

# **RSAI Annual Meeting Minutes**

**Oct. 25, 2022 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

FFA Enrichment Center, DMACC Campus  
1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway, Ankeny, Iowa 50023

1. **Call Annual Meeting to Order.** Paul Croghan, RSAI Leadership Group Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.
2. **Approval of the Agenda.** *Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD, moved approval of the agenda. Kurt DeVore, Lone Tree CSD, seconded. Vote was unanimously approved.*
3. **Introductions of Meeting Attendees.** All meeting attendees introduced themselves, indicated if they were part of the 2022-23 Leadership Group or 2022-23 Legislative Committee, and shared what they believe to be an advantage of rural schools/education and what their communities would miss if their school was no longer there.
4. **Annual Meeting Business:** Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD, and Secretary/Treasurer of the RSAI Leadership Group, reviewed the financial reports included in the materials packet including the 2021-22 Financial Report & Annual Audit, the 2022-23 Budget and Professional Advocate Payment, and the 2022-23 RSAI Membership Dues schedule.
5. **Amendments to the RSAI Bylaws.** Scott Williamson, Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont CSD, and Chair of the RSAI Legislative Committee, reviewed the proposed changes to the RSAI Bylaws included in the packet, as well as the process for the review of the bylaws that took place. *A motion to approve the amendments to the RSAI Bylaws was made by Scott Williamson, Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont CSD, seconded by Nick Trenkamp, Central CSD. Vote was unanimously approved.*
6. **Report Results of Election of Region Representatives to the Leadership Group.** Welcome back to Paul Croghan, Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD, elected at the RSAI SW Regional Meeting as the RSAI Leadership Group SW Regional Director serving through September 2025.
7. **Election of RSAI At-Large Representative to the Leadership Group.** The position previously held by Dennis McClain, AC/GC CSD, and vacancy filled by Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, is up for election. Any board member or superintendent in a member district is eligible for the seat. The at-large members also serve on the Legislative Committee in addition to their Leadership Group duties.

*Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD, nominated Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, for election as the at-large representative. Seconded by Mandy Ross, Stratford CSD and Webster City CSD. No other nominations were brought forth.*

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*Nick Trenkamp, Central CSD, moved to cease nominations. Seconded by Janet Stutz, Grinnell-Newburg CSD. Unanimous approval followed to close nominations, with the exception of Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, who abstained.*

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*Results of the vote were unanimous to elect Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, to serve as the RSAI Leadership Group At-Large representative through 2025, with the exception of Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, who abstained.*

8. **Presentation on “Rewriting the Rural Narrative” by Benjamin Winchester:** Benjamin Winchester, Rural Sociologist, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Community Vitality shared a virtual presentation on Rewriting the Rural Narrative. A recording of the presentation is available for a limited time at: <https://youtu.be/xL73JpWh918>.
9. **November 8<sup>th</sup> General Election & 2023 Session Preview:** Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, and Dave Daughton, RSAI Grassroots Advocate, provided information about the upcoming General Election and preview of education issues likely to come up during the 2023 legislative session. The slides are posted on the RSAI Annual Meeting webpage.

A brief break for dinner took place at this time.

10. **Report of Aug. 30 Legislative Committee Meeting.** Scott Williamson, Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont CSD and Chair of the 2022-23 RSAI Legislative Committee, introduced himself and the other Legislative Committee members, and discussed the process the Committee went through in their meeting on Aug. 30, to prepare the 2023 recommended legislative priorities being presented tonight.
11. **Establish RSAI legislative priorities for the upcoming 2023 Legislative Session**
  - **Adequate School Resources:** the increase in SSA provides the resources for Iowa schools to deliver an educational experience for students that meets the expectations of Iowa parents, communities, employers and policy makers. What schools can deliver is dependent on the level of funding provided, which begins with the 2023-24 school year and requires a consistent and sustainable commitment:
    - **World Class Education:** An investment of at least 10% SSA (*\$741 per pupil, or \$4.12 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 fall \$1,200 short of the national average, 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% (*\$371 per pupil, or \$2.06 per day of 180 days of instruction*) would position school districts and AEAs to maintain current status with Iowa’s competitive economy, recovering *partially* from high inflation and increased student needs.

