

Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes



April 9, 2024

BOARD MEETING

Ms. Margaret Borgen, president, called the meeting of the Heartland AEA Board of Directors to order at 4:06 p.m.

Board members present: Ms. Margaret Borgen, Ms. Liz Brennan, Mr. Pete Evans, Mr. John Kinley, Ms. Tiara Mays-Sims, Mr. Alex Piedras, Dr. Steve Rose and Ms. Margie Schwenk. *Absent:* Ms. Kelly Simmons.

Administrative Staff Present: Mr. Kevin Fangman, Dr. Susie Meade, Mr. Kurt Subra, Ms. Jenny Ugolini, Dr. Kristi Upah and Dr. Cindy Yelick.

Guest: Mr. D.T. Magee, Executive Director, Iowa Association of School Boards.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Kinley to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from March 12 & 26, 2024

A MOTION was made by Ms. Brennan and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve the minutes from March 12 & 26, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum and Correspondence

Mr. D.T. Magee, Executive Director of the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB), thanked Heartland AEA for its continued membership with the Association. He acknowledged the numerous supports the Agency provided to Perry CSD during their crisis event. He also noted the collaboration taking place between IASB, Heartland AEA and other educational organizations such as School Administrators of Iowa and the Iowa State Educational Association.

Discussion Items

Support for Perry CSD

Dr. Susie Meade, Heartland AEA Chief Academic Officer, and Mr. Kevin Fangman, Heartland AEA Chief Human Resources Officer, reviewed the Agency's support to Perry CSD during its crisis event in January. Close to 100 employees from the Agency assisted with logistics, communications and social-emotional-behavior health support. Dr. Meade and Mr. Fangman highlighted the day-to-day support and services the Agency provided. Board members noted that districts rely on the AEAs to provide this type of support because they don't have the staff or resources to undertake it themselves. They also noted the closing of the Tyson plant in Perry and the impact of that on students, families and the community.

The Board recessed for dinner from 5:08 to 5:54 p.m.

Legislative Update

Dr. Cindy Yelick, Heartland AEA Chief Administrator, shared a summary of HF 2612 and the impact it will have on Iowa's AEAs.

- The bill shifts the AEA Boards of Directors from governance to advisory. Four of the nine members will be appointed superintendents or their designees. The AEAs have asked the Iowa Dept. of Education (DE) for guidance on how best to transition the Board.
- The bill includes a Task Force that will study core services and facilities and should start as soon as the legislative session ends. The Task Force report is due Dec. 31, 2024. Dr. Yelick will be a member of the task force.
- Dr. Yelick noted the funding reductions to Education Services and Media/Technology Services and the 10% reduction to Special Education Services.
- There are new AEA accreditation standards, from 8 to 18.
- The AEAs are determining how to transition to a fee-for-service organization.

Board members asked who bears the responsibility to ensure students receive the IEP minutes they're entitled to. Oversight will now shift to the DE. If a parent decides to engage their due process rights, it would be with the DE or the school district.

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Mr. Magee noted that IASB is currently reviewing the bill to help the AEAs navigate some of the unanswered questions regarding board transition. Board members were encouraged to email their questions to him.

Budget Update and Projections

Mr. Kurt Subra, Heartland AEA Chief Financial Officer, reviewed the status of the Agency's budget. He reviewed the budget that was published in February and the impact the passing of the bill has had on revenue and expenses. Until the legislative session ends, there are still many unknowns with the final figures. The Agency will look at what can be reduced that is furthest away from impacting services to kids, including ways to recoup funds to breathe money into a new fee-for-service model. The AEA Chiefs and AEA joint directors will begin meeting tomorrow to begin planning.

Leaders 2024-25 Compensation

Dr. Yelick recommends that all Heartland AEA Leaders (Management staff) have a salary freeze for 2024-25. Board members noted the amount of work that is going to take place in the next year to make sense of the new law. They struggle with the fact that a lot of people will be doing significantly more work with no additional pay. It's unfortunate.

Chief Administrator Contract & Salary Recommendation for 2024-25

Dr. Yelick recommended a zero salary increase for herself for 2024-25. Board members can extend her contract an additional year, as it's a rolling three-year contract.

Board Policies - First Read of Policy 415, 418, 505 and 604

Board members had a first reading of new and revised policies.

Action Items

Leaders 2024-25 Compensation

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Mays-Sims to approve the recommendation for Leaders (Management staff) zero compensation for 2024-25. The motion passed unanimously. The MOTION was AMENDED by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Brennan to specify that action item 3.01 is a zero percent increase in *salary* for Leaders (Management staff) compensation for 2024-25. The amended motion was unanimously approved.

Chief Administrator Contract & Salary Recommendation for 2024-25

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Piedras to approve the Chief Administrator's recommendation for a pay freeze and to increase an additional year of her contract. The motion passed unanimously.

Construction Change Orders

A MOTION was made by Ms. Brennan and seconded by Ms. Schwenk to approve the construction change orders for Phase II of the Johnston Regional Education Center remodel. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Borgen reviewed the Agency's financial reports. She reported that everything is stable. A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve the consent agenda including payment of warrant numbers 420693 through 420824 and electronic warrant numbers 47882 through 48303. The motion passed unanimously.

- Addendum Personnel Report
- Purchase Order
 - *Zoom Video Communications - \$111,516.08*
- Amended Agreement between Heartland AEA and Johnston CSD (K. Richards)
- BRI Termination Letter
- BASE Agreements

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CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session - Section 21.5(1)(j) of the Iowa Code

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Brennan to enter an exempt session as provided in Section 21.5(1)(j) of the Iowa Code.

A roll call vote was taken. The Board of Directors entered into a closed session at 7:05 p.m.

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|-----------------------|-----|----------------------|--------|
| • Ms. Margaret Borgen | Aye | • Mr. Alex Piedras | Aye |
| • Ms. Liz Brennan | Aye | • Dr. Steve Rose | Aye |
| • Mr. Pete Evans | Aye | • Ms. Margie Schwenk | Aye |
| • Mr. John Kinley | Aye | • Ms. Kelly Simmons | Absent |
| • Ms. Tiara Mays-Sims | Aye | | |

The Board of Directors exited the closed session at 7:19 p.m.

Chief Administrator Comments

- Dr. Yelick noted that meetings with staff in smaller groups will take place. The Agency continues to work through the puzzle of the new legislation and staffing the highest priority areas. She noted Central Rivers AEA has experienced 60 resignations that included the majority of their cabinet members. Green Hills AEA also laid off 19 employees this week.

Board Member Comments

- Board members asked questions about the transition of their roles and if superintendents were aware of the changes and the impact of the bill on districts.
- Dr. Rose noted upcoming poetry events at the Des Moines Art Center.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Ms. Brennan and seconded by Dr. Rose to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Reports and documents and the full text of motions, resolutions or policies considered by the Board at this meeting are on file in the Board Secretary's office, (515) 473-6644, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Handwritten signature of Margaret A. Borgen in black ink.

Ms. Margaret Borgen
Board President

Handwritten signature of Jenny Ugolini in blue ink.

Ms. Jenny Ugolini
Board Secretary