

Political Voices

Democrat

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for research and treatment, and an influx of medical professionals to tackle the problem. Instead, the federal government slashed National Institute of Health (NIH) grant funding to our universities (including ongoing patient trials), and the governor asked the legislature to allocate just \$1 million for new cancer research, a relative drop in the bucket. Meanwhile, some of our state legislative colleagues have been so focused on attacking higher education that it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain the medical professionals and researchers we so desperately need. We only need to look across the Missouri River to neighboring Nebraska for a different model. They have purposefully built a robust, well-funded, and well-staffed research and development program. We can, too.

Iowa struggles to provide adequate access to maternal healthcare, especially in our rural areas (fully one-third of our counties are considered maternity care deserts). After abandoning the federal Medicaid family planning network in favor of an anemic state-run program, the legislature passed one of the country's strictest abortion bans. Now, even more hospitals are closing labor and delivery units, in part because legislative policy has created an environment where medical professionals must walk a legal and medical tightrope while trying to make split-second, complex decisions. We must again become a welcoming state for medical professionals.

We've lost out on a dozen CDC grants aimed at providing funding for state and local health departments because Republican officials fell in line, rather than challenging President Trump's draconian cuts in court. States that did, won their legal challenges and kept their grants. We work for Iowans we should have, too. We still can.

Carefully researched legislation aimed at addressing Iowa's nursing home issues can't even get subcommittee hearings because they were introduced by a Democrat. Good ideas aren't red or blue – they're Iowan. Let's pass them.

On top of it all, every member of our Republican federal delegation signed onto a disastrous budget bill that has our rural hospitals, which already run on thin margins, worried that upcoming cuts to Medicaid may force them to shutter. And when a hospital closes, it doesn't just close for Medicaid patients, it closes for everyone, with enormous economic knock on impacts for that community as well. That's bad policy – let's reverse it.

Improving healthcare access, affordability, and quality for ALL Iowans, regardless of zip code, starts by examining what actually works, not "fixing" things that aren't broken. The next step is showing a spine and working for Iowa solutions. Real leadership means getting it done. We're ready.

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cal and dental school slots prioritize Iowans and give preference to residency candidates with Iowa roots. Primary care residencies are now required to offer rural rotations, introducing them to communities that need them most. These smart, targeted reforms directly address the shortage and retention problem.

We're also expanding access to maternal healthcare by removing outdated barriers that made it harder to open birthing centers. At the same time, Iowa is adding hundreds of new residency slots, investing in maternal health through enhanced Medicaid reimbursement, and streamlining approvals so providers can deliver care more efficiently. These are real investments with real impact for rural families, not just empty rhetoric.

And it's paying off. WalletHub recently ranked Iowa as the 4th best state in America to practice medicine and 2nd for opportunity and competition. Those rankings aren't just numbers on a page, they reflect Iowa's growing strength in training, recruiting, and retaining top medical talent.

Caring for veterans and disabled Iowans remains a top priority. The new state

Republican

budget increases funding for home and community-based services, boosts rates for prosthetic and orthotic providers, and invests millions more into the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Iowa Veterans Home. These resources are making a real difference for the Iowans who deserve our deepest respect.

Rural hospitals are also receiving critical support to expand access to specialty care. Recent state grants helped Cass Health, Mahaska Health, and Van Buren County Hospital bring new services closer to home for rural Iowans. And by combining mental health and substance use care into a single Behavioral Health Service System, we're simplifying access and ensuring more coordinated, effective support.

At the federal level, President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill makes the largest investment in rural healthcare in American history, more than \$50 billion to modernize hospitals, retain staff, and expand services. Importantly, the program trusts communities to decide how best to use those dollars, rather than forcing them into a one-size-fits-all federal mold.

The bill also strengthens Medicaid for the vul-

nerable including pregnant women, children, seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income families, while rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse. It cracks down on improper payments, and ensures taxpayer dollars are going where they are truly needed.

And it includes commonsense work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents. Most Americans agree that if you are able to work, you should either have a job or contribute through community service in order to receive Medicaid benefits. Democrats oppose this, but Iowans know Medicaid must remain an honest program that protects those who truly need it.

Whether you live in a big city or a small town, every Iowan deserves access to affordable, quality healthcare close to home. Thanks to Gov. Reynolds, Iowa Republicans, and a strong partnership with the Trump administration, rural healthcare is no longer an afterthought, it's a top priority.

We're not done, and we should never be complacent. But the progress is real, and the future is bright. Iowa is proving that strong conservative leadership works. We need to keep going.

EARLHAM COMMUNITY SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES
Oct. 8, 2025
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
The Earlham School Board met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. in the School Library on October 8, 2025. Board President Joey Morrison called the meeting to order. Roll call was answered by E. Christensen, K. Henke, J. Morrison, C. Lenze and J. Tiemeyer. There were two visitors.

