Van Sickle	Louisa-Muscatine
			SW	Deron Stender	Creston
			SW	Sharon Dentlinger	Interstate 35
Plus all three At-Large Leadership Group Members					



RSAI Essential Values

(Considerations when Formulating Positions on Legislative Issues)

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.

- **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 principle 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's 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. School districts should be trusted to exercise local authority via Statutory Home Rule.
- **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 above the state average are a prime example.
- **Local Control:** Local leaders make the best decisions for students, especially when they have adequate flexibility and resources to make those decisions. If local stakeholders don't agree, elections have consequences. 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 oversight, etc.)
- **State Program Sustainability:** Funding for state initiatives should be defined and planned, including 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 BYLAWS

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 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. Affiliate membership shall be open to Governmental Entities, AEAs, Community Colleges, and Universities.

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; 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 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 RSAI Annual Meeting. 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. Affiliate membership fees shall be set by the Leadership Group for each year, and shall not be less than school district membership dues.

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 Bylaws.

Voting:

Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all voting is to be done in person and may be done electronically if identity of the individual is determined. Active electronic attendance is permitted via internet technologies and shall be considered in person for purposes of voting, or in response to survey or other electronic communication as approved by the RSAI Leadership Group. Proxy voting 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 Bylaws, 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 Bylaws, 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 Bylaws. 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.

Representation:

RSAI shall strive for diversity in representation of all leadership and elected positions within RSAI, including both elected Board members and Superintendents.

Good Standing:

Eligible officer positions can only be held by school board members and superintendents in good standing with their district's RSAI membership. 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 to a nonmember district or outside of regional boundaries for the office 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 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 Regional Meeting participants shall elect an RSAI Region Representative to serve a term as specified later in these Bylaws on the RSAI Leadership Group and shall act as Chair of the Regional Meetings during their term. The RSAI Region Representative will be responsible for making all arrangements necessary for RSAI Regional Meetings during their term, ensuring that staff share an Agenda with members at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

The RSAI Regional Meeting participants shall elect at least one Liaison but no more than one per AEA within the RSAI Region to the RSAI Legislative Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the RSAI Region Liaison, with assistance by staff, to present the RSAI Region's Legislative priorities to the Legislative Committee meeting each year. The term of office of the RSAI Region Liaison shall be one year.

At the RSAI Regional Meeting, amendments to these Bylaws may be presented for consideration. In order for an amendment to move forward to the RSAI Legislative Committee for consideration, a 2/3 majority is required.

At the RSAI Regional Meeting, Legislative priorities for the upcoming Iowa Legislative Session shall be established and forwarded for consideration to the RSAI Legislative Committee. Determination of Legislative priorities shall be based on a simple majority vote.

RSAI Legislative Committee:

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

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

The RSAI Legislative Committee will be responsible for reviewing, amending as necessary and finalizing the Legislative Priorities as identified at the RSAI Regional Meetings.

The RSAI Legislative Committee 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 Committee shall present any Amendments to these Bylaws 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 Committee 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 Bylaws 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 maintained to ensure continuity of a rotating three-year cycle:

- RSAI SW Region & 1 At-Large
- RSAI NE Region & 1 At-Large
- RSAI NW Region, RSAI SE Region & 1 At-Large

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 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 Bylaws; act as the official spokesperson for RSAI; and preside at meetings.

It shall be the responsibility of the Vice-Chair to act as temporary Chair when the Chair is absent, or in the case of the Chair vacating the office, to act as Chair until the next election of officers.

It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary/Treasurer to monitor all appropriate records and amounts deposited into or withdrawn from the bank account(s); conduct an annual audit or annual financial report for presentation at the Annual Meeting; maintain minutes of each meeting; and file (or confirm that staff has filed) 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 may be filled by the Leadership Group at its next regular meeting or subsequent 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 Committee 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.

