

## CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT COMMITTEE

February 23, 2026

The conference realignment committee meeting was called to order by Marty Fonley (West Monona, West Harrison, Whiting). Members in attendance included Trevor Miller (Exira-EHK, Audubon), Andy Crozier (Central Lee), Brent Jorth (Central Lyon), Adam Riley (Decorah), Tara Williams (Pleasantville), Scot Lamm (Mount Pleasant), Eric Boyle (Waukee), Julie Girsch (Columbus Catholic), Tara Paul (Indianola), Bill Watson (Martensdale-St. Marys), Brandon Ruffridge (Fort Dodge), Zach Clark (Central Decatur), Jeff Bissen (Glenwood), Brent Cook (Dubuque Senior), Barb Schwamman (Osage, Riceville), and Deron Durflinger (Van Meter). Representing the IGHS AU: Erin Gerlich, Kylee Walker, and Elise Boulton. Representing the IHSAA: Tom Keating. Absent: Cade Lambert (Des Moines Christian).

The meeting was called to order at 11:00am, **motion by Miller, second by Durflinger, and passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Bisen, second by Schwamman to approve the minutes from the January 26<sup>th</sup> Conference Realignment Committee meeting with the following amendment regarding selection of the chair and vice chair that was inadvertently omitted in original minutes.**

**Selection of Chairperson of Committee - Motion by Crozier to appoint Marty Fonley as Chair and Deron Durflinger as Vice-Chair of the committee. Second by Miller. Approved unanimously. Amended language will be added to January 26, 2026**

The bylaws of the committee were reviewed and revised by members. Changes were made concerning the purpose and authority of the committee and the appeals process. **Motion to approve the bylaws of the committee by Durflinger, second by Watson, unanimously approved.**

The process and timeline of the committee was discussed. Paul discussed fast track application reviews based on past issues. Fast track application requirements were debated and decided on by the committee.

To complete the fast track process, the applying school must submit the following items: a formal letter of exit from their current conference with a date of release, a formal letter of admission into their new conference with a date of entry, and the school board minutes from the applicant's school with an approval for move date in agreement with their current conference.

**Motion by Durflinger, second by Schwamman to approve the fast track application process outlined above. Approved unanimously.**

Martensdale-St. Marys request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Martensdale-St. Marys requested to leave the Pride of Iowa Conference effective at the start of 2026-27 school year and join the West Central Activities Conference beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Martensdale-St. Marys also included an approval letter from the Martensdale-St. Marys school board consistent with the dates outlined by the West Central Activities Conference and the Pride of Iowa Conference. **Bissen motion to approve Martensdale-St. Marys request for conference affiliation, second by Cook and approved unanimously. Abstained: Williams, Watson, Durlinger, and Clark.**

Van Meter's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Van Meter requested to leave the West Central Activities Conference effective at the start of the 2027-28 school year and join the Raccoon River Conference beginning in the 2027-28 school year. Van Meter will be required to submit an approval letter from their School Board consistent with the dates outlined by the West Central Activities Conference and the Raccoon River Conference. **Motion by Lamm to approve Van Meter's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Van Meter School Board, second by Jorth and unanimously approved. Abstained: Williams, Watson, and Durlinger.**

Pella's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Pella requested to leave the Little Hawkeye Conference effective at the start of the 2028-29 school year and join the Raccoon River Conference beginning in the 2028-29 school year. Pella will be required to submit an approval letter from the Little Hawkeye Conference consistent with the dates outlined by the Raccoon River Conference and the Pella School Board. **Motion by Cook to approve Pella's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Little Hawkeye Conference, second by Schwamman and unanimously approved. Abstained: Paul.**

Red Oak's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Red Oak requested to leave the Hawkeye Ten Conference effective at the start of the 2026-27 school year and join the Western Iowa Conference beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Red Oak will be required to submit an approval letter from their School Board consistent with the dates outlined by the Hawkeye Ten Conference and the Western Iowa Conference. **Motion by Williams to approve Red Oak's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Red Oak School Board, second by Riley and unanimously approved. Abstained: Bissen and Miller.**

Shenandoah's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Shenandoah requested to leave the Hawkeye Ten Conference effective at the start of the 2026-27 school year and join the Western Iowa Conference beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Shenandoah will be required to submit an approval letter from

their School Board consistent with the dates outlined by the Hawkeye Ten Conference and the Western Iowa Conference. **Motion by Jorth to approve Shenandoah's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Shenandoah School Board, second by Watson and unanimously approved. Abstained: Bissen and Miller.**

Lewis Central's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Lewis Central requested to leave the Hawkeye Ten Conference effective at the start of the 2026-27 school year and join the Missouri River Conference beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Lewis Central will be required to submit an approval letter from their School Board consistent with the dates outlined by the Hawkeye Ten Conference and the Missouri River Conference. **Motion by Miller to approve Lewis Central's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Lewis Central School Board, second by Paul and unanimously approved. Abstained: Bissen.**

Carroll's request for conference affiliation was reviewed by the committee. Carroll requested to leave the Raccoon River Conference effective at the start of the 2026-27 school year and join the Hawkeye Ten Conference beginning in the 2026-27 school year. Carroll will be required to submit an approval letter from their School Board consistent with the dates outlined by the Hawkeye Ten Conference and the Raccoon River Conference. **Motion by Miller to approve Carroll's request for conference affiliation pending a letter of approval from the Carroll School Board, second by Clark and unanimously approved. Abstained: Bissen.**

The committee chair will notify the school districts with approved conference realignment changes.

The draft of the committee handbook was reviewed and edited by members. There was discussion on the standard application process, but it was determined that a subcommittee would be formed to finalize the standard application process prior to the next meeting.

Jorth, Crozier, Cook, and Girsch have formed a subcommittee to review the conference realignment application process. The subcommittee will meet prior to the next committee meeting to present a standard application process.

The committee will meet within ten business days of the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**With no further business, Jorth motion to adjourn, second by Miller and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:00pm.**

Elise Boulton

Recorder