- **Continued Erosion:** An investment of 2.5% (\$185 per pupil, or \$1.03 per day of 180 days of instruction) will partially cover expected increased costs of the next fiscal year, including staff salaries and benefits, but will require schools to scale back, provide part-time librarians, counselors and nurses, shift some classes to on-line 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.

Iowa's school foundation formula must maintain balanced state and local resources, be predictable, and assure adequate time for budget planning and staffing.

*Janet Stutz, Grinnell-Newburg CSD, moved approval as presented. Mike Kruger, West Fork CSD, seconded. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Education Staff Shortage:** In addition to sufficient SSA, strategies to rebuild Iowa's education workforce must address two areas during an unprecedented staff shortage:
  - **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, 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.
  - **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; additional flexibility for retention incentives, flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, opportunities for teaching expanded courses within existing and/or competency based licensure, institute a special education generalist credential, allow districts to hire retirees without a negative IPERS impact, and maintain the commitment to resources for mentoring, training and supporting staff.

*Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD, moved approval of the priority language as presented. Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, seconded. Discussion ensued.*

*Eric Traeger, AHSTW CSD, offered an amendment to add language regarding "fostering respect for the education profession", that compliments the language used by SAI. Eric withdrew that motion and motioned instead to have the RSAI Leadership group consider the suggested language at their upcoming meeting to finalized the priority. The motion*

*was seconded by Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD. Vote on the motion was unanimously approved.*

*Vote on the priority including the direction to the RSAI Leadership Group to consider additional language was unanimously approved.*

- **Local School Board Authority:** locally elected leaders closest to the community are in the best position to determine the interest 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 statute to effectuate local control.

*Mike Kruger, West Fork CSD, moved approval as presented. Michelle Havenstrite, PCM CSD seconded. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Quality Preschool:** funding of quality statewide voluntary preschool at the 1.0 per pupil cost for full time or prorated proportionally. Formula protections against budget and program impacts of preschool enrollment swings (budget guarantee/on-time spending authority). Full day programming increases the opportunity for parent workforce participation, allows Iowa's limited child care workforce capacity to focus on younger children, prevents later special education consequences, improves literacy and prepares students for learning.

*Ken Kasper, Garner-Hayfield-Ventura CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Mike Kruger, West Fork CSD. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Opportunity Equity:** resources 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 practice 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.

*Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Theron Schutte, Marshalltown CSD. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Sharing Incentives/Efficiencies:** extension of Whole Grade Sharing, Reorganization and Operational Sharing Incentives. Expand the 21-student cap to allow access to new flexibility. Weightings should be sufficient to encourage and support sharing opportunities, with a 3-student weighting at a minimum. The addition of new positions over the last few years, such as the work-based learning coordinator and school resource officer, demonstrates the value of continuing sharing incentives for both efficiency and extended

opportunities for students.

*Sharon Dentlinger, Interstate 3 CSD, moved approval as presented. Kurt DeVore, Lone Tree CSD, seconded. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Student Mental Health:** increased access to funded community mental health services for children. Address the shortage of mental health professionals statewide, provide resources for local districts to train school staff in social emotional learning awareness and build community capacity to collaborate for a collective solution to the increasing mental health needs of children.

*Deron Stender, Creston CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Shawn Holloway, Panorama CSD. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Formula and Transportation Equity:** continue investments in formula equity, closing the state and district per pupil gap within ten years and maintain the commitment to transportation equity support without burdensome reporting requirements. General fund directed at transportation is not available to spend on teachers, curriculum and opportunities for students. According to the DE's 2020-21 Annual Transportation Report, transportation expenditures per pupil ranged from \$27 per pupil to \$1,012 per pupil. Thanks to the transportation equity funding commitment, all districts with high expenditures were reimbursed down to the state average of \$353 per pupil. Inequities in the formula, based on no longer relevant historical spending over 40 years ago, must be corrected to support resources for all Iowa students.