Adopted: January 18, 2014
Amended: October 25, 2014
Amended: June 15, 2015
Amended: October 12, 2016
Amended: October 25, 2017
Amended: October 24, 2018
Amended: October 21, 2020
Amended: October 26, 2021
Amended: October 25, 2022
Amended: October 17, 2023



RSAI 2024 Regional Meeting Legislative Priorities & Services Discussion

2024 Legislative Priorities:

	2024 RSAI Legislative Priority	Delete	Keep	Changes/Notes
1	<p>Adequate School Resources: the increase in SSA provides resources for Iowa schools to deliver an educational experience for students that meets the expectations of Iowa parents, communities, employers and policymakers. Iowa's school foundation formula must maintain balanced state and local resources, be predictable, minimally exceed inflation, allow schools to compete for labor, and assure adequate time for budget planning and staffing.</p> <p>What schools can deliver is dependent on the level of funding provided, which begins with the 2024-25 school year and requires a consistent and sustainable commitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World-Class Education: an investment of at least 10% SSA (\$763 per pupil, or \$4.23 per day of 180 days of instruction) would position Iowa schools and AEAs to deliver a world-class education, lower class sizes, attract and retain qualified staff, increase and individualize internships and other workforce experiences for students, and provide programs to close achievement gaps. Iowa per pupil expenditures, ranked 29th in the nation in 2021, fall \$1,581 short of the national average (<i>source: NCES Finance Tables, May 2023</i>), which does not meet the standard of Iowa's pride in our foundation of education, as shown on the Iowa state quarter. The 10% investment would be a down payment in closing Iowa's lagging funding gap, unless other states commit even more to their students' education. • Sustain Current Status: an investment of at least 5% (\$382 per pupil, or \$2.12 per day of 180 days of instruction) would position school districts and AEAs to maintain current status with Iowa's competitive economy, recovering <i>partially</i> from high inflation and increased student needs. • Continued Erosion: an investment of 2.5% (\$191 per pupil, or \$1.06 per day of 180 days of instruction) will <i>partially</i> cover expected increased costs of the next fiscal year, including staff salaries and benefits, but will require schools and AEAs to scale back, provide part-time librarians, counselors and nurses, shift some classes to online learning, or take other actions to squeeze more out of the current system in order to set a salary sufficient to retain existing staff (teachers, bus drivers, custodians, paraprofessionals) and provide a rounded course offering and programs. 			

	2024 RSAI Legislative Priority	Delete	Keep	Changes/Notes
2	<p>Staff Shortages: In addition to sufficient SSA, strategies to rebuild Iowa's education workforce must address these areas during an unprecedented staff shortage:</p> <p>Recruitment: to rebuild the pipeline of interest into education, the Legislature, BOEE and DE must provide additional flexibility for school districts to provide hiring incentives, ongoing investment in CTE programs for high school students to study and experience work in education, provide resources for grow-your-own educators and appropriate certifications including expanded intern licenses, provide means-tested tuition assistance and minimize the economic costs of unpaid student teaching, provide more loan forgiveness, and change the culture of political speech to restore education to a respected profession.</p> <p>Retention: to slow the out-migration of staff from schools to other professions or retirement, the Legislature, BOEE and DE must provide maximum flexibility to hire staff to deliver great instruction; use of the Management Fund for recruitment and retention incentives, flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, opportunities for teaching expanded courses within existing and/or competency-based licensure, institute social studies and other content generalist credentials, define a shorter bona fide retirement period for schools to hire retirees, consider tax incentives for teachers, increase state funding for teacher salary supplement, and maintain the commitment to resources for mentoring, training and supporting staff.</p> <p>Competitive and adequate compensation: school funding primarily pays for quality staff and employees to provide a great education for students. In 2019-20, Iowa ranked 28th in the nation in average teacher pay (including TLC for teacher leaders at the high end) and starting teacher pay was ranked 38th (<i>source: Learning Policy Institute, Understanding Teacher Compensation State by State Analysis</i>).</p> <p>In both the short and long term, legislation, policy, and public support provide improved compensation and benefit options for educators. They must also foster respect for the education profession, which is well deserved, to attract more lowans into teaching and retain more teachers in Iowa. Only when we are able to do this will Iowa be able to have adequate numbers of quality individuals educating and supporting our children.</p>			

