UEN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2026 at Noon
Via Zoom (contact jen@iowaschoolfinance.com for link)

Steering Committee Attendees: Amy Hawkins, Chair-Elect (Dubuque), Cindy Garlock (Cedar Rapids), Patrick Peters (Council Bluffs), Karen Kline Jerome (Davenport), and Jared Smith (Waterloo)
(Bylaws require a majority of charter members for a quorum, and the quorum was met for this meeting.)

Other Members in Attendance: Erick Pruitt (Ankeny), Josh Porter (Fort Dodge), and Theron Schutte (Marshalltown)

Staff/Guest Attendees: Margaret Buckton (ISFIS), Jen Albers (ISFIS)

UEN Purpose Statement:
The Urban Education Network keeps the state's lawmakers, the media, and the public informed about the progress and problems in our state's largest and most diverse schools. The organization does this through advocacy, legislation, communications and research.

The UEN also helps to build capacity in urban education by facilitating connections between member districts to improve student academic performance and narrow achievement gaps, improve professional development; and strengthen leadership, governance, and management.

In addition, joint efforts with other state organizations and policymakers extend the UEN's influence and effectiveness outside member school districts to the broader community that will ultimately benefit from the contributions of today's urban students.

All members of the Urban Education Network help determine program priorities. For guidance, the members rely upon data retrieved from local, state, regional and national sources. In addition, specific issues arise addressing contemporary events, legislative concerns and current trends. The priorities of the UEN continually evolve, reflecting the changing needs of urban students, families and communities.

1. **Call to Order and Introductions by Amy Hawkins (UEN Chair-Elect)**
   Chair-Elect Hawkins called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm. A quorum was present.

2. **Action on Agenda**
   Hawkins asked for any additions or changes to the agenda. None were brought forth.

3. **Action on Steering Committee Minutes from February 20, 2026**
   Smith moved approval of the agenda, seconded by Peters. Approved unanimously.

4. **Action on FY 2026 YTD Financial Report**
   Albers presented the FY 2026 YTD Financial Report through March 31, 2026, along with a bill pay listing of items since the last Steering Committee meeting. A motion was made by Pruitt

and seconded by Peters to approve the YTD Financial Report and Bill Pay Listing as presented. Approved unanimously.

5. **Action on FY 2027 Budget, Dues Schedule and Corporate Sponsorships**
   Albers and Buckton shared the FY 2027 Draft Budget and Membership Dues schedule history and a recommendation for FY 2027. Discussion ensued. Garlock moved the FY 2027 dues be set at $10,750 for Charter & Founding Members and $6,500 for Associate Members (no change from recent years), and approval of the FY 2027 Budget as presented. Second by Smith. Approved unanimously.

6. **Action on FY 2027 Steering Committee Members/Officers**
   Albers and Buckton shared the list of recommended Steering Committee officers and members for FY 2027. Discussion ensued. *Peters moved approval of the Steering Committee Members for FY 2027 as presented. Second by Smith. Approved unanimously.*

   The Treasurer role is a one-year term thus a Treasurer for FY 2027 needs to be appointed. *Hawkins nominated Smith to serve another term during FY 2027 as Treasurer. Second by Peters. Smith indicated he would be willing to serve again. Approved unanimously with Smith abstaining from the vote.*

7. **Action on FY 2027 Meeting Schedule**
   Included in the packet was the draft meeting schedule for FY 2027. Discussion ensued. *Garlock moved approval of the FY 2027 Meeting Dates. Second by Smith. Approved unanimously.*

8. **Report on Status of 2026 Legislative Session & Priorities**
   Buckton and the group discussed various legislative actions since the start of Session including status of the state budget, bills to the Governor thus far, advocacy actions before end of session, and the status of property tax bills.

9. **Report on Legislative Issue Survey for 2027 Priorities**
   Buckton and Albers shared last year's Legislative Issues Survey of the UEN membership and explained the plan for surveying membership again this summer. Staff asked SC members to share any concerns or additional questions they would like added. Feedback from the survey will be compiled and shared to prepare the 2027 legislative priorities for SC approval at the November meeting.

10. **Updates from Steering Committee Members**
    Steering Committee Members discussed various topics from their local districts including the status of superintendent search for upcoming transitions, plans for facility changes, and a discussion about how UEN staff could facilitate a member show & tell meeting where members share things they are each doing in their district with other members could Q&A to learn from one another.

11. **Other Business**
    No other business was discussed.

12. **Upcoming Meeting Dates** - https://www.uen-ia.org/calendar
    The group reviewed upcoming meeting dates.

13. **Adjourn**
    The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 12:50 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Jen Albers on behalf of Margaret Buckton, UEN Executive Director, 04/24/2026