



October 14, 2026 DPO Meeting Minutes

7:00–8:00 pm | Held at the ICCSD Center for Innovation and via Zoom | Meeting called to order ~7:02 pm

Meeting Recording: <https://youtu.be/-tvGYu9W5Ao?si=HPwUh1j-KxtZSGVv>

OPENING: Welcome from DPO Board

- In-Person Attendees: Angela Romero, Anna Flaming, Cristy Walcher-Chevillet, Colleen Theisen (Tate High School PTO), Laura Ebinger (Foundation for ICCSD), JoAnna Droll-Madole (North Central PSTO), Tea Ho (City PSTO), Colin Richenbacher (Lemme Elementary PTA), Angela Rogers, Sarah Kelley (Weber Elementary PTO), Interim Superintendent Amy Kortemeyer, Pat Moore (ICCSD CFO), Curt Pratt (ICCSD COO)
- Online Attendees: Hanna Zembrzuska, Jennifer Horn-Frasier, Charlie Eastham, Sara Curtin DeLara Wickham, Emily Johnson (filling in for regular DPO liaison), Katie, Lena Peterson, Jan Beaver, Lindsay Schroeder (full online list not captured)
- Opening remarks: meeting scheduled for 60 minutes; presenters thanked for joining a difficult and sensitive conversation; all asked to take part in open, respectful discussion (listen with curiosity, speak with courtesy, assume good intent). Pauses built in for questions – in the chat or live.

DPO OFFICER REPORTS

1. Co-President Update:

- a. DPO has been speaking with PTOs across the district to share information about the DPO and help connect schools; visited 21 of 28 school sites so far with 2 visits pending – schools not yet visited, or wanting a return visit, should reach out
- b. Two topics have come up at several PTO visits; DPO can help connect interested schools:
 - i. Read-a-thons information sharing – schools with experience share what works with schools starting one
 - ii. PTO carnival games lending library/decentralized carnival game exchange (e.g., fish-and-magnet game, wheel game) – spreadsheet:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1IZYr32wKWpmZ9Jtk6ByS884HBjjKCjrQYv37Y604-TA/edit?usp=sharing>



- c. PTO directory (presidents/treasurers) recently updated; will be sent to all PTOs/PTSOs/PTAs after the meeting to review and send corrections

2. Treasurer Update – Hanna Zembrzuska:

Treasurer's Report Slides:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Zdp892Inmp_6WmAZJ90RY4Z6u5PR2tXJOUCQPuiWphQ/edit?usp=sharing

- a. DPO dues (\$40/year) fund DPO scholarships for students going into education, awarded at the end of the year
- b. Dues received from: Borlaug, Coralville Central, Grant, Hoover, Kirkwood, Lincoln, Tate High School, Lucas, North Central Middle, Northwest Middle, Penn, Shimek, Weber, Wickham
- c. Dues not yet received from: Alexander, City High, Garner, Horn, Lemme, Liberty High, Longfellow, Mann, Southeast Middle, Twain, Van Allen, West High, Wood
- d. Send dues to Shimek Elementary, 1400 Grissel Place, Iowa City, c/o Hanna Zembrzuska; questions can go to the DPO email; PTOs without a checkbook can pay cash by meeting Hanna or another board member (including at a DPO meeting)

IOWA CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REPORTS

1. School Board Representatives – Jennifer Horn-Frasier, Charlie Eastham:

- a. Welcomed new board director Audrey Muller last month; she will serve through November (next election)
- b. Work underway involving community members/committees toward budget reduction:
 - i. Boundary Analysis Committee (~60 people from across the district) – at last night's meeting the board expanded its charge to look at boundaries across all schools, elementary through secondary, within a four-year budget-reduction horizon
 - ii. In parallel, administration, Financial Oversight Committee, and board are reviewing non-school buildings and land (including CFI) and other cost-saving measures not tied to buildings; many creative ideas coming from the community and thanks to those serving on the committee



- iii. Administration is leading an outside-firm organizational structure analysis and a compensation and benefits study
- iv. Financial Oversight Committee is getting up and running; meeting schedule for the rest of the school year approved last night
- c. District EdTech workgroup (parents, medical professionals, teachers, board members, librarians, administrators) is looking at screen-time practices, 1:1 device use, policy, and instructional frameworks to improve educational outcomes and health; continues work from last spring's screen time survey and will continue into next spring
- d. Work session after last night's meeting focused on evaluating proposals from firms to conduct the permanent superintendent search; firm expected to be identified by end of October, with community input and a new superintendent in place by July 1, 2027
- e. Charlie Eastham confirmed the report was comprehensive and accurate

