

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education**  
**August 3, 2023**

Brooke Axiotis  
Vice President  
Des Moines

Cindy Dietz  
Cedar Rapids

Cassandra Halls  
Carlisle

Brian J. Kane  
Dubuque

Mike May  
Spirit Lake

Mary Meisterling  
Cedar Rapids

Nathan Peterson  
Iowa City

John Robbins  
President  
Iowa Falls

Sophia Van Houten  
Student Member  
Ida Grove

McKenzie Snow  
Director and  
Executive Officer

The State Board of Education (State Board) meeting was held on August 3, 2023, in person at the Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

State Board members present were Cindy Dietz (remotely), Cassandra Halls, Brian Kane, Mike May, Mary Meisterling, Nathan Peterson, and John Robbins.

Iowa Department of Education (Department) staff members present were Shan Seivert, Heather Doe, Rachel Bosovich, Eric St Clair, Earl Whipple, Cassandra Cline, Thomas Mayes, Kim Buryanek, Stephanie TeKippe, Kelly Faga, Dennis Harden, Amy Gieseke, Lora Vargason, Jordan Roseburrough, Isbelia Arzola, Lisa Albers, Jillian Dotson, Holly Barnes, Veronica Andersen, Derek O'Riley, Janet Boyd, April Gosselink-Lemke, Tom Wood, Earl Whipple, Tom Deeter, Bryan Bauer, Zach Blacksmith, Steve Ervin, Audra Hiebert, and Holli Marolf.

Also in attendance were: Margaret Buckton (UEN & RSA1), Dr. Paul Hutchison (Grinnell College), Roger Henderson (Grinnell College), Skylar Tallal, Ophelia Jacobson, Dalton Hidy, Erin Kokemiller, Caleb McCallough, Samantha Hernandez, and Roger Riley (WHO-TV 13), Simon Daniels, Deborah Elder, Keenan Crow, Rachel Lamparek, Kay Schmalen, Damian Thompson, Courney Collier, Deb Temperly, Molly Foster, David Epley, Ty Rushing, Jane Robinette, Michelle Johnson, Alex Peck, Dr. Judy Sweetman, Kathy Seibel, Hannah Mitchell, Bridget Godes, Kim Walsh, Benjamin Fisher, Linh Ta, John Hoyem, Jennifer Stanerson, Hannah Fingerhut (Associated Press), Pam Gronau, Jordan Mix, Sam Helmick, Darwin Danielson, DeeDee Dohman, Grant Gerlock (Iowa Public Radio), Kevin Kooienga, Dana Searles, Jane Dufoe, Linda Danielson, Christy Hickman (ISEA), Jason Noble, Ryan Wise, Chris Higgins, Michelle Kruse, and Robin Opsahl.

**State Board Business Meeting**

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

The meeting was conducted in person, with remote access information provided in the notice of meeting.

**Motion:** Brian Kane made a motion and Mary Meisterling seconded to approve the meeting agenda.

**Vote:** The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

## **Communication**

John Robbins made a statement regarding limiting the time of public comment based on the number of speakers wishing to provide public comment.

### *Public Comment*

Margaret Buckton, Urban Education Network (UEN), provided comment regarding the 2023 legislative session and requested further guidance and clarification from the Department pertaining to compliance with age appropriate curriculum and library books in schools.

### *Director's Report*

Director Snow started off by thanking members of the Board for their public service. Snow then shared the Department's unified statewide priorities, followed by an introduction of herself. Her most recent background includes serving as the Virginia Deputy Secretary of Education, New Hampshire Department of Education Division Director, and U.S. Department of Education Policy Director. Snow continued her report by sharing Department updates, including alignment, awards and recognitions earned by staff and students, Department-led events and professional development, and leadership's recent engagement with the field.

## **Consent Agenda**

**Motion:** Brian Kane made a motion and Cassandra Halls seconded to approve the consent agenda.

**Vote:** The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

## **Rules: Chapter 20 – Education Savings Accounts (Adopt)**

Thomas Mayes, General Counsel, presented information regarding Chapter 20 - Education Savings Accounts. Mayes reminded the Board that they have already adopted emergency rules which are currently in place. Changes for the proposed final rules to implement the Students First Education Savings Account Program include allowing the Director to consider case-by-case income changes, clarification that an approved provider's credential or license issued by the State of Iowa must be relevant to the service being provided, and clarification in the language to better define ineligible and eligible expenses.

