**RSAI Leadership Group Minutes**

**December 9, 2020 at noon**

Via Zoom or at ISFIS 1201 63rd Street, Des Moines, IA 50311

*(Contact* [*jen@iowaschoolfinance.com*](mailto:jen@iowaschoolfinance.com) *for Zoom link)*

***Zoom Leadership Group Member Attendees:*** *Dennis McClain (Chair), Paul Croghan (Vice Chair), Justin Daggett, Dan Peterson, Nick Trenkamp, Scott Williamson, and Lolli Haws, AEA.*

***ISFIS Staff Attendees:*** *Margaret Buckton, Larry Sigel, Dave Daughton, and Jen Albers*

**I Call To Order/Roll by McClain**

*McClain called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.*

**II Approve Agenda**

*Croghan moved and Trenkamp seconded approval of the agenda. Approved unanimously.*

**III Approve Meeting Minutes from November 11, 2020**

*Trenkamp moved and Croghan seconded approval of the minutes from the RSAI Leadership Group on November 11, 2020. Approved unanimously.*

**IV Membership Report**

*Albers shared the membership report showing FY 2021 memberships received to date at 121 plus 2 affiliate AEA members, which includes 20 new members. The group discussed pending renewals and other districts that have expressed interest.*

**V Monthly Financials**

*Albers reviewed the YTD October 31, 2020 financial statements. Croghan moved and Williamson seconded approval of the financial report through October 31, 2020 and approval of payment/reimbursement to ISFIS of $1,699.96. Approved unanimously.*

**VI Mission Critical Actions/Updates**

* Recap from NREA Annual Conference from November 12-13

*Buckton and Daughton shared the agenda from the National Rural Education Association Conference that took place on November 12-13, and shared their reflections about a few of the sessions. The recordings and handouts will be available soon and will be shared with this group.*

* RSAI Position Papers & Advocacy Actions before 2021 Legislative Session

*Buckton shared that the majority of the RSAI Position Papers have been updated and posted to the RSAI 2021 Legislative page for review, Discussed other resources coming soon such as sample questions for legislators and contact information for newly elected legislators. Buckton encouraged everyone to reach out to the newly elected legislators as well as to advocate for sufficient (3.75% of more) SSA in the next 6 weeks to all legislators. SSA must be set in the first 30 days of the legislative session so the clock is ticking.*

* RSAI Advocacy Handbook

*Buckton shared a copy of the new RSAI Advocacy Handbook with the group, which is complete but pending 2021 committee assignments. Once those assignments are finalized, it will be distributed to the membership and posted on the RSAI website to help with advocacy efforts.*

* Discussion on “Schools Can’t Do It Alone”

*Buckton shared information on Jamie Vollmer’s “Schools Cannot Do It Alone Network”, a coalition of educators and their allies working to defend public education and increase support for our public schools. This service is being provided for some districts by AEAs and is available for individual districts to also buy in if they choose. RSAI distributed the new Part 1 video designed to help the general public better understand how our public schools contribute to the health and well-being of our entire community. Discussion ensued around these tools designed for schools and educators, and the videos included for the general public. Some RSAI districts have worked with or participated in his trainings in the past individually or through their AEAs. RSAI is not going to purchase this participation for members, but wanted to help get the conversation rolling on how these supports can help district leaders and community members have substantive conversations about the priority of public schools.*

* Discussion on RSAI Boundaries

*During the RSAI Legislative Committee meeting this summer, it was suggested to consider expanding the number of RSAI Regions from 4 to a larger number now that RSAI membership has grown. Rationale was more regions would allow for less travel time to regional meetings and more opportunities for leadership in the RSAI organization. There was also a suggestion to make the RSAI boundaries match those of the AEAs so RSAI could have a greater presence at the AEA superintendent meetings. The natural fit of networking within the AEA structure seemed a good frame through which to grow and support RSAI membership.*

*Buckton and Sigel shared information on current RSAI membership by AEA and a map overlaying the AEA boundaries. Discussion ensued around the pros and cons of expanding the number of regions, as well as the fact that certain AEA regions just have fewer “rural” schools while others have more, regardless of RSAI membership. With more virtual and hybrid meetings this year than in the past, the travel time has become a little less of an issue, which gives some comfort in proceeding carefully with this proposed change, not having to rush anything. RSAI also now has designees within each AEA to report on RSAI activities. Since this decision has significant implications for the bylaws, leadership group and legislative committee makeup, the consensus was to move slowly and have a subcommittee look into all of the aspects more thoroughly and in detail to prepare a recommendation for the leadership group. If the leadership group then decides to move forward, next steps would be discussion at the Summer 2022 Regional Meetings and then approval at the October 2022 Annual Meeting for implementation the following fiscal year.*

**VII Other Business**

*There was brief discussion about the Governor’s press conference and impact on middle school activities. No other business was brought forth.*

**VIII. Upcoming Meeting dates:**

* Wed, January 13, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* Wed, February 10, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* Wed, March 10, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* Wed, April 14, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* Wed, May 12, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* May/June 2021 – Regional Meetings *(specific dates TBD)*
* Wed, July 14, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* August 2021 – Bylaws Committee Meeting *(specific date TBD)*
* August 2021 – Legislative Committee Meeting *(specific date TBD)*
* Wed, September 8, 2021, from 12-1pm via Zoom
* October 2021 – Annual Meeting *(specific date TBD)*
* October 2021 – Organizational Meeting *(immediately following Annual Meeting)*

**IX. Adjourn**

*Croghan moved to adjourn and Daggett seconded. Approved unanimously. The meeting concluded at 1:06 pm.*

*Minutes respectfully submitted*

*Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, As of 12/09/2020*