Approval of Agenda
E. Christensen moved the board to approve the agenda. C. Lenze seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Consent Agenda
Minutes from Sept. 10 board meeting.
Open Enrollment Applications
Financial Statements and Invoices
E. Christensen moved the board to approve the agenda. C. Lenze seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Public Forum - No communication from the public
Personnel Report
Resignations:
a) New Hires
a) Part-time Kitchen - Christy Donnelly
a. Part-time Kitchen - Dusty Stanley
b. Assistant MS Boys Basketball - Dion Braet
2. Contract Lane Change
a. Alex Teig - BA-0 to BA-15
K. Henke moved the board to approve the Personnel Report. J. Tiemeyer seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

New Business The Trane Service agreement was presented to the board for consideration. This agreement is the annual prevention service performed by Trane. For reference: 24-25 Agreement, 25-26 Proposed Agreement. E. Christensen moved the board to approve the Trane service agreement. C. Lenze seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The board was presented with an operational sharing change due to the upcoming change in school business official. The district would dissolve the sharing agreement with Orient-Macksburg for school business official and pursue a sharing agreement with Van Meter for school business official C. Lenze moved the board to approve the sharing agreement. K. Henke seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

The instructional support levy (ISL) has been implemented as part of district funding since 2012. It is set to expire in the fall of 2026. The board discussed and tabled the consideration of this resolution in September and brought it back in October for consideration. The board discussed a consideration to continue the ISL and adjust how the levy is made up. It is currently all property tax and the board is considering the implementation of an income surtax to offset the property tax. E. Christensen moved the board to continue participation in the Instructional Support program. K. Henke seconded the motion. A role call vote was held, all board members voted aye to approve the continuation unanimously. Public Hearing - November 19, 2025 at 5:30pm - Located in the Library

Early Graduation Requests were by Emily Smith and Lillian Black. J. Tiemeyer made a motion to approve the early graduation request by both students. C. Lenze seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

A special education Application was proposed to allow the district the spending authority on special education programming. C. Lenze moved the board to approve the special education application. E. Christensen seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Snow Removal bids were presented to the board. The district received three bids: Double J, Adams Snow Removal and Midwest Roof and Siding. After review of the bids, C. Lenze moved the board to approve Adams Snow Removal for the snow removal needs. E. Christensen seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Information
Information items were presented to the board. Construction update on the practice room was provided. The building has passed fire inspection and the district has been granted occupancy. The 2nd floor remodel is complete as well.

Committee work will begin with the following groups. Committee members will be contacted this upcoming week. Committee Work (Board Goal: Culture)
Technology Committee - Monday, November 24 - 6:00pm, Facilities Committee - Monday, November 3 - 6:00pm, SIAC - Tuesday, November 18 - 6:00pm

Superintendent Kaster gave the board information on the upcoming school board election and workshop. There will be an opportunity to meet the candidate evening on Tuesday, October 29 at 6:00pm. General forum questions will be asked of all candidates followed by the opportunity for individual questions and answers. The board workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, October 22 at 5:30pm. The topic is deepening the board's governance role in student learning.

Adjourn
E. Christensen moved the board to adjourn the meeting. C. Lenze seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Cards Beat Warhawks

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Winey with a hit at the 14, but he showed incredible balance and strength to stay on his feet. A few defenders in the area hesitated a bit—maybe thinking Winey was down—and that's all he needed. He accelerated down the sideline untouched for the score, and the Cards led, 7-0, at 3:09 in the 1st quarter.

The Warhawks answered. After the Cards' onside kick went out of bounds, they drove 50 yards in 4 minutes for the tying touchdown, scoring at the 11-minute mark of the 2nd quarter.

Cash Eitel returned the ensuing kickoff to the 43. On 1st down, Winey struck again. The O-line caved in the Warhawk defensive front and Winey followed them up the middle for 5 yards, then cut left and burst into open field. There were two defenders left, but Winey easily beat them and scored the go-ahead touchdown with 10 minutes to go in the 1st half.

The Cardinal defense forced North Mahaska to punt on their next two drives. On the Warhawks' final possession of the half, Xander McNeal intercepted a tipped pass. While North Mahaska's offense had success on their first two drives, the Cardinal defense shut them down after that.

"I think we just kind of realized, 'It's go-time now,'" said Etter. "They tried to punch us in the mouth and we just we battled back. That's what we do. Especially in the second half. The defensive line, the linebackers, and the defensive backs all played lights out, and

that's what we needed to win this game. I think that there's a lot of guys that just knew this was win or go home for them, and they want to play in two weeks."

North Mahaska punted on the opening possession of the 2nd half. After a big loss due to a botched snap, the Cards faced 3rd and 22 from their own 42. Reynolds dropped back and lobbed a long pass in the middle of the field. Konner Keller was well-covered by two defenders, with another one closing in, but he turned, back pedaled, and caught the ball for a Cardinal 1st down at the Warhawk, 21. Winey eventually scored from 2 yards out. The PAT was no good, but the Cardinals led, 20-7, at 2:21 in the 3rd.

Earlham sealed the game with a grinding, 8-minute touchdown drive late in the 4th quarter, capped by Winey's 11-yard TD run. Quick strike scoring is always great, of course, but there is nothing like a long, time-consuming drive

to drain your opponent.

"When you want to put a game away, or when you want to kind of make a statement, you need something like that," said the coach. "I thought they just did a great job."

Next up for the Cardinals is a road trip to Lynnville-Sully on Friday. The Hawks are 6-1 and ranked #10 (as of 10/6) in the state. The Hawks have clinched the top spot in the district. A strange set of variables would have to occur for the Cardinals to be any better than 4th. So, what is Earlham's motivation at practice this week?

"I'd like to see what we can do against a team like this just to kind of measure where we're at," said Coach Caskey. "Selling the kids on, 'Hey, make something happen.' Don't go in and think, 'Well, we're in. Let's coast a little bit.' Let's see what we can do against a team like this and see if we can't get some things done."

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