



UEN Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
February 7, 2025, 12 pm
(following UEN Superintendents Meeting)
1201 63rd Street, Des Moines, IA 50311
or Via Zoom (contact jen@iowaschoolfinance.com for link)

Steering Committee Attendees: TJ Schneckloth, Chair (Davenport), Amy Hawkins, Chair-Elect II (Dubuque), Cindy Garlock (Cedar Rapids), Patrick Peters (Council Bluffs), Jackie Norris (Des Moines), 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: Mike McGrory (Ottumwa)

Staff/Guest Attendees: Margaret Buckton (ISFIS), Ken Sturgis (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 TJ Schneckloth (UEN Chair)

Chair Schneckloth called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm. Schneckloth asked for introductions with each participant sharing a celebration. A quorum was present.

2. Action on Agenda

Garlock moved approval of the agenda, seconded by Norris. Approved unanimously.

3. Action on Minutes from November 20, 2024

Garlock moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Norris. Approved unanimously.

4. Financial Items

a. Action on YTD Financial Report

Albers presented the YTD Financial Report through December 31, 2024, along with a bill pay listing of items since the last Steering Committee meeting. A motion was made by Hawkins to approve the 12/31/2024 YTD Financial Report and Bill Pay Listing as presented. Seconded by Garlock. Approved unanimously.

b. Action on Bank Account Signatory Authorization

Albers discussed some recent unauthorized activity on the UEN bank account and the process to recover those funds with the banks involved. As part of that, a replacement UEN checking account will be established. Discussion ensued. A motion was made by Peters to approve the UEN Treasurer and Director of Finance & Operations as the authorized signers on UEN checking accounts going forward. Seconded by Garlock. Approved unanimously.

c. Discussion on FY 2026 Budget Items

The group provided direction and discussed various items related to the FY 2026 budget that will be presented for approval at the May meeting, including: the process for renewal of the UEN contract with ISFIS, UEN audit engagement with Denman & Associates, membership dues for FY 2026 and beyond, organizational financial reserves, and various member engagement opportunities. Staff will coordinate with the UEN Officers to bring recommendations for FY 2026 to the May Steering Committee Meeting.

5. Report on Status of 2025 Session & UEN Legislative Priorities

Buckton reviewed the status of legislation around several of UEN's legislative priorities including SSA, preschool and others. Discussion ensued.

6. Discussion/Feedback on UEN Annual Dinner (November 20, 2024 at the Hilton)

The group debriefed the November UEN Annual Dinner and provided feedback for staff for 2025 planning purposes.

7. Report on Results of UEN Preschool Survey

As follow up from the November Steering Committee discussion, Buckton reviewed the responses from UEN member districts related to preschool services. Discussion ensued.

8. Updates from Steering Committee Members

Steering Committee members shared updates from their local districts and discussed the following topics: 2025 legislative session; "State of the District" presentations/discussions with communities and how each share the good news, recap of previous year and future plans for the district; suggestions around "lobby day" for school leaders and engaging urban districts for intentionally; and salaries for early childcare associates.

9. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:02 PM.

*Minutes respectfully submitted,
Margaret Buckton, UEN Executive Director, 2/7/2025*

UEN 2024-25 Steering Committee Members:

- Chair - TJ Schneckloth, Davenport
- Chair-Elect - Amy Hawkins, Dubuque
- Chair-Elect II - Rod Earlywine, Sioux City
- Past-Chair - Matt Degner, Iowa City
- Board Member - Cindy Garlock, Cedar Rapids
- Board Member - Astor Williams, Waterloo
- Board Member - Patrick Peters, Council Bluffs
- Board Member – Jackie Norris, Des Moines
- Treasurer - Jared Smith, Waterloo

All UEN Member Districts have a vote on matters in front of the Steering Committee.

Upcoming Steering Committee Meeting Dates - <https://www.uen-ia.org/calendar>

- May 9, 2025 - Steering Committee Lunch/Meeting 12-1:30 in Des Moines or via Zoom