

**POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING**  
**United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room**  
**Des Moines, Iowa**  
**September 25, 2013**

**Voting Members Present:** Judy McCoy Davis, Sam Carrell, Marvin DeJear, Cindy Elsbernd, Terry Harrmann, Claudia Hawkins, Matt Knoll, Natali Justiniano Pahl, Joyce Pingel, Tom Slater, JoEllen Spriggs-Dixon

**Voting Members Absent:** Mike Bandstra, Terri Henkels, Shane Schulte, Georgia Sheriff

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Dave Arens

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Don Doudna, Dave Discher, Brook Rosenberg

**Guests Present:** None

**Staff Present:** Barb Bremner, Lynette Kingery (temporary administrative assistant)

**Welcome & Introductions:**

Judy McCoy Davis welcomed everyone to the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board. Quorum was met at 8:07 a.m.

Judy opened the meeting with the sad announcement of Maureen Tiffany's death on September 24. During Maureen's 27 year career with United Way of Central Iowa she led the way on early childhood issues and in her many roles as child advocate she worked closely with current and past members of the PCECI Board. The early childhood community will miss her greatly and those in the community will think of a fitting tribute to her lifelong commitment to the children of Iowa.

The meeting then turned to the agenda and its action items. Tom Slater helped the transition by commenting, to the assent of all, that Maureen would have wanted the board to get to the business at hand.

**Approval of August 28, 2013 Minutes:**

*A motion to approve the June 26, 2013 minutes was made by Terry Harrmann and seconded by Cindy Elsbernd. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

**Monthly Financial Statements:**

PCECI fiscal agent United Way of Central Iowa continues the process of hiring a new controller. Interim controller Tammy Mason and accounts payable department continue to support PCECI financials. Barb presented the August 2013 financial report. There still have not been a lot of invoices received yet but this is historically the situation at this point in the fiscal year. Contracts have been issued to all 37 funded programs and all but 7 have been returned and executed. Early

Childhood funds for FY14 are not federal funds (as in past years) but for FY14 the same requirements are in place as in previous years. If there are any changes in requirements they will be put in place for FY15.

### **Early Childhood**

- Year to Date receipts totaled \$260,003.75 on July 21st. This amount represents 25% of the annual early childhood funding. Annual FY14 Early Childhood funding for PCECI is \$1,040,015.
- At the end of August the early childhood initiative had expended \$79,335.41. (The EC carry forward dollars in amount of \$3,221.35 have been fully expended.)
- These expenditures are approximately 7.6% of the fiscal year 2014 budgeted expenditures.

### **School Ready**

- Year to Date Receipts totaled \$147,507.86 on August 26<sup>th</sup>. This amount represents 25% of the annual funding. Annual FY14 School Ready funding is \$2,610,557.
- The School Ready initiative has expended \$147,507.86 (including carry forward funds).
- These expenditures are approximately 5.5% of the fiscal year 2014 budgeted expenditures
- Allowable carry forward for School Ready this fiscal year is \$90,564.38. So far \$67,428.57 carry forward funds have been expended. This is 74% of SR carry forward.

### **Approval of July 2013 Financial Statements:**

*A motion to approve the August 2013 financials was made by Tom Slater and seconded by Joyce Pingel. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

### **Discussion and approval of revisions to By-laws**

Tom Slater introduced the by-law document members had reviewed the revisions marked. Tom commented that given the minor nature of the revisions, and the fact they had been discussed at last month's meeting, he felt confident the document was improved and ready to be approved.

*A motion to approve the revised by-laws was made by Terry Harrmann and seconded by Claudia Hawkins. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

### **Discuss Executive Director Performance Review**

Judy thanked the board members who were able to complete the performance evaluation for Barb's first six months. She said that in order to give more board members the opportunity to submit their evaluations she would like to postpone reporting and discussing results until the next board meeting (October 30<sup>th</sup>).

Judy also commented that it made sense going forward to move the annual performance review for the PCECI Executive Director to the spring so that it could be part of the budgeting decisions for the next fiscal year. There was general agreement to this scheduling.

### **State's submission for Race To The Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTTT-ELC)**

Barb shared that September 6<sup>th</sup> the Governor's office had given approval to state departments to submit for the federal RTTT-ELC grant, which potentially could be \$37.5 million over 4 years for early childhood investment. The deadline is October 16<sup>th</sup>.

The state intends to highlight Iowa's existing collaborative system of ECI areas. The submission requires collaboration across state departments and the input from various community stakeholders. They are asking for ECI areas to submit letters of support which will be included as part of the application. The Board was asked to approve a letter drafted by Barb and addressed to Dr. Brad Buck, Iowa's new Director of the DOE. Judy and Dave Arens commented that the Board had submitted a similar letter when the state submitted for the previous RTTT grant (which the

state did not receive). After brief discussion the board voiced general approval of submitting this letter.

*A motion to approve the revised by-laws was made by Cindy Elsbernd and seconded by Tom Slater. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

### **Discussion of signing *Every Child Counts* letter to Iowa Senators and Congressmen**

Every Child Counts (an advocacy network that is a division of the Child & Family Policy Center) has asked for online support for a letter they have drafted encouraging Iowa Senators and Congressmen to support President Obama's call for action and budget of \$10 billion investment in young children.

This led to a discussion of the role of advocacy for our local ECI Board and for the state ECI Board. Barb shared that at the most recent state board meeting she attended September 6<sup>th</sup>, the state board chair Joanne Lane had asked exactly that question: what advocacy role is allowed/permitted for the state board. Barb also shared that there was minimal discussion but individual state board members expressed interest in more actively advocating. The state technical team was present but offered no comments or answer at that meeting. J

udy mentioned that in the past when PCECI was reviewed for the Levels of Excellence the reviewers deducted points because there was not enough evidence of advocacy by the Board (letters to the editor was an example).

Terry suggested that the PCECI Board should err on the side of advocacy. Tom agreed and Joyce seconded this idea.

Barb is going to contact the state technical assistance team to ask about this very particular example of advocacy of the letter, and then to also solicit guidance on the advocacy role of the PCECI Board. Sam suggested that the Board continue the discussion of advocacy and to work toward establishing policy to guide the Board.

### **Administrative Update**

Barb provided her Administrative Update. She focused on information relating to preschool and reported on a meeting with Linda Fandel, special assistant for education to Governor Branstad. Barb, Kate Bennett and Sarah Ramsey of UWCI met with Linda on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was intended to focus on preschool and ways to expand the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) in order to enroll more low income and at-risk children. Unfortunately the meeting revealed that the Governor's office has changed priorities and intends to focus on the DOE's Iowa Reading Research Center. They will be promoting the literacy assessment IGDIs and will be "pushing out" professional development focused on the assessment and on literacy.

Tom and Judy both mentioned that it will be important to make sure these efforts include pre-K and early learning.

As background information for the board development session, Barb shared a state-issued SWVPP data sheet. She also shared a document outlining the funding reductions that have occurred for ECI areas statewide and for PCECI since 2008. She shared a map of the 9 school districts in Polk County and DOE data for 2012-13 on FRL and Limited English proficient students.

**Old Business:**

Board members were reminded the next roundtable discussion will be **Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup> from 3-6 p.m.** in Conference Room F at United Way.

**New Business:**

None reported.

**Public Comment:**

None reported.

**Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 a.m. The next board meeting will be on Wednesday, October 30th, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the Leadership Room at United Way of Central Iowa (note this is the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month rather than the typical 4<sup>th</sup>.)