

POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room
Des Moines, Iowa
April 23, 2014

Voting Members Present: Judy McCoy Davis, Sam Carrell, Marvin DeJear, Matt Knoll, Natali Justiniano Pahl, Joyce Pingel, Tom Slater, JoEllen Spriggs-Dixon

Voting Members Absent: Mike Bandstra, Cindy Elsbernd, Terry Harrmann, Claudia Hawkins, Terri Henkels, Shane Schulte, Georgia Sheriff

Ex-Officio Members Present: Brook Rosenberg

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Dave Discher, Don Doudna, Dave Arens

Guests Present: Stacey Walter, Early Childhood Coordinator; Amy Curtis, Child Care Center Consultant

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Welcome and Introductions

Board Chair Judy McCoy Davis welcomed everyone to the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting at 11:35 a.m. Marvin DeJear arrived at 11:40 a.m. and left at 11:50 a.m. Tom Slater arrived at 11:50 a.m. Quorum was not met, and action items were set aside until next meeting.

Approval of March 2014 Minutes

Members received March minutes. Quorum was not met to approve Minutes.

Monthly Financial Statements

Members received March financials. Information was not presented or discussed.

Approval of March 2014 Financial Statements

Quorum was not met to approve March financial statements.

Overview of Coalition of Child Care Centers

Davis introduced Stacey Walter, Early Childhood Coordinator and Amy Curtis, Child Care Center Consultant with Central Iowa Child Care Coalition co-funded by the Board, United Way of Central Iowa and UWCI Women's Leadership Connection. Walter and Curtis presented an overview of the Coalition. The Coalition began in 2002 with funding from Women's Leadership Connection to target Des Moines centers caring for at-risk children in order to support staff and improve quality. The WLC funded a "business case" document to support investment in early education environments and to focus efforts. Initially the coalition included eight programs. In 2005 five additional centers were added to the Coalition, and Curtis was hired as a consultant. In 2005 Creative Curriculum was implemented at all centers. All Coalition centers and teachers are offered ongoing professional development. Mental Health clinicians and VNS nurses were added to the Resource Team to assist in supporting quality improvements onsite at centers. The Resource Team supporting the Coalition centers currently includes: Walter, Curtis, Child Care Nurse Consultants with VNS and Mental Health consultants with Orchard Place. Monthly center director's meetings focus on professional development for all directors.

The Coalition currently includes 19 centers. Early Childhood Capacity Building funding from the Board is invested in 8 centers to develop and sustain high quality environments for the children enrolled. These 8 centers receive additional funding from UWCI WLC for each center's director salary. The remaining 11 Coalition centers do not receive direct funding from the Board but are supported by consultation services of the Resource Team and the professional development delivered to leadership and staff of all centers.

Brook Rosenberg asked if as a strategy whether the Coalition should be adding more centers or expanding the capacity of existing centers. Walter explained most of the centers are at capacity for space and stated she believes it makes more sense to reach out to other centers serving low income children. Centers, like most in the coalition serving low income families, enroll families from the surrounding neighborhoods. Conmigo is an exception to this with families attending from a range of zip codes for the dual language care and education.

JoEllen Spriggs-Dixon asked if expulsion rates were tracked at the centers. Walter explained centers experience some parents who won't sign releases to allow additional mental health services, perhaps because they don't want their child labeled. Walter said there is some expulsion of children though the Resource Team works with directors and staff for other solutions first. With the population served by the Coalition often a child expelled from one center enrolls at another center in the Coalition. When parents are open to services provided, this also allows centers to refer families to the therapeutic classrooms of CFI CDC better equipped to address the child's issues. Joyce Pingel referred to the ACEs study and the need to go back to the core (parents) when providing mental health services. Curtis emphasized when parents are open to additional support services the whole family is considered. Curtis also mentioned Coalition center staff and their teaching practices often are impacted by adverse experiences through their life experiences.

Preschool Committee Report

Matt Knoll reported the Preschool committee met in late March at an early childhood program in Urbandale. He noted each funded district's early childhood program uses the Board's Early Childhood School Ready funds in different ways, making it difficult to compare use and impact across districts. Committee has discussed creating a formula to allow for more transparency. Rosenberg warned formulas can prove to be problematic. Committee believes there is need to continue to explore best way to distribute funds through meeting individually with district administrators of programs and through convening the districts as a group. Committee discussion has been to maintain status quo on funding but to prepare for any increase in funding by establishing priorities for populations to serve and impacts desired.

Applications for Funding – New Programs

Bremner presented applications for five new programs requesting funding for the new fiscal year. Members were asked to return their reviews to Bremner by May 14 to compile results for the May meeting. Any questions may be directed to Bremner. Proposed budget will be presented in May and final approval of budget by Board will be in June.

Vision and Mission Statements

Draft copies of revised Vision and Mission statements were presented. There was discussion of changing "successful" to "school ready." All members were in agreement to keep "successful."

Policy & Procedure Manual

Davis asked for input on updating the Board's Policy & Procedure Manual. Members were asked if would like to review in sections or a few policies per month. Majority expressed preference to break the manual into three sections to review.

Levels of Excellence Documents

Bremner presented drafts of PCECI Executive Director and Board Member Job Descriptions. Members were asked to review the documents and forward suggestions for changes to Bremner. These updated descriptions are part of the LOE documentation due December 30, 2014.

Administrative Update

None reported.

Legislative Updates

With the legislature still in session, Davis noted in May the Board may only be approving an estimated budget. After the Legislature adjourns the Governor will have 30 days to sign Appropriations Bills. After this the Board will receive the final budget from the state.

Old Business

None reported.

New Business

None reported.

Public Comment

None reported.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m. The next meeting will be held May 28th at 8:00 a.m. in UWCI Leadership Room. The Board's Annual Meeting will be held June 18th at 11:00 a.m. in UWCI Leadership Room.