

RSAI Annual Meeting Minutes

Oct. 16, 2019 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.** Bob Olson, Clarion-Goldfield-Dows CSD, Chair, Leadership Group, called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm.
2. **Approval of the Agenda.** *Paul Croghan, Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD, moved approval of the agenda. Sandy Dockendorff, Danville CSD, seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.*
3. **Introductions.** Bob Olson introduced each member of the RSAI Leadership Group in attendance at the meeting.
4. All attendees of the meeting introduced themselves and shared what they believe to be an advantage of rural schools/education.
5. **Annual Meeting Business:** Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD, Secretary/Treasurer, RSAI Leadership Group reviewed the financial reports included in the packet materials:
 - 2018-19 Financial Report & Annual Audit. *A motion to approve the 2018-19 Financial Report & Annual Audit was made by Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD, second by Paul Croghan, Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD. The motion was approved unanimously.*
 - 2019-20 Budget & Professional Advocate Payment. *A motion to approve the 2019-20 Budget and Professional Advocate Payment was made by Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD, second by Barb Schwamman, Osage CSD and Riceville CSD. The motion was approved unanimously.*
 - 2019-20 RSAI Membership Dues. The dues schedule for 2019-20 was shared with the group by Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD.
6. **Results of Election of Region Representatives to the Leadership Group.**

Bob Olson welcomed back Paul Croghan, CAM CSD and Nodaway Valley CSD for his reelection at the SW RSAI Regional Meeting as the SW Leadership Group Region Director serving through 2022.
7. **Election of RSAI At-Large member for a three-year term.** This is the 3-year at-large term on the leadership group most recently filled by Dennis McClain, Adair Casey/Guthrie Center CSD. Any board member or superintendent in a member district is eligible for the seat. The at-large members also serve on the Legislative Group in addition to their Leadership Group duties.

Nick Trenkamp, Central CSD, nominated Dennis McClain, Adair Casey/Guthrie Center CSD for another 3-year term. Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD, seconded the motion. No other nominations were brought forth. Nick Trenkamp, Central CSD voted to cease nominations and Paul Croghan, CAM CSD and Nodaway Valley CSD, seconded the motion to cease nominations. Unanimous approval followed to close nominations. Unanimous approval followed of the election of Dennis McClain, Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center CSD, to again serve as the RSAI Leadership Group At-Large representative through 2022.

8. **Opportunity to Amend RSAI Bylaws.** No proposals emerged at regional meetings or via Legislative or Leadership Committee review. Duane Willhite shared the process for changing the bylaws should any member be interested in making changes for next year.
9. **Status of RSAI 2019 Priorities:** Margaret Buckton, RSAI Professional Advocate, provided an update on the status of this past year’s legislative session, the status of the current state budget, and on the RSAI legislative priorities and accomplishments, to help set the stage for tonight’s conversation. The sides are posted on the RSAI Annual Meeting webpage.
10. **Report of Aug. 14 Legislative Committee Group Meeting.** Duane Willhite, North Fayette Valley CSD and Chair of the 2019-20 Legislative Group, introduced himself and the other Legislative Committee members, and discussed the process the Committee went through at the ISFIS office during their Aug. 14 meeting to prepare the 2020 legislative priorities being presented tonight.
11. Establish RSAI legislative priorities for the upcoming Session
 - **Adequate School Resources:**
 - *Barb Schwamman, Osage & Riceville CSD, moved approval as presented. Janet Stuts, Grinnell-Newburg CSD, second.*
 - *Dennis McClain, Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center CSD, offered an amendment to change the rate in the final sentence from 3.2% to 3.75%. Second by Paul Croghan, Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD.*
 - *Dan Peterson, Central DeWitt CSD, moved an amendment to amend the final sentence to add “..., if the revenue adjustment controlling for tax cuts is lower than 3.75%.” Sandy Dockendorff, Danville CSD, seconded. Unanimous approval to the amended amendment.*
 - *Unanimous approval to the original amendment to 3.75% approved.*
 - *Unanimous approval on vote of language as amended.*
 - *The final priority text after amendments were approved now reads:*

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. The rate of increase in SSA should be no lower than anticipated growth in state revenue (adjusted for legislated tax cuts), 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. The SSA rate for the 2020-21 school year should be set no lower than 3.75%, if the revenue adjustment controlling for tax cuts is lower than 3.75%.