	2024 RSAI Legislative Priority	Delete	Keep	Changes/Notes
3	<p>Public School Priority: as Iowa public schools will always be the first choice of most Iowa families, they must be adequately funded and supported by the State.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Education Savings Accounts, as enacted by HF 68 in 2023, require further legislation to minimize the impact on public students and schools. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Public schools should be relieved of the mandate to reimburse private school parents or provide transportation for private schools. b. Private school students returning to public school after the October enrollment count date should be funded timely (included in the enrollment count and budget for the next year or added to the class action requests for SBRC modified supplemental amount similar to on-time funding spending authority.) c. ESA (and open enrollment) applications should be submitted and approved by an annual deadline to inform both public and private schools timely for staff and budget planning. 2) ESAs should not be expanded to homeschool students or a weakened accreditation process expanded to more private schools. 3) Equity of expectations and regulations should be applied consistently to both public and private schools under an ESA environment. 4) Many rural school districts do not have a private school in their community today. In the future, the expansion of private online academies, the pressure for the State to support homeschooling and the profit motive to expand private schools without the corresponding costs of oversight and compliance will create lower economies of scale, compounding the challenge for small rural schools to survive rigorous State accreditation compliance. 			

	2024 RSAI Legislative Priority	Delete	Keep	Changes/Notes
4	<p>Opportunity Equity, Increasing Student Needs and Mental Health: resources should be based on at-risk need, in addition to enrollment. All school boards should have the opportunity to access up to 5% dropout prevention funding. School districts should be granted spending authority for FRPL-waived fees. Iowa should study the impact of poverty on educational outcomes and best practices of other states in closing associated achievement gaps, leading toward a significant and urgent update to Iowa's School Foundation Formula in funding programs for Iowa's neediest students. Investments in programs for at-risk students prepare them for full participation in the workforce, improve school safety for all students, minimize tax increases to remediate social costs later and improve outcomes for students and families. Students in rural areas are often distanced from services. Iowa must continue to address needed access to funded community mental health services for children and the shortage of mental health professionals statewide. The State should provide resources for local districts to train school staff in mental health first aid and awareness and build community capacity to collaborate for a collective solution to the increasing mental health needs of children.</p>			
5	<p>Quality Preschool: funding of quality statewide voluntary preschool for three and four-year-olds should be set at the 1.0 per pupil cost for full-time or prorated proportionally. The formula should include PK protections against budget and program impacts of preschool enrollment swings like they do for K-12 (budget guarantee/on-time spending authority). Full-day programming increases the opportunity for parent workforce participation, allows Iowa's limited childcare workforce capacity to focus on younger children, prevents later special education consequences, improves literacy and prepares students for learning. Although all students benefit from quality preschool, Iowa's low-income and non-English speaking students face barriers to half-day programs, making them even more at risk of lower long-term achievement.</p>			
6	<p>Sharing Incentives/Efficiencies: Whole Grade Sharing, Reorganization and Operational Sharing Incentives should be extended. The 21-student cap should be increased to allow access to new flexibility. Weightings should be sufficient to encourage and support sharing opportunities, with a 3-student weighting at a minimum per position. Reductions in weightings should be restored. The addition of new positions over the last few years, such as mental health counselors, work-based learning coordinators and school resource officers, demonstrates the value of continued sharing incentives for both efficiency and student opportunity. Some positions, such as those to address mental health or school safety, should be exempted from the cap.</p>			

