Plan for Progress
Board of Directors 2004-2005
2005 Board Legislative Advocacy Plan

Directive F3: Legislative Action Plan

Prepare a Legislative Action Plan for the upcoming Iowa Legislature with a goal to increasing education funding from the state.

Vision

Advocacy on behalf of public education is a primary responsibility for school board members. Des Moines Public Schools Board of Directors will speak with a unified voice in 2005 in support of its stated legislative goals. The board will implement a specific plan of advocacy with an emphasis on adequate funding for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. Des Moines school board members will be leaders in advocating on behalf of public education in Iowa by mobilizing fellow school board members and maintaining regular and effective contact with legislators.

Today’s Reality

The board annually takes numerous steps to advocate at the state level on behalf of Des Moines Public Schools. The board each year:

- Expects the Superintendent to advocate on behalf of the district and provide accurate information to legislators. See Appendix 5- State of the Schools.
- Approves legislative goals for the following fiscal year, submitted to the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB).
- Approves legislative resolutions of the Urban Education Network (UEN) and participates in the UEN annual meeting reviewing legislative issues.
- Appoints members to the IASB Delegate Assembly and participates in the annual IASB convention. See Appendix 2 for IASB advocacy and position statements.
- Participates in UEN Lobby Day during the legislative session, meeting with groups of legislators and individual legislators. See Appendix 3.
- Convenes a gathering of Polk County area legislators to discuss priorities prior to the beginning of the legislative session.
- Attends legislative sessions and legislative committee hearings as needed, working with the UEN representative.
- Maintains relationships with legislators discussing issues as they arise during the legislative session.
The Board has approved its 2005 legislative goals for the 2005-2006 school year. They include:

A. **Adequate Funding**- including 6% Allowable Growth

B. **Equitable and Stable Funding**- including revision of the School Aid Formula and raising the Uniform Levy to restore equity

C. **Early Childhood**- available to all three and four year olds

Annual efforts have been successful in maintaining positive working relationships with area legislators, other urban districts, IASB, School Administrators of Iowa, Iowa PTA, and other groups supporting education.

The advocacy goal in 2004 for 2004-2005 was 6% Allowable Growth.

Early 2004 legislative predictions mentioned 0% Allowable Growth in 2004-2005 and no more than 2% Allowable Growth in 2005-2006. The final results were 2% with “backfill” of across-the-board cuts and 4%, respectively.

A high level of Des Moines involvement in planning and executing advocacy on behalf of 6% appears to have contributed substantially to convincing legislators to increase Allowable Growth.

### Action Plan

The Board’s goal for 2005 is adequate funding, including 6% Allowable Growth in 2005-2006.

In order to advocate for this goal, Board members will engage members of the 81st General Assembly and the Office of the Governor in consistent, unified, and ongoing dialogue on board goals. Partners in this advocacy process will include district teachers, administrators, and other staff, parents and community advocates, and statewide advocacy partners such as Iowa Association of School Boards, Urban Education Network, Iowa PTA, Iowa State Education Association, and School Administrators of Iowa.

Advocacy will highlight the impact of several years of significant reductions in funding compared to historic levels, successful district efforts to use dollars in the most efficient manner possible while avoiding where possible local property tax increases, the increased financial needs related specifically to the federal No Child Left Behind requirements, and the positive impact on Iowa economic development of strong and successful public schools. See Appendix 8 for 2004 scientific survey on public support for education.

Strategies utilized by all board members in conveying these messages will include:

- One-on-One relationships- each Board member establishing and maintaining ongoing dialogue with three to five key legislators.
• Pairings- working together on a consistent message supporting adequate funding with board members in similar circumstances, such as urban board members and board members from declining enrollment districts.

• Partnerships- Board members maintaining regular contact with and participating in advocacy organized by education groups including IASB, UEN, ISEA, PTA) and assisting parent advocates. See Appendix 8 for Gallup survey on parent support for public education.

• Business Partnerships- Board members working to inform and maintaining open dialogue with influential business and advocacy groups such as the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Iowa Chamber Alliance, and Iowa Farm Bureau.

• Board Reception with all Polk County area legislators on Wednesday, January 5, 2005, offering a “Sneak Preview” of a newly-completed renovation and expansion of a portion of East High school.

• UEN Lobby Day, January 25, 2005, 9:45 a.m.- 2:15 p.m., meeting with legislators and discussing goals and priorities.

• UEN Follow-Up Lobby Day for Des Moines representatives, February 22, 2005.

• Legislative Committee meetings- working with UEN contacts to maintain awareness of committee discussions and attend and speak if necessary.

Continuous Improvement

The 2005 Legislative Advocacy Plan strategies will be reassessed and refined continually as legislative positions and events unfold. Strategies may be reassessed at several points during the 2005 state budget process, including release of 2005-2006 budget proposals by the Governor and legislative leaders and legislative deadlines such as “funnel weeks” which eliminate or adjust legislation.

2005 legislative outcomes will be the basis for 2006 Legislative Advocacy Plans finalized in fall 2005.

Appendices

F3- 1 Iowa General Assembly Information
F3- 2 Iowa Association of School Boards Advocacy Information
F3- 3 Urban Education Network Legislative Resolutions
F3- 4 My Iowa Schools Advocacy Consortium
F3- 5 State of the Schools
F3- 6 Legislative Correspondence Samples
F3- 7 Legislative Statements Samples
F3- 8 2004 Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll on Public Education Support
**Goal**- Increasing education funding from the state.

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<td>• Board members each contact 3-5 legislators&lt;br&gt;• Board reception with local legislators&lt;br&gt;• UEN Day at legislature&lt;br&gt;• UEN- Des Moines Followup at legislature&lt;br&gt;• Legislative Committee meeting involvement</td>
<td>Dec. 2004&lt;br&gt;January 5, 2005&lt;br&gt;January 25, 2005&lt;br&gt;February 22, 2005&lt;br&gt;January-April 2005</td>
<td>Board, staff&lt;br&gt;Staff&lt;br&gt;UEN, Staff&lt;br&gt;UEN, Staff&lt;br&gt;Staff, UEN</td>
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<td>Board pairings with other boards</td>
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<td>Partnerships with education groups</td>
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<td>Board dialogue and information with Iowa Chamber Alliance, Greater Des Moines Partnership</td>
<td>Jan.-April 2005</td>
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**2005 Advocacy and Legislative Timeline**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 17-18, 2004</td>
<td>Urban Education Network/Iowa Association of School Boards</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10, 2004</td>
<td>Begin to identify and Contact 3-5 legislators/Governor’s staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 10, 2004</td>
<td>Invite Polk area legislators to Informational Breakfast</td>
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<td>January 5, 2005</td>
<td>Informational “Sneak Preview” Reception at East High School</td>
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<td>January 10, 2005</td>
<td>81st General Assembly Opens</td>
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<td>January 11, 2005</td>
<td>Governor’s Condition of the State Address</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 17, 2005</td>
<td>Begin weekly to daily dialogue with 3-5 legislators/Governor’s staff</td>
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<td>January 25, 2005</td>
<td>UEN Lobby Day, 9:45am- 2:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22, 2005</td>
<td>Follow-up Des Moines Lobby Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>March-April 2005</td>
<td>Attend legislative Committees, other ongoing follow-up</td>
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