- **Student Mental Health:**

- *Dennis McClain, Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center CSD, moved approval as presented. Janet Stutz, Grinnell-Newburg CSD, seconded.*
- *Eric Trager, Audubon CSD & Coon Rapids Bayard CSD, offered an amendment to add the language, “...In addition to adequate funding for AEA services and other service providers, an array of service should also include telehealth services received at school. For those services paid by private insurance companies...”. Second by Dan Peterson, Central DeWitt CSD. Unanimous approval to the amendment with the expectation that the RSAI Leadership Group would reword slightly to capture the intent of the conversation around this topic.*
- *Sharon Detlinger, I-35 Superintendent, discussed concern that the whole area of mental health is not sufficiently understood or contained in the expertise of Iowa school leaders today. We will need lots of resources to effectively advocate.*
- *Vote on item as amended was 14 votes in favor, 10 votes against. Item passed.*
- *The final priority text after amendments were approved (which will be further refined at the next Leadership Group Meeting) now reads:*

Student Mental Health: RSAI supports increased access to and funding for mental health services for children. Student mental health challenges are increasing while lack of access to mental health services in rural Iowa is common. In addition to adequate funding for AEA services and other service providers, an array of services should also include telehealth services received at school. For those services paid by private insurance companies and Iowa’s Medicaid services plan, including direct billing by providers to minimize school districts’ administrative burden.

- **Educator Shortage and Quality Instruction:** RSAI supports maximum flexibility to hire staff to provide great instruction and support to all Iowa students. RSAI supports 1) district flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, 2) teacher or other staff shortage loan forgiveness programs and incentives to encourage staff to work in rural schools, 3) a special education generalist credential to teach special education across all grades, 4) creation of a Public Service strand in Iowa’s CTE system to prepare Iowa’s future teaching workforce, 5) continued state support of Iowa Learning Online (ILO), 6) flexibility to hire retirees without a negative IPERS impact, and 7) elimination of barriers to licensure for teachers and administrators, and 8) allow associate degree for substitutes. The BOEE should accept evidence other than strict transcripts to show skill mastery for administrators from other states. *Scott Williamson, Sioux Central CSD, Laurens Marathon CSD, and Clay Central Everly CSD moved approval as presented. Dennis McClain, Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center CSD seconded.*

- *Mike Van Sickle, Louisa Muscatine CSD, offered an amendment to add language “...and 8) allow associate degree as adequate credential for substitutes.” Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD, seconded the amendment.*

*Votes on amendment were all in favor except one vote against.
Amendment passed.*

- *Vote on item as amended. Passed unanimously*
- *The final priority text after amendments were approved now reads:*

- Educator Shortage and Quality Instruction:** RSAI supports maximum flexibility to hire staff to provide great instruction and support to all Iowa students. RSAI supports 1) district flexibility to meet offer and teach requirements, 2) teacher or other staff shortage loan forgiveness programs and incentives to encourage staff to work in rural schools, 3) a special education generalist credential to teach special education across all grades, 4) creation of a Public Service strand in Iowa's CTE system to prepare Iowa's future teaching workforce, 5) continued state support of Iowa Learning Online (ILO), 6) flexibility to hire retirees without a negative IPERS impact, 7) elimination of barriers to licensure for teachers and administrators, and 8) allow associate degree for substitutes. The BOEE should accept evidence other than strict transcripts to show skill mastery for administrators from other states.
- **Formula and Transportation Equity:** RSAI supports formula and transportation equity. The Legislature should accelerate the commitment to close the \$165 gap between the state and district cost per pupil within ten years and continue transportation equity support, bringing down all districts to no more than the state average per pupil transportation cost, without requiring burdensome reporting requirements from school districts. *Tim Mitchell, Riverside CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Eric Trager, Audubon CSD and Coon Rapids Bayard CSD. Vote unanimously approved.*
 - **Opportunity Equity for Low SES:** RSAI supports resources for at-risk students. Resources should be based on need, such as the percentage of students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL), in addition to enrollment of the district. The current disparity in dropout prevention capacity, (some districts held to 2.5% and others allowed to access up to 5% of regular program district cost) is arbitrary, based on history no longer relevant to supporting student needs. All school boards should be able to realize the full 5% dropout prevention funding. The formula must further recognize the disproportionate cost of providing equal educational opportunities to low-income students. School districts should be granted spending authority for FRPL eligible students' fees mandated to be waived by state and federal law. *Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD, moved approval as presented. Seconded by Laurie Noll, Fairfield CSD. Unanimous approval.*
 - **Sharing Incentives and Efficiencies:** RSAI supports extension of sharing and efficiency incentives. Rural students benefit from opportunities to achieve efficiencies, share capacity to operate, and redirect resources to educational programs. Whole Grade Sharing, Reorganization, and Operational Sharing Incentives should be extended and expanded. *Joel Pedersen, Cardinal CSD, moved approval as presented. Doug Glackin, Woodbury Central CSD, seconded. Unanimous approval.*
 - **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. *Barb Schwamman, Osage and Riceville CSD, moved*

approval as presented. Seconded by Paul Croghan, Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD. Unanimous approval.