2. Administration Representative – Interim Superintendent Amy Kortemeyer:

- a. Introduced by Cristy: 30+ years in education; previously ICCSD Director of Elementary Schools, Assistant Superintendent, and Deputy Superintendent; most recently Linn-Mar superintendent; interim superintendent since July 1
- b. Honored to return to the district and hopes to provide stability during the superintendent search; currently focused mostly on operations/management
- c. Latest legislative session brought more changes for Iowa public schools; board policies updated this year reflect those changes
- d. Welcomed Director Audrey Muller; at last night's meeting Carmen Rananale [spelling to confirm] presented a two-year associate's degree pathway for students graduating from the district
- e. Audits: FY24 audit complete (14 findings); FY25 audit draft expected soon, then to Financial Oversight Committee and Board in November; auditors return in December for FY26 field work, to be completed and reported in March, meeting the March 30 statutory deadline – audits will then be caught up
- f. Thanked CFO Pat Moore (here since May) and COO Curt Pratt for stepping in when the financial distress was discovered in January



SPEAKERS AND TOPICS – School Budget & Financial Management

Pat Moore (ICCSd CFO) & Curt Pratt (ICCSd COO); Amy Kortemeyer facilitated. Presentation of ~8 slides, conversational with pauses for questions.

Presentation Slides (School Budget & Financial Management):

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14fxTig0Kj9-jTEN0xO9Bg00T_9ekgg_v/view?usp=sharing

1. Audit process and status (Pat Moore):
 - a. FY24 draft arrived 5 days after her mid-May start; went to the Board of Education within a month, then to the state
 - b. FY25: auditors completed field work (invoices, coding); draft expected next week; Pat and the assistant controller review line by line, back-and-forth with auditor, then Financial Oversight Committee, then Board of Education, then filed with the state – at which point the district is considered current
 - c. FY26 audit not due until end of March 2027; auditors return in December, then same review path with filing in March
 - d. Q (Colin, parent): Who is the audit firm and is it new? A: Bohnsack & Frommelt [spelling to confirm], selected through an RFP (3–4 respondents); FY25 is their second audit and the contract runs through about 2028. Prior firm was RSM through the FY23 audit. New firm is a Quad Cities-based firm that works on both sides of the river, has experience with large Iowa districts and school finance, and has been very responsive
2. School finance overview – funds are “buckets” that can’t all be used the same way:
 - a. General Fund (operating fund, a taxing fund): ~99% of staff paid from it, including coaches’ salaries; revenue mostly property taxes, state aid, and miscellaneous (open enrollment, special education, federal grants such as Medicaid). The ~\$14 million in targeted cuts apply to the General Fund
 - b. Management Fund (taxing): general liability insurance, unemployment, early retirement. Student Activity Fund: admissions, fees, fundraising for co-/extracurriculars
 - c. Capital Projects: SAVE (one-cent state sales tax) and PPEL (property-tax-derived) – buildings, grounds, improvements. The Coralville pool project would be funded from Capital Projects and does not interact with teacher salaries or positions



- d. Debt Service (taxing): principal and interest on bonds. Nutrition Fund (enterprise): meal sales. Health and dental: self-funded
 - e. Q: Isn't shifting money from one bucket to another how this all started? A: Yes – the previous CFO made a cash loan from the Health Insurance Fund to the General Fund in August 2025, retroactively approved in January 2026; usually approval comes first. The obligation was due before 10/1 and has been met in full. Funds were believed to cover payroll (Aug. 31/Sept. 15), i.e., teacher salaries and other employee costs (chat question, Lena Peterson)
3. Key terms and the “ceiling”:
- a. Supplemental State Aid (SSA) is the per-pupil amount from the state (~\$8,000); “allowable growth” is the percent increase the legislature sets each spring
 - b. Iowa is a ceiling state: the Maximum Authorized Budget (MAB) is a legal cap, more like a credit limit than cash; the district also needs cash to spend up to it. Unspent Authorized Budget (UAB) and solvency ratios relate to the General Fund
 - c. Q: Does the district spend up to the cap? A: Typically very close, for at least a decade. That is not inherently bad if there are reserves, but without reserves there is a very narrow margin of error
 - d. Q (chat, Sara Curtin DeLara Wickham): What percent of the budget is the General Fund? A: Roughly 60% of overall budget
 - e. Q (chat, Katie): What is the ceiling? A: \$232 million for FY26; unaudited expenditures were \$222 million. Property sales last year helped the district stay under the ceiling
4. Reserves:
- a. Experts (IASB) suggest a 7–17% reserve; board policy targets 10–15%; goal is to keep the reserve intact and spend each year's revenue on students. ~90 days cash on hand is a common standard; the district is not there and it will not happen overnight
 - b. Q: Can reserves come from somewhere other than leftovers? A: Yes, e.g., property sale proceeds. When a building is sold, the board can hold a hearing and vote to put the funds in the General Fund instead of Capital Projects (law change in the last 2–3 years); the board did this
 - c. Q: When was the last time the district had a healthy reserve? A: Uncertain, but likely more than 5 years ago, around when Craig Hansel (sp?) was CFO. Need a balance – a taxing entity owes it to constituents to spend money on services