Mayes also shared other proposed changes that were ultimately deemed unnecessary or not actionable.

There was also discussion regarding the appeals process, income provisions for special circumstances, and audit process concerns, which were addressed by Dr. Cassandra Cline, Bureau Chief of School Business Operations. Heather Doe, Bureau Chief of Communications confirmed that the total number of applications approved by the Department as of July 26 is 18,491; however, there are still applications which need additional information that are still being processed.

**Motion:** Brian Kane made a motion and Mike May seconded to approve recommended changes.

**Vote:** The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

### **Grinnell College Comprehensive Educator Preparation Program Approval**

Dr. Stephanie TeKippe, Consultant, Bureau of Community Colleges and Postsecondary Readiness presented the Grinnell College Educator Preparation Program Approval Report. Grinnell offers a secondary education preparation program.

The Department conducted an extensive program review and site visit as required in Chapter 256 stating that any practitioner preparation leading to licensure is subject to board approval. Grinnell has met Chapter 79 compliance standards.

Dr. Paul Hutchison and Roger Henderson, both of Grinnell College, shared information regarding the background and highlights of Grinnell's program, including changes being made to the assessment program, endorsements offered, a ninth semester program, an off-campus semester option, a student teacher placement partnership with two high schools in Minnesota, and the Mentored Advanced Project (MAP) student research program.

Discussion topics included details regarding the review process, addressing compliance concerns, student success rate, financial aid, student recruitment efforts, student population diversity, program requirements, adjunct faculty hiring process, onboarding procedures, and focus on literacy.

**Motion:** Mike May motioned and Cindy Dietz seconded to approve the program.

**Vote:** The ayes were unanimous. The motion carried.

### **Letter to the Field/Legislative Update**

Eric St Clair, Legislative Liaison, shared the Department's annual letter to the field issued in July, which provides a detailed summary of legislation affecting schools which was passed during the legislative session and signed into law.

There was discussion regarding teacher licensure requirements, teacher shortages, and legislation related to curriculum and book compliance.

### **State Board Retreat Planning**

There was discussion regarding the State Board retreat/meeting scheduled for September 14-15, 2023 at the Early Childhood Center in Council Bluffs.

### **Board Reports**

Cassandra Halls shared that the Community College Council (CCC) hosted its first luncheon between the Board of Education and Trustees and college presidents on July 17 as part of the annual Community College Trustee Annual Conference at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids. Thirty-six attendees came to the event. There will be another CCC event, the Community Colleges for Iowa Convention, on November 28-30 in Des Moines.

Cindy Dietz thanked Cassandra for coordinating the luncheon for CCC, which she also attended. She also attended the Southeast STEM Hub Community Stem Day on July 13 at Collins Aerospace in Cedar Rapids. This first-time event hosted over one thousand attendees and included demonstrations, workshops, and many vendors.

Brian Kane also attended the CCC luncheon and shared that there was much discussion at his table regarding finances and the cost of adult education in community colleges. He also shared his involvement with the community foundation in Dubuque and their efforts to bring awareness and support to the issue of dyslexia.


Mary Meisterling has been in contact with the president of the Grant Wood AEA Board regarding connecting regularly to discuss challenges and opportunities. She will also be meeting with Kirkwood Community College, the City of Cedar Rapids, and the school district regarding transportation issues and finding solutions to help students take better advantage of the technical education opportunities offered at the Kirkwood campus or other training centers.

Nathan Peterson shared that he also attended the CCC conference and learned a lot. He enjoyed speaking with people from different backgrounds and looks forward to similar opportunities in the future.


John Robbins attended a board meeting at Iowa Valley Community College and intends to attend meetings at North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC) and Iowa Central Community College (ICCC) in the future. He also shared that he was selected for induction to the Hall of Excellence at the University of Northern Iowa recently, which will be presented in October.

It was moved by Brian Kane and seconded by Mary Meisterling to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 am.



John Robbins  
President



McKenzie Snow  
Director