- **School Safety:** RSAI supports school safety investments. Rural schools need the resources, training and support necessary for Iowa student and staff safety at school, including additional funding for security personnel and training to protect against active shooter and other emergency situations presenting harm. *Tim Mitchell, Riverside CSD moved approval as presented. Seconded by Sandy Dockendorff, Danville CSD. Unanimous approval.*
- **Bonding Capacity:** Janet Stutz, Grinnell-Newburg CSD moved that RSAI add a priority to address the difficulty of passing a bond issue, given the requirement for a 60% supermajority vote. *“A simple majority vote for bond issue should be sufficient rather than 60% super majority.”* Second by Chris Bergman, Clarinda CSD. *Unanimous approval to add this as a priority.*

12. **Focus Area Prioritization:** Margaret explained a process whereby each district was asked to select their top 3 priorities with stickers and a notation of 1, 2 or 3 in terms of most importance. Results of votes were as follows:

- Adequate School Resources (23 first priority, 2 second priority, 2 third priority, 27 total votes)
- Formula and Transportation Equity (2 first priority, 7 second priority, 11 third priority, 20 total votes)
- Student Mental Health (5 first priority, 5 second priority, 6 third priority, 16 total votes)
- Educator Shortage and Quality Instruction (1 first priority, 6 second priority, 4 third priority, 11 total votes)
- Opportunity Equity for Low SES (0 first priority, 9 second priority, 2 third priority, 11 total votes)
- Quality Preschool (1 first priority, 3 second priority, 0 third priority, 4 total votes)
- School Safety (0 first priority, 0 second priority, 4 third priority, 4 total votes)
- Bonding Capacity (1 first priority, 1 second priority, 1 third priority, 3 total votes)
- Sharing Incentives and Efficiencies (0 first priority, 0 second priority, 1 third priority, 1 total vote)

13. No Other Business.

14. Adjourn: Bob Olson closed the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

RSAI Annual Meeting Attendees:*Yellow = 2019-20 Leadership or Legislative Committee Member; Gray = Non-Members/Guests*

District	Attendee
Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center CSD	Dennis McClain
Audubon CSD/Coon Rapids Bayard CSD	Eric Trager
Cardinal CSD	Joel Pedersen
Central CSD	Nick Trenkamp
Central DeWitt CSD	Dan Peterson
Central Lee CSD	Andy Crozier
Clarinda CSD	Chris Bergman
Clarion-Goldfield-Dows CSD	Bob Olson
Clinton CSD	Gary DeLacy
Danville CSD	Sandy Dockendorff
Decorah CSD	Mark Lane
Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont CSD	Dean Cook
Edgewood-Colesburg CSD	Rob Busch
Estherville Lincoln Central CSD	Tara Paul
Fairfield CSD	Laurie Noll
Fremont-Mills CSD and Stanton CSD	David Gute
Grinnell-Newburg CSD	Janet Stutz
Guest	Sue Gehling
Guest	Dave Daughton
Hinton CSD	Todd Meyer
Interstate 35 CSD	Sharon Dentlinger
Louisa-Muscataine CSD	Mike Van Sickle
Murray CSD	Dennis Jeter
Nodaway Valley CSD and CAM CSD	Paul Croghan
North Fayette Valley CSD	Duane Willhite
Osage and Riceville CSDs	Barb Schwamman
Riverside CSD	Tim Mitchell
Sioux Central, Laurens Marathon, and Clay Central Everly CSDs	Scott Williamson
Stanton CSD	Amy Tibben
West Fork CSD	Mike Kruger
Woodbury Central CSD	Doug Glackin

ISFIS/RSAI Staff AttendeesProfessional Advocate & Communications, Margaret Buckton, margaret@iowaschoolfinance.comData Analysis and Virtual Meeting Management, Larry Sigel, larry@iowaschoolfinance.comFinancial/Association Management, Jen Albers, jen@iowaschoolfinance.comSchool Improvement, Susie Olesen, susie@iowaschoolfinance.com

Registration helpers, Liz & Cole, Lincoln High School Des Moines students

Minutes respectfully submitted, Oct. 17, 2019 by Margaret Buckton and Jen Albers