*Kimberly Lingenfelter, Cherokee CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Public School Priority:** Public schools must be adequately funded and supported by the state. Investments in education savings accounts, voucher programs, school tuition organizations or home school, whether by tax credit or direct appropriation, remove resources from public schools in three ways;
  - Iowa's funding formula is enrollment based. Fewer students results in fewer resources for staff, programs and courses for the vast majority of students remaining in the public school. For rural schools in particular, the loss of students further stresses an already tight economy of scale.
  - Carving Iowa's education funding pie into more pieces necessarily means a smaller piece of pie for Iowa's public-school students. Rural school leaders, looking ahead to the implementation of the 2022 historic tax cuts, already fear the inability of the state to adequately fund public schools, let alone, take on the commitment of a second educational delivery system.
  - School choice programs typically start small, but quickly expand eligibility criteria (increased income eligibility, support for home school, or even eventual public support of private tuition for any student at any private school that will take them.) Many rural school districts do not have a private school in their community today.

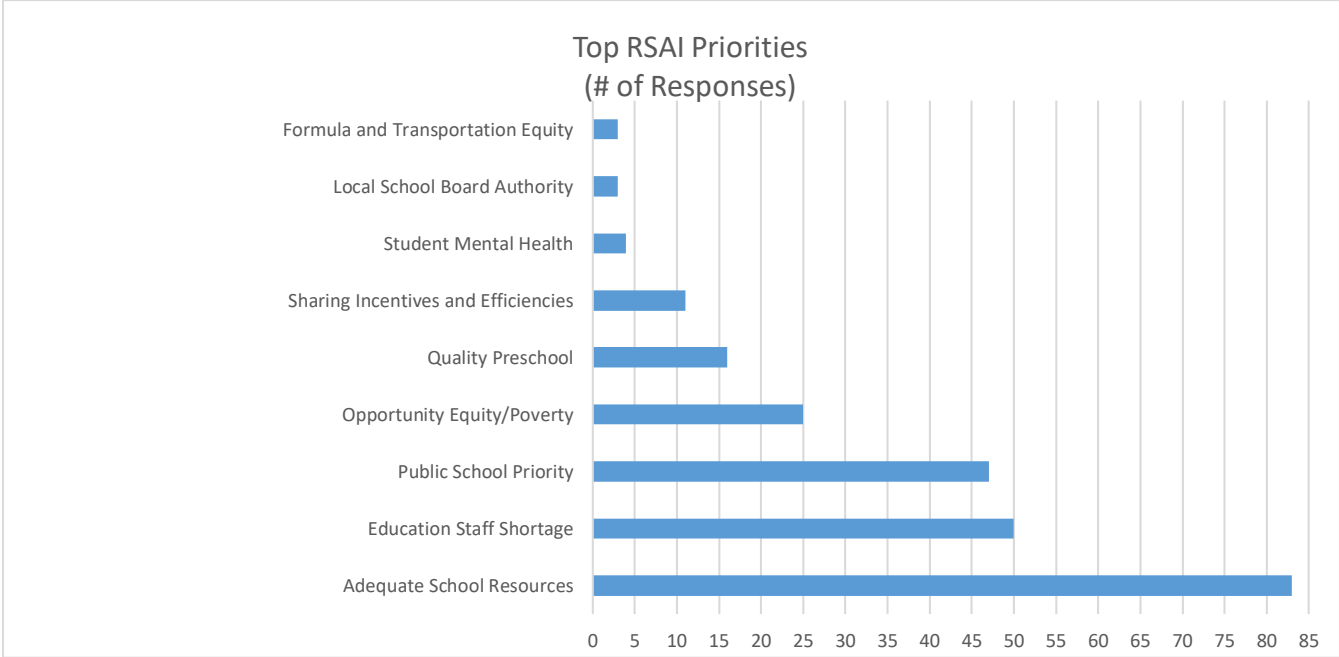
In the future, private online academies, the pressure for the state to support home schooling and the profit motive to expand private schools without the corresponding costs of oversight and compliance will create lower economies of scale and the inability for small rural schools to survive increased rigorous state accreditation compliance.

RSAI is opposed to all forms of education savings accounts/voucher programs/additional public funds appropriated for private or home school. Such programs traditionally do not include accountability for tax expenditures, are not required to educate and assess all children or provide special education services, and are hidden from the public oversight that accompanies public funding. With recent expansions to unlimited open enrollment to any public school in Iowa, combined with Iowa's current public investment in private religious schools and home school exceeding \$80 million, even small demonstration programs or pilot projects should be resisted; the camel's nose under the tent is soon followed by the humps.

