

Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes



Jan. 14, 2025

BOARD MEETING

Ms. Liz Brennan, board president, called the Heartland AEA Board of Directors meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ms. Margaret Borgen, Ms. Liz Brennan, Mr. Pete Evans, Mr. John Kinley, Ms. Tiara Mays-Sims and Dr. Steve Rose. Mr. Alex Piedras joined the meeting immediately following roll call. *Absent:* Ms. Margie Schwenk.

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

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 Dec. 10, 2024

A MOTION was made by Ms. Borgen and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve the minutes from Dec. 10, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum and Correspondence

No one from the public was present to speak to the Board.

Discussion Items

Fiscal Year 2024-25 and 2025-26 Budget Conversation

Mr. Brian Whalen, Heartland AEA Director of Business Services, reviewed the Agency's FY2024-25 budget and the changes to the FY2025-26 budget resulting from House File 2612.

IAAEA Board Representative Meeting Follow-up

Dr. Cindy Yelick, Heartland AEA Chief Administrator, shared highlights from the IAAEA Board Representative meeting held in December. The meeting consisted of individual board members from across Iowa's AEAs. They engaged in conversations about efficiencies and moving forward to focus on 5 priorities that will help children and students and should be part of a Center of Excellence. Board members commented that the reality for AEAs is no longer about preserving the structure of the past but about moving forward and making a difference for kids. Additional meetings may be scheduled in the future.

Special Convention to Fill District 1 Director Vacancy

Dr. Yelick shared that a special convention to fill the District 1 Director vacancy will be held on Jan. 20, 2025, due to Ms. Kelly Simmons' resignation. Two candidates have submitted paperwork, Ms. Mary Poulter who resides in the Colfax-Mingo CSD, and Ms. Heather Sievers, who resides in the S.E. Polk CSD.

Recommendation to Terminate Certified Employee for Job Abandonment

Mr. Kevin Fangman, Heartland AEA Chief Human Resources Officer, shared that the Agency has an employee who did not return to work after winter break. The employee was notified about the recommendation to terminate based on abandonment of their position, which has created a disruption in services in the field. The employee did not request a hearing with the Board.

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Second Opportunity for Early Notification Stipend

Mr. Fangman shared a recommendation to provide a second opportunity for the early notification stipend. The Agency has received additional resignations and continues to hold conversations with staff about retirements. It would impact Certified and Management staff at a rate of \$1,500, with notification received in Human Resources by Feb. 7 and full completion of their contract by June 30. The incentive for full-time at-will employees would remain the same with a due date of Sept. 30, 2025.

Action Items

Recommendation to Terminate Certified Employee for Job Abandonment

A MOTION was made by Ms. Brennan and seconded by Ms. Tiara Mays-Sims to move that the recommendation of the Chief Administrator be accepted and that the contract of Celeste Mortvedt be terminated effective immediately for the reasons that were outlined in the Chief Administrator's Notice and Recommendation to Terminate the Contract of Celeste Mortvedt. The motion passed unanimously.

Second Opportunity for Early Notification Incentive

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Mr. Evans to approve the recommendation for the second opportunity for an early notification stipend as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Brennan reviewed the financial statements and noted everything was in good shape. Revenue and expenses are down due to lower staffing and fewer expenses. The Agency's self-insurance fund is also holding steady. A MOTION was made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Dr. Rose to approve the consent agenda including payment of warrant numbers 422016 through 422094 and electronic warrant numbers 51478 through 51843. The motion passed unanimously.

- Personnel Report (Addendum only, no additional report)
- Purchase Orders
 - PowerSchool Group L.L.C. - \$21,282.79
- Order of Services Agreement between Heartland AEA and Northwest AEA
- 2024-25 Instructional Technology Consultant Agreement between Heartland AEA and Des Moines Public Schools
- 2024-25 Service Agreement Between Heartland AEA and Knoxville CSD

Chief Administrator Professional Development Goals

Dr. Yelick shared updates on her three professional development goals.

Chief Administrator Comments

Dr. Yelick shared that the Iowa Department of Education announced the process for districts to purchase special education services from a contiguous AEA. The Agency has heard from five districts about this topic, and three have taken it to their boards for formal action. The Agency has not been recruiting districts, nor has that been part of our business strategy.

Board Member Comments

Dr. Rose shared that Heartland AEA was mentioned on public radio last week. A parent shared comments about the wonderful services she received from Heartland AEA and bemoaned the legislative changes. There are still people out there saying good things about what the AEAs do.

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Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Mr. Evans to adjourn the meeting. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:02 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. – 4:00 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Elizabeth Brennan", written over a horizontal line.

Ms. Liz Brennan
Board President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jenny Ugolini", written over a horizontal line.

Ms. Jenny Ugolini
Board Secretary