

Minutes State Board of Education January 15, 2026

John Robbins
President
Iowa Falls

Brooke Axiotis
Vice President
Des Moines

Todd Abrahamson
Arnolds Park

Cassandra Halls
Carlisle

Brian J. Kane
Dubuque

Mary Meisterling
Cedar Rapids

Grace Bechtel
Student Member (non-voting)
Lake Mills

Beth Townsend
Iowa Workforce Development
(non-voting)

McKenzie Snow
Director and
Executive Officer

The State Board of Education meeting was held on January 15, 2026, at the Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting was conducted in person, with remote access information provided in the notice of the meeting.

State Board members present: John Robbins, Brooke Axiotis, Todd Abrahamson, Cassandra Halls, Mary Meisterling and Grace Bechtel. Beth Townsend attended virtually.

Iowa Department of Education staff members present: McKenzie Snow, John Elkin, Bryce Amos, Tina Wahler, Heather Doe, Thomas Mayes, Eric St Clair, Jay Pennington, Cassandra Cline, Stefanie Wager, Barbara Ohlund, Eric Heitz, Kyle Morin, Tom Bredfield, Liza Garcia and Jeremy Anzevino.

State Board Business Meeting

John Robbins called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Motion: Mary Meisterling made a motion and Brooke Axiotis seconded to approve the agenda.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

John Robbins announced public comment for 30 minutes.

Danny Carroll made a public comment.

Maggie DeWitte made a public comment.

Jarad Bernstein made a public comment.

Chuck Hurley made a public comment.

The following reports were provided:

Director's Report, by Director Snow.

Consent Agenda

December 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Rules: Chapter 21 – Community College Accreditation

Motion: Todd Abrahamson made a motion and Brooke Axiotis seconded to approve the Consent Agenda.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Rules: Chapter 12 – Human Growth and Development

Motion: Todd Abrahamson made a motion and Mary Meisterling seconded to adopt these amendments to Chapter 12.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Revised Social Studies Standards – Second Reading

Motion: Brooke Axiotis made a motion and Cassandra Halls seconded to approve the Iowa Academic Standards in Social Studies with the modification of two additions recommended by the Iowa Antisemitism Task Force.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Overview of the Charter Application Reviewer Process

The matter was discussed.

John Robbins announced a break until 10:32.

Charter School Application – Future Frontiers

Motion: Cassandra Halls made a motion and Mary Meisterling seconded to approve authorization of Future Frontiers without conditions.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Charter School Application – Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids

Motion: Todd Abrahamson made a motion and Brooke Axiotis seconded to approve authorization of Horizon Science Academy Cedar Rapids without conditions.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Charter School Application – STEM Innovation High School

Motion: Mary Meisterling made a motion and Todd Abrahamson seconded to approve authorization of STEM Innovation High School without conditions.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

John Robbins announced a lunch break until 12:33 p.m.

APPLE Independent Accrediting Agency Application Approval

Motion: Todd Abrahamson made a motion and Mary Meisterling seconded to approve the APPLE application as a “reliable authority concerning the quality of education” and grant the agency authority to accredit nonpublic schools in the state of Iowa.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

Array Global Independent Accrediting Agency Application Approval

Motion: Cassandra Halls made a motion and Brooke Axiotis seconded to approve the Array Global application as a "reliable authority concerning the quality of education" and grant the agency authority to accredit nonpublic schools in the state of Iowa.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

The Society for Classical Learning Independent Accrediting Agency Application Approval

Motion: Brooke Axiotis made a motion and Todd Abrahamson seconded to approve the The Society for Classical Learning application as a "reliable authority concerning the quality of education" and grant the agency authority to accredit nonpublic schools in the state of Iowa.

Vote: The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.


December School Budget Review Committee Update

The matter was discussed.

Foundations of Reading Accountability and Continuous Improvement Framework

The matter was discussed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.



John Robbins
President



McKenzie Snow
Director