*Michelle Havenstrite, PCM CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Mandy Ross, Stratford CSD and Webster City CSD. Discussion ensued. Vote was unanimously approved.*

- **Other:** No other priorities were raised by the group.

12. **Focus Area Prioritization:** Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, explained a process whereby each attendee was provided 6 stickers and asked to place them on the various priorities according to their importance to their school district. 3 stickers were to be placed on their #1 choice. 2 stickers on their #2 choice and 1 sticker on their #3 choice (although participants were allowed to place all of their stickers on one priority). Results of the prioritization activity are below:



13. **Press Release:** Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, encouraged attendees to submit a press release to their local newspaper regarding the RSAI Annual Meeting and 2023 Priorities. A sample will be circulated via email following the meeting.
14. **Adjourn:** *Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD, moved to adjourn the RSAI Annual Meeting. Second by Sharon Dentlinger, Interstate 35 CSD. Unanimous approval. The meeting was concluded at 7:15 p.m.*

**RSAI Annual Meeting Attendees:**

*Yellow = 2022-23 Leadership Group/Legislative Committee Members; Gray = Non-Members/Guests*

<b>District</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
AHSTW	Darin	Jones
Albert City-Truesdale & Newell-Fonda	Jeff	Dicks
Ankeny	Wade	Grinhaus
Audubon & Coon Rapids - Bayard	Eric	Trager
Bedford/Mount Ayr	Jason	Shaffer
Cardinal	Joel	Pedersen
Central	Nick	Trenkamp
Central Decatur & Lamoni	Chris	Coffelt
Central Lee	Andy	Crozier
Cherokee	Kimberly	Lingenfelter
Clarinda	Jeff	Privia
Clinton	Gary	DeLacy
Colo-NESCO	Marc	Snavelly
Creston	Deron	Stender
East Union & Murray	Tim	Kuehl
Eddyville Blakesburg Fremont	Scott	Williamson
Edgewood-Colesburg	Rob	Busch
Fairfield	Laurie	Noll
Garner Hayfield Ventura	Ken	Kasper
Glidden-Ralston & Paton-Churdan	Kreg	Lensch
Grinnell-Newburg	Janet	Stutz
Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn	Patrick	Carlin
Hartley-Melvin-Sanborn	Becky	Stoltz
Interstate 35	Sharon	Dentlinger
Lone Tree	Kurt	DeVore
Louisa-Muscatine	Mike	Van Sickle
Manson Northwest Webster	Justin	Daggett
Marshalltown	Theron	Schutte
Newton	Tom	Messinger
Nodaway Valley & CAM	Paul	Croghan
North Scott	Joe	Stutting
North Scott	Frank	Wood
Panorama & Orient-Macksburg	Shawn	Holloway
PCM	Michelle	Havenstrite
Pekin	Derek	Philips
Riverside	Tim	Mitchell
Seymour & Mormon Trail	Brad	Breon
South Tama County	John	Cain
Stratford & Webster City	Mandy	Ross
West Fork	Mike	Kruger
<i>Mississippi Bend AEA</i>	<i>William</i>	<i>Decker</i>
<i>University of Iowa</i>	<i>Mark</i>	<i>Hopkins</i>
<i>Classroom Clinic</i>	<i>Sue</i>	<i>Gehling</i>
<i>Denovo Construction Solutions</i>	<i>Patrick</i>	<i>Davis</i>



## **RSAI/ISFIS Staff Attendees**

RSAI Professional Advocate, Margaret Buckton, [margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:margaret@iowaschoolfinance.com)

RSAI Grassroots Advocate, Dave Daughton, [dave.daughton@rsaia.org](mailto:dave.daughton@rsaia.org)

RSAI Accountant, Jen Albers, [jen@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:jen@iowaschoolfinance.com)

ISFIS Partner, Larry Sigel, [larry@iowaschoolfinance.com](mailto:larry@iowaschoolfinance.com)

*Minutes respectfully submitted, Oct. 25, 2022 by RSAI Staff, Margaret Buckton and Jen Albers*