

CONFERENCE REALIGNMENT COMMITTEE

February 27, 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), Scot Lamm (Mount Pleasant), Eric Boyle (Waukee), Tara Paul (Indianola), Bill Watson (Martensdale-St. Marys), Brandon Ruffridge (Fort Dodge), Zach Clark (Central Decatur), Jeff Bissen (Glenwood), and Deron Durlinger (Van Meter).

Representing the IGHSAU: Erin Gerlich, Kylee Walker, and Elise Boulton. Representing the IHSAA: Tom Keating.

Absent: Cade Lambert (Des Moines Christian), Julie Girsch (Columbus Catholic), Brent Cook (Dubuque Senior), Tara Williams (Pleasantville), Barb Schwamman (Osage, Riceville).

Motion to approve the February 27, 2026 agenda by Bissen, second by Jorth, unanimously approved.

Fonley mentioned that he has shared his notes from his discussion with Thomas Mayes regarding the bylaws. Mayes also shared recommendations for the committee to review. Fonley mentioned that Mayes recommends the committee add Principal Place of Business to the bylaws and have all committee members whose school or conference may be under consideration regarding school placement recuse themselves from involvement. The Principal Place of Business will be the Iowa High School Athletic Association. Under Members, item G, Mayes recommended adding “all related discussion, review of information and determination for approval/denial of such application”.

Motion by Boyle to amend By-Laws to include the following language

Principal Place of Business

The principal place of business for the Conference Realignment Committee shall be the Office of the Iowa High School Athletic Association, 1605 South Story St. Boone, Iowa 50036.

Members Section, Item g) add **related discussion, review of information and** between the words from and determination in the second line of text.

second by Paul, unanimously approved.

Jorth mentioned that the subcommittee met to discuss the application process. The application materials are for the member school(s) requesting a change in conference affiliation. Keating mentioned that the committee needs to be a review committee with the applying school being responsible for providing all requested documentation to the committee for review. Fonley mentioned sending a letter to conferences under consideration for the schools placement with the conference being responsible to send requested materials for the committee to review. Paul mentioned that more information needs to be included in the cover letter process to include attempted solutions for the committee to review and have information on those attempted solutions. Jorth reviewed the subcommittee's proposed timeline with the group. Fonley and Durflinger will organize small groups to review applications from member schools after the application process is closed on November 1. The committee discussed dividing our membership into quadrants of the state in an effort to avoid conflicts of interest related to the conference memberships of individual committee members. The conference realignment committee will meet as a large group in December following the small group meetings. At that meeting the committee would determine what possible conference placement options to consider. Following the meeting, conference commissioners/chairs under consideration for placement of the appealing school would be notified and given 30 days to provide documentation in support of their position. In mid January the committee will schedule hearings with all parties. On January 30, the committee will meet for approval, denial, or recommended solutions. Following that meeting the applying school and all conference commissioners/chairs who were under consideration will be notified. Any appeals related to the committee's decision may be sent to the Director of the Department of Education within 60 days of notification of the committee's determination.

The committee discussed meeting again next week with a goal of finalizing the application materials, process, and timeline. Director Gerlich will send out a doodle poll to determine a meeting date next week.

With no further business, Crozier motioned to adjourn, second by Miller and approved unanimously.

Kylee Walker

Recorder