

Bridge Consortium Superintendents Meeting
Inaugural Annual Meeting Minutes

Location: Keystone AEA – Elkader, IA

Time: 10:00 a.m.

I. Call to Order & Official Organizational Business

Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

Present:

- Central: Micah Gearhart
- Oelwein: Josh Ehn
- Turkey Valley (TV): Erik Smith
- New Hampton (NH): Erik Smith
- Decorah (Dec): Dr. Tim Cronin (*Virtual*)
- North Fayette Valley (NFV): Joe Griffith
- Postville: Karen (*Proxy, Virtual*) — (*Superintendent Absent*)
- South Winneshiek (SF): Ryan Cunningham
- Allamakee (All): Jay Mathis
- Eastern Allamakee (EA): Jay Mathis
- MFL MarMac: Tim Dugger
- Western Dubuque (WD): Jen Vance

Absent:

- Starmont
- West Central

Also Present (Keystone AEA):

- Annette Hyde
- Amy Holst
- Barb Schwamman

II. Executive Board & Officer Appointments

Election of the Executive Board

- Nominations: Micah Gearhart, Josh Ehn, Joe Griffith, Jen Vance, Erik Smith
- Action: Motion by Tim Dugger, seconded by Jay Mathis, to approve the slate of nominees for the 5-member Executive Board.
- Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers & Official Appointments

- Action: Motion by Jen Vance, seconded by Joe Griffith, to appoint Micah Gearhart (Central Elkader) as Consortium Chair, official Executive Director, and Fiscal Agent.
- Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

III. Programmatic Authorizations

AEA K-12 Behavioral Program Contract

- Action: Motion by Jay Mathis, seconded by Josh Ehn, to adopt a resolution authorizing the newly elected Executive Board to enter into final negotiations with the Area Education Agency (AEA) to provide the K-12 Behavioral Program.
- Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Financial Report

Financial Projections & Cost Analysis

- Discussion Highlights:
 - Review of SBRC (Special Education Supplemental Aid) application details.
 - Per-pupil cost structures and estimations for facility expenses.
 - Inquiries raised regarding the 5% administrative fee and overall cost percentages.
 - Recommendation: Create a one-page document or FAQ sheet to share with local business offices to clarify expectations and financial commitments.

V. Operational & Facilities Updates

Facilities & Launch Contingencies

- Presented by Annette Hyde.
- Discussion Highlights:
 - Delays noted regarding State Fire Marshal approvals and inspections.
 - Potential use of a portable building (Annex) was presented as an alternative.
 - Current student numbers/needs driving location contingencies:
 - Allamakee: 1 student (9th grade)
 - Decorah: 2 students (8th grade, 8th grade)
 - Postville: 1 student (2nd grade)
 - Starmont: 2 students (4th grade, 7th grade)
 - South Winneshiek: 2 students (4th grade, 7th grade)
 - Splitting Options Discussed:
 - *Option B*: Utilize the Annex building.
 - *Option C*: Split locations into North/South sites (Decorah/Lansing and Oelwein/Starmont).

Behavioral School Consortium Due Diligence

- The Executive Committee will review the Department of Education (DE) due diligence document and give final approval prior to official submission.

VI. Programming & Student Enrollment

Program Manuals & Placement Steps

- Presented by Amy Holst.
- Discussion Highlights:
 - Reviewed intake concerns and expected student outcomes; the team remains flexible to make procedural adjustments as needed.
 - Universal consensus to utilize standardized flowcharts and checklists for intake processes.
 - Intake Timeline: Intakes will occur on Wednesdays, allowing students to officially start the following Monday.

District Calendar & Assessment

- Early dismissal schedule: Fridays.
- General Education FAST and ISASP testing will remain the responsibility of, and be administered by, the resident district.

Professional Development: Teach to Heal

- Training Dates: August 20, 21, and 28.
- Districts are encouraged to send Special Education teachers and Administrators (a sign-up sheet will be provided).

VII. Open Discussion & Next Steps

- Program Start Date: August 31st.
 - Current consideration is to add 5 days to the end of the program calendar to accommodate the start date.
- Waitlist: Clear and regular communication with member districts regarding waitlisted students is essential.
- Executive Committee Reporting: The Executive Committee will provide monthly reports to the consortium.

VIII. Future Meetings & Adjournment

- Next Inaugural/Annual Meeting: July 20th, 2027
- Executive Committee Meetings: To be held concurrently with scheduled Superintendent Network Days.

- Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Joe Griffith, seconded by Jen Vance. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned.

Respectful submitted for approval:

Joshua J. Ehn - 7/21/26