- d. Q (chat, Lena Peterson): Is there a national benchmark for reserves? A: Difficult because funding differs by state; 90 days is typical; National Association of School Business Officials is a resource
 - e. Q (chat, Jan Beaver): Does the district have professional code of conduct insurance in general liability? A: The district has insurance; the question needed clarification and was not revisited
5. Enrollment and revenue:
- a. Enrollment rose steadily from 2001, peaked around FY20, and has been up and down since (e.g., 14,284 in FY21, then +101); a slight downward trend is expected (lower birth rates, possible federal pressures on immigrant families, vouchers now in a second year with no income cap). A fuller enrollment report with projections is expected in November (5-year look-ahead)
 - b. Q: Small enrollment declines seem minor – why such a big impact? A: Without reserves, small swings hit harder; ~\$8,000 per student means 100 students ≈ \$800,000, compounding over years. A budget guarantee (101% of prior year, board approval) only delays the “stair-step” down
 - c. Enrollment-based revenue is a significant portion of the General Fund (property tax levy, open enrollment tuition, state aid, categoricals, federal funds such as Title and Medicaid); revenue slide used district data from 9/6/2026 (pre-audit)
 - d. Q: Open enrollment numbers, and could our issues reduce them? A: Estimates are still being finalized; the district is typically even or slightly positive, which is rare among peer urban districts (Liberty High helped); a decrease would require a budget response
6. Expenditures (FY26 slide): regular instruction \$86.2M; coaches \$3.7M; building-based support (attendance, social work, guidance, nursing) ~\$8.8M; instructional support (curriculum, PD, library/media) \$14.2M; general administration \$3.3M; central business/technology/HR \$5.8M; AEA flow-through has shrunk after legislative changes, with some funds now used for the district’s own special education services
7. Budget reduction planning:
- a. Board chose planning assumptions of 1% SSA and low enrollment (projections ~1.5 years old; SSA historically averages ~2%) → \$13.8 million this year and \$32.5 million over four years; this is a projection/roadmap and locking in assumptions carries risk



- b. Adjustments focus on buildings, programs, and people: Boundary Analysis Committee (buildings); organizational review; compensation and benefits analysis
 - c. Q: What is included under organizational review? A: Whole district at some level, with deeper dives into ~6 departments (roles and responsibilities, chains of command, gaps/redundancies) and benchmarking others against peers such as Waukee. Compensation/benefits analysis (job descriptions, pay philosophy, market position) is mainly a board/administration process; community engagement for the organizational review is still being determined
8. Slides will be shared; topic presentation link and meeting recording (also on the DPO YouTube channel) are listed at the top of these minutes. Attendees invited to reach out to the speakers

FOUNDATION REPORT – Laura Ebinger

- Acknowledged a heavy start to the fall; thanked PTOs and community members who stepped up (meals for teachers, principals from other buildings subbing) – “looking for the helpers”
- Run for the Schools – this Sunday (Oct. 18); still looking for volunteers (especially course marshals) and participants; weather looks perfect; signing up under a school earns participation dollars for that school’s library and PE
- Visiting author Dan Santat – all 2nd graders on Oct. 26 and 27 at CFI; families welcome to join
- Thursday, Oct. 29 – Symphony Sparks Magic at Voxman for all 4th graders; School of Music hosts a costume contest (bring earplugs)

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

- Request for support with a food drive or food assistance. Laura coordinated with the Tate representative about available resources.

ADJOURNMENT (8:08 pm)



**IOWA CITY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
All In for All Kids

Districtwide Parents Organization

Iowa City Community School District
dpoiccsd@gmail.com • www.iowacityschools.org/dpo

District Parent Organization Executive Board:

- **Co-Presidents:** Cristy Walcher-Chevillet & Anna Flaming
- **Co-Past Presidents:** Laura Voshell & Allison Strickland
- **Secretary:** Angela Romero
- **Treasurer:** Hanna Zembrzuska

Future Meetings

November 11, 2026 – ICCSD Center for Innovation & Zoom

For more information, questions, or feedback, please contact the DPO at DPOICCSD@gmail.com