

RSAI Leadership Group Minutes

November 11, 2020 at noon

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

(Contact jen@iowaschoolfinance.com for Zoom link)

Zoom Board Member Attendees: Dennis McClain (Chair), Paul Croghan (Vice Chair), Laurie Noll (Secretary/Treasurer), Dan Peterson, Scott Williamson, and Lolli Haws, AEA.

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

I Call To Order/Roll by McClain

McClain called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm.

II Approve Agenda

Croghan moved and Noll seconded approval of the agenda. Approved unanimously.

III Approve Meeting Minutes

- RSAI Annual Meeting on October 21, 2020
- Leadership Group Organizational Meeting on October 21, 2020

Peterson moved and Croghan seconded approval of the minutes from the RSAI Annual Meeting on October 21, 2020, and the Legislative Committee Meeting on October 21, 2020. Approved unanimously.

IV Membership Report

Albers shared the membership report showing FY 2021 memberships received to date at 121, including 18 new member districts so far. Additionally, Great Prairie AEA just joined as RSAI's first Affiliate Member. The group discussed pending renewals and others that have expressed interest.

V Monthly Financials

- YTD Financial Report
Albers reviewed the YTD September 30, 2020 financial statements. Croghan moved and Noll second approval of the financial report through September 30, 2020 and approval of payment/reimbursement to ISFIS of \$10,436.30. Approved unanimously.
- RSAI Policies & Procedure Manual
Buckton and Albers shared draft policies and procedures for RSAI indicating while RSAI already had some of these policies approved, it is best practice for the organization to have all of these items documented officially and compiled in one place. Discussion ensued. Noll moved and Croghan second approval of the RSAI Policies & Procedure Manual. Approved unanimously.

VI Mission Critical Actions/Updates

- Annual Meeting Debrief
 - Attendance & Logistics
 - Press Release
 - RSAI 2021 Priorities
 - Reflections

Buckton shared a summary of attendance from the RSAI Annual Meeting, recirculated the sample press release and encouraged distribution with local media if not already done, shared the final 2021 approved legislative priorities, and the group discussed reflections and observations about the hybrid approach of this year's meeting.

- Election Recap and SSA Priority Language

Buckton shared information on the 2020 election results at the federal and state level, and its likely impact on leadership and advocacy at the Iowa Statehouse.

The group discussed the 2021 legislative priorities and made two amendments to the language.

Croghan move and Peterson seconded revising the Adequate School Resources priority as noted below. Approved unanimously.

Adequate School Resources: RSAI supports adequate base funding. The increased per pupil cost known as SSA is especially critical to rural students due to distance from school/opportunities, economies of scale, mandates, the need for AEA support, and the ability to attract and retain staff. Rural schools depend on an investment of meaningful new resources to prepare students for a successful future. COVID-19 experience has created additional financial burdens for connectivity, staffing, social distancing practices, virtual curriculum and protective equipment, while potentially diverting resources away from the district due to open enrollment or home school choices which may be temporary. The rate of increase in SSA should be no lower than anticipated growth in state revenue (adjusted for legislated tax cuts), but not lower than 3.75% in FY 2022 regardless of estimated revenues due to abundant FY 2020 state surplus, should keep up with other economic factors such as personal income or state gross domestic product over the long term, should maintain a balance of state and local property taxes, provide predictability, and be set timely to assure adequate notice for budget planning and staffing.

Croghan move and Williamson seconded revising the Quality Preschool priority as noted below. Approved unanimously.

Quality Preschool: RSAI supports full funding of quality preschool. Quality preschool has been proven to minimize negative student outcomes (special education, dropout, limited lifetime wages, home and car ownership, for example) while maximizing student academic success. Preschool is the ounce of prevention that ~~is~~ saves future taxpayers a pound of cure. Additionally, expansion to provide quality preschool for three-year-olds would benefit parents, the business community and the economy, in addition to the student. Due to changing demographics in rural Iowa, significant transportation costs, and lack of quality day care, preschool should be fully funded at the 1.0 per pupil cost. The 2020 bill, [HF 2490](#) Poverty Weighting Study, should be moved forward in the 2021 Session and include a discussion of weightings which should be applicable to preschool students' programs. RSAI supports formula protections against budget and program impacts of preschool enrollment swings, such as budget guarantee and ontime funding spending authority.

- Advocacy Actions between now and January
Buckton shared the importance of reaching out to the newly elected legislators at the Statehouse and establishing relationships early.
- RSAI Advocacy Handbook
Buckton shared that a new resource is almost complete and will be circulated as soon as the election results are finalized and leadership is determined, to help members with their advocacy efforts.
- NREA Annual Conference – Virtual November 12-13
Buckton shared the agenda for the NREA Conference this week and will share information afterwards with members.

VII Other Business – none.

VIII. Upcoming Meeting dates:

- Wed, December 9, 2020, from 12-1pm via Zoom (*discuss RSAI Boundaries*)
- 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*)
The group discussed possibly switching meetings from beginning at noon to beginning at 12:30 instead to accommodate a scheduling conflict. Information will be distributed to seek feedback.

IX. Adjourn

There being no other business, Croghan moved to adjourn and Peterson seconded. Approved unanimously. The meeting concluded at 12:58 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted

Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, As of 11/11/2020