

# Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes



Aug. 12, 2025

## BOARD MEETING

Ms. Liz Brennan, board president, called the Heartland AEA Board of Directors meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

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

*Heartland AEA Administrative Staff Present:* Mr. Kevin Fangman, Chief Human Resources Officer; Ms. Valerie Hubert, Executive Assistant; Dr. Susie Meade, Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Jenny Ugolini, Executive Assistant/Board Secretary; Dr. Kristi Upah, Chief Student Services Officer; and Mr. Brian Whalen, Director of Business Services.

## Approval of Agenda

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

## Approval of Minutes

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Sievers to approve the minutes from June 10 and 30, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

## Public Forum & Correspondence

There was no one from the public present to address the Board.

## Discussion Items

### Heartland AEA Accreditation

Dr. Upah shared both the summary and the full accreditation report from the Iowa Department of Education. There were no required corrective actions reported. She reviewed the list of noted strengths and recommended areas of continuous improvement. Board members asked about the timing of the next accreditation cycle, which remains unknown at this time. The Agency will report progress on its areas of continuous improvement at the March 12 State Board of Education meeting.

The Board recessed from 4:33 - 4:41 p.m.

## FY24-25 Financial Results

Mr. Whalen presented the 2024-25 financial report. Heartland AEA has been able to react to the 2024 legislative funding changes and reduce expenditures in a timely manner. The Agency has been able to hold its fund balance steady and live within its means of revenues. Overall, he is feeling positive about going into fiscal year 2026.

## Wellness Program and Budget for 2025-26

Mr. Whalen reviewed the proposal for the 2025-26 wellness program and budget. The wellness program budget comes from the Agency's self-insurance funds, about 1.8% of its revenues. The Agency is in year three of a three-year agreement. The estimated cost for 2025-26 is approximately \$164,980.

## Board of Directors Redistricting and Terms

Board members reviewed redistricting options and board term limits as a result of HF2612. The Board will retain nine members; however, the director districts will be reduced to five regularly elected members, one per director district, and four superintendents to serve at-large. The timeline for the regular election of the director districts and the four superintendent seats was discussed. Staggered terms will be established for the first two years to prevent

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the entire board from transitioning at the same time. The election process will begin in September and be completed by Nov. 30. The new board will be seated at the Dec. 9 meeting.

### **Staff Handbook 2025-26**

Mr. Fangman reviewed the changes to the Staff Handbook for 2025-26. The majority of changes were reviewed by legal counsel.

### **Board Policies - First Reading (Policy 205, 419, 420, 504, 506, 507, 508, 509, 605, 606 and 607)**

Mr. Fangman reviewed the first reading of several board policies. He shared whether they were updated policies, mandated policies or new policies drafted based on the Board's request and recommendation (policy 420).

### **IASB Legislative Priorities**

Board members reviewed their top four legislative priorities.

### **Des Moines Public Schools and Heartland AEA Memorandum of Agreement**

Dr. Upah and Mr. Whalen gave a brief overview of the Memorandum of Agreement between Heartland AEA and Des Moines Public Schools. Des Moines Public Schools will hire its own staff to provide special education services. AEA obligations include some general oversight and providing support as requested. Many details previously included in past agreements have been removed due to changes in legislation.

### **Action Items**

#### **Board of Directors Redistricting and Terms**

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Piedras to accept Option 3 of the redistricting plan and to approve the process and terms as presented. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **IASB Legislative Priorities**

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Sievers to submit the following four priority goals for the 2026 legislative session in the following order: 1) student achievement, 2) AEA, 3) mental health and 4) school funding. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Resolution of Depositories**

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Schwenk to approve the resolution of depositories as written. Ms. Brennan abstained from the vote due to a possible conflict of interest. The motion passed unanimously. (Ayes: Borgen, Evans, Kinley, Mays-Sims, Piedras, Rose and Schwenk. Abstained: Brennan. Nays: None)

#### **Wellness Program and Budget for 25-26**

A MOTION was made by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Piedras to approve the wellness program and budget. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Staff Handbook**

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Schwenk to approve the Staff Handbook revisions as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Des Moines Public Schools and Heartland AEA Memorandum of Agreement**

A MOTION was made by Ms. Borgen and seconded by Mr. Piedras to approve the Des Moines Public Schools and Heartland AEA Memorandum of Agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

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### Consent Agenda

Ms. Schwenk reviewed and reported on the Agency's financial statements. She noted that there will not be a lot of incoming revenue until September. Expenditures are down due to decreased numbers of staff and salaries. The Agency's self-insurance is higher through the summer months as employees have more time for medical appointments and procedures, as school is out of session. A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Ms. Sievers to approve the consent agenda, including payment of warrant numbers 422606 through 422950 and electronic warrant numbers 53870 through 54666. The motion passed unanimously.

- Personnel Report and Addendum
- Aug. 29 Special Board meeting - Mr. Fangman anticipates there could be a need to hold a special board meeting on Aug. 29 for actions related to personnel. He will keep the Board updated.
- Purchase Orders:
  - *Convergeone* - \$21,934.10
  - *Kruck Plumbing & Heating Co.* - \$24,800.00
  - *Morningside College* - \$36,000.00
  - *University of Northern Iowa* - \$48,000.00
  - *Wex Bank* - \$24,000.00
  - *Marco* - \$168,000.00
- Transfer of State Funding Between Heartland AEA and the following school districts:
  - Ankeny CSD
  - Baxter CSD
  - Bondurant-Farrar CSD
  - Carlisle CSD
  - Carroll CSD
  - Coon Rapids-Bayard CSD
  - Lynnville-Sully CSD
  - North Polk CSD
  - Norwalk CSD
  - Winterset CSD
- Urbandale CSD and Heartland AEA 2025-26 Service Agreement
- Des Moines Regional Catholic Schools Cooperation and Heartland AEA Service Agreement for 2025-26 (Cybersecurity)
- Spirit Lake CSD and Heartland AEA 2025-26 Service Agreement
- Service Agreement (Revised) between Iowa Association of School Boards and Heartland AEA
- Prairie Lakes AEA and Heartland AEA 2025-26 Service Agreement (Communication Services)
- Des Moines Christian Schools and Heartland AEA Master Service and Order of Service Agreement (Cybersecurity)
- Newton CSD and Heartland AEA 2025-2026 Service Agreement
- Itinerant Teacher Service Agreement by and between Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Heartland AEA
- Orientation and Mobility Service Agreement by and between Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Heartland AEA

### Chief Administrator Comments

- Board members were reminded that the next board meeting will be held on Monday, Sept. 8, at the Ankeny DMACC campus. It's the annual Heartland AEA and DMACC joint board meeting.

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## Board Comments

- Dr. Rose noted the Iowa Summer Writing Festival will end in 2025. It was created in 1987 and typically attracted 5,000 people to the state. It's ending due to funding challenges.

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Sievers to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:30 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 cursive script, reading "Elizabeth Brennan", written in black ink over a horizontal line.

Ms. Liz Brennan  
Board President

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jennifer Ugolini", written in black ink over a horizontal line.

Ms. Jenny Ugolini  
Board Secretary