	2024 RSAI Legislative Priority	Delete	Keep	Changes/Notes
7	Local School Board Authority: locally elected leaders closest to the community are in the best position to determine the interests of students, staff, district and stakeholders. District leaders need maximum flexibility to provide a great education to all students. The Legislature, the Executive Branch and the courts should follow Iowa Code 274.3 and liberally construe laws and regulations in deference to local control.			
8	Formula Equity: continue investments in formula equity, closing the state and district per pupil gap within ten years. Inequities in the formula, based on no longer relevant historical spending patterns over 40 years ago, must be corrected to support resources for all Iowa students.			
9	Bond Issue Dates: the restriction of bond elections to one annual date spikes the demand for providers, architects, bonders, and construction labor, while extending the time of completion, all increasing cost to taxpayers. Bond issues, like other ballot initiatives, should be approved by a simple majority of voters.			
10	Area Education Agencies: Iowa schools are critically reliant on Iowa's Area Education Agencies (AEAs), rural schools in particular, not only for special education services to students and training and support to staff, but also for instructional and media services. In many instances, if it wasn't for the AEAs, rural schools would not be able to find or afford specialists to meet student needs or assist staff with the curriculum and materials necessary for student learning. In addition, the economies of scale of the AEAs provide savings which schools would not otherwise be able to achieve. The AEAs also provide many needed services for schools, just to name a few: emergency support when a district loses a superintendent or school business official mid-year, virtual learning content, printing of materials at affordable fees, training when districts undertake new instructional math or literacy initiatives, crisis/emergency supports and mental health services, among many others. The Legislature should work closely with schools and AEAs in updating expectations and changing the funding or structure of AEA services, in order to fully understand the impact on students and schools before any changes are made that will negatively impact services to rural students, schools, and communities.			

New Legislative Priorities for 2025:

Issues needing more information:

What other programs/services should RSAI look into to serve members?



Thank you to RSAI 2023-24 Corporate Sponsors



AssuredPartners

At Assured Partner, we are health insurance specialists with deep background and knowledge on how Iowa school districts work. We have particular programs that help school districts in the mid-size range save money in the general fund budget and improve benefits to school employees.

Contact tom.obrien@assuredpartners.com for more information. www.linkedin.com/in/thomas-p-o-brien-03320616/

Classroom Clinic provides rural school districts with timely and convenient access to children's mental health services through the use of telehealth and related technology platforms. [View this Video](#) to Learn More. Find testimonials from [Spencer CSD Administration](#) and [one rural school family](#).

Contact sue@classroomclinic.com for more information. www.classroomclinic.com



**Classroom
Clinic**



Team Denovo has a passion for improving Iowa's K-12 schools and believes all Iowa districts deserve the best facilities for their students. Denovo strives to be a long-range facility partner for Iowa's rural districts through facility assessment services, master planning, program management, design, construction management, commissioning and intelligent facility services. We understand each district has unique needs and as your advisor, we can meet you where you are and walk with you through facility planning - big and small. Download [Denovo Construction Solutions printable brochure](#).

Contact pdavis@teambdenovo.com for more information. www.teambdenovo.com

More information about RSAI Corporate Sponsors at: www.rsaia.org/corporate-sponsors



MISIC is a non-profit collaboration of over 70 school districts in Iowa, predominantly rural, who are working together to improve curriculum and instruction. For more information and a trial login to the MISIC website, contact jamie@misiciowa.org. www.misiciowa.org

Public Progress LLC is an Iowa company providing districts and schools across the country with education consulting services. We specialize in working with leadership teams and school boards on strategic planning, conducting needs assessments, and delivering customized solutions for the district-wide implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for continuous improvement. Download [Public Progress printable flyer](#).

Contact admin@thepublicprogress.com for more information. thepublicprogress.com/



Solution Tree has been a trusted resource of professional learning for school districts in Iowa for more than 20 years. We provide the highest quality of customized support to ensure the success for all students statewide. The state office was established in July 2022 solely to support Iowa educators in transforming education that ensures that all students are learning at high levels. The state office provides a unique state and local perspective in supporting school districts. We are dedicated to serving as a resource for districts looking for proven and research-based solutions developed by skilled practitioners who have done the work. Download the [Solution Tree Printable Flyer](#).

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