Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes

Sept. 8, 2025

JOINT BOARD MEETING WITH DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Ms. Liz Brennan, Heartland AEA board president, called the joint board meeting of the Heartland AEA and Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) boards of directors to order at 3:00 p.m.

Introductions and Roll Call

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

Heartland AEA Administrative Staff Present: Mr. Kevin Fangman, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Susie Meade, Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Jenny Ugolini, Executive Assistant/Board Secretary; Mr. Brian Whalen, Director of Business Services and Dr. Cindy Yelick, Chief Administrator.

DMACC Board Members present: Mr. Chaz Allen, Mr. Felix Gallagher, Mr. Fred Greiner, Mr. Kevin Halterman, Ms. Angela

DMACC Administrative Staff Present: Dr. Rob Denson, President/CEO; Ms. Brooke Stowe, Board Secretary; and Mr. Bill LaTour, Board Treasurer.

Approval of Agenda

A MOTION was made by Ms. Tursi and seconded by Mr. Gallagher to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

DMACC and Heartland AEA Updates

Dr. Denson shared updates, recent activities and milestones from DMACC. He will be retiring from DMACC in December after 22 years of service.

Dr. Yelick shared information about the implementation of HF2612. She discussed how shifts in funding have affected the areas of special education, media and educational services for AEAs.

Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Ms. Tursi and seconded by Mr. Gallagher to adjourn the meeting. The joint board meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

HEARTLAND AEA BOARD MEETING

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

Board Members Present: Ms. Liz Brennan, Mr. John Kinley, Ms. Tiara Mays-Sims, Dr. Steve Rose, Mr. Alex Piedras and Ms. Heather Sievers. *Absent:* Ms. Margaret Borgen, Mr. Pete Evans and Ms. Margie Schwenk.

Heartland AEA Administrative Staff Present: Mr. Kevin Fangman, Chief Human Resources Officer; 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.

Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes

Sept. 8, 2025

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 from Aug. 12 and 26, 2025

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Mr. Piedras to approve the minutes from Aug. 12 and 26, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum and Correspondence

Ms. Brennan shared a thank you letter received from the Iowa Association of School Boards for renewing the Agency's membership for 2025-26.

Discussion Items

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

Board members held a second reading of various board policies that were either revised, newly drafted or mandated by state or federal law.

Early Notification Incentive Payout

Mr. Fangman shared that the Early Notification Incentive for staff is brought to the Board on an annual basis for consideration of renewal. Both Classified and Certified staff would receive the same incentive of $2,000. Board members asked if it was still fiscally reasonable to offer the payout. Mr. Whalen shared that the Agency is fiscally sound and the benefits outweigh the cost. Early notification of vacancies allows the Agency to move dominoes internally for transfers and assignments, to reevaluate which positions to back-fill and to advertise and hire quality staff.

New Staff Numbers

Mr. Fangman shared data about the 41 new staff hired for 2025-26. Twelve speech-language pathologists will intern with the Agency this year. After their internships, they may have the opportunity to transition to full-time employment. While the focus on the last year and a half has been about budget reductions and staff leaving, it feels good to get back to a natural rhythm and to be able to focus on recruitment.

Staff Communication Structure

Dr. Yelick discussed staff communication. She recognizes the changes the Agency has undergone in the past year, so she wants to take a conscious look at how to communicate with staff and gather feedback. Last year, communication was mostly one-way, getting information out to staff. She shared the various opportunities that will be available this year for staff to meet with her to gather their input. Board members asked for routine updates on what she is hearing from employees.

Action Items

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

A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Sievers to approve the board policies. The motion passed unanimously.

Early Notification Incentive

A MOTION was made by Mr. Kinley and seconded by Mr. Piedras to approve the early notification incentive. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Brennan reviewed the financial statements and noted everything is in order. A MOTION was made by Dr. Rose and seconded by Ms. Sievers to approve the consent agenda, including payment of warrant numbers 422953 through 423044 and electronic warrant numbers 54667 through 54848. The motion passed unanimously.

- Personnel Report and no addendum
- Purchase Orders:

    - *Morningside University - $36,000.00*
    - *University of Iowa - $36,000.00*
    - *Bee-Clean US Holdings L.L.C. - $85,357.32*
- Drake University Head Start Agreement Between Heartland AEA
- Contracts for Transfer of State Funding between Heartland AEA and:
    - Earlham CSD
    - Paton-Churdan CSD
    - Pleasantville CSD
- New Opportunities Interagency Agreement for Special Education Services for 2025-26
- Northwest AEA and Heartland AEA 2025-26 Service Agreement (Title III Coaching)
- Fagen, Friedman, and Fulfrost, L.L.P. (3F) Agreement for Legal Services
- Des Moines Public Schools Memorandum of Understanding for Van Delivery and Warehouse Space
- Des Moines Public Schools Memorandum of Understanding for Information Services Support

Chief Administrator Comments
- Dr. Yelick shared that she will be presenting at the IASB board meeting next week regarding the implementation of HF2612. She highlighted the Agency's relationship between SAI, IASB and ISEA. SAI is doing the majority of the work around the AEAs' election of superintendents to their boards, so that the process is done through a neutral third party. They've done a great job of understanding the nuances of the process.
- She noted that the Agency is still trying to figure out staffing sizes for next year among the professional service providers (Educational Services). The Agency may have to add staff as it determines the long-term market. Leadership will continue to look at staffing patterns for 2026-27 and opportunities for our growing system.

Board Comments
- Ms. Mays-Sims asked for a future agenda item about learning more about the Agency's partnership with DMACC.
- Ms. Brennan shared that Dr. Yelick's presentation on the implementation of HF2612 was good and positive.

Adjournment
A motion was made by Dr. Rose and Mr. Kinley to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:56 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.

Elizabeth Brennan
Ms. Liz Brennan
Board President

Jennifer Ugolini
Ms. Jenny Ugolini
Board Secretary