

**POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING**  
**United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room**  
**Des Moines, Iowa**  
**April 27, 2011**

**Voting Members Present:** Dave Arens, Connie Boesen, Misty Hansen, Terry Harrmann, Debbie Hubbell, Ka'Meka Lowery, Becky Miles-Polka, Dave Stout, Kittie Weston-Knauer,

**Voting Members Absent:** Dave Discher, Mike Farrell, Mary Gesiriech, Chaney Yeast

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Judy McCoy Davis

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:**

**Guests Present:** Cathy Beck-Cross

**Staff Present:** Kate Bennett, Linda Dahlman, Terie Taylor-Wolf, Sarah Witt

Dave Arens welcomed everyone to the Polk County Empowerment Board meeting at 8:05 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

**Year to Date Financial Statements and Audit Update:**

Linda Dahlman presented the financials ending March 31, 2011 to the board.

Expenditures for the period ending March 31, 2011 were as follows:

**Early Childhood**

- Year to Date Receipts total \$993,091.00
- Overall spending on the budget is at 70%, which is behind the anticipated expenditure rate of 75%. (due to timing)

**School Ready**

- Year to Date Receipts total \$2,193,144.75.00
- Overall spending on the budget is very close to 69%, which lags the anticipated expenditure rate of 75%.

**American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

- During the first nine months of the current fiscal year, the ARRA initiative has spent on average \$5,160 monthly.
- Overall spending on the budget is at 10%

In an effort to spend more of the ARRA funds, United Way Public Policy staff along with Child and Family Policy Center staff submitted language to Senator Hatch to amend SF 649.

- expanding training and supports for infant care providers in the state and community;
- ensuring healthy and safe child care environments;
- promoting positive relationships between parents and providers in their mutual efforts to care for very young children; and
- Ensuring that parents have the information and resources that they need to choose quality care.

Becky Miles-Polka arrived at 8:11 a.m.

It was moved by Terry Harrmann and seconded by Kittie Weston-Knauer to approve the financials for the period ending March 31, 2011. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**Approval of March 2011 Minutes:**

It was moved by Connie Boesen and seconded by Debbie Hubbell to approve the minutes of March 28, 2011. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Dave Arens noted the meeting adjourned at 8:40 when quorum was lost. Minutes have been corrected to reflect this.

**Administrative Update:**

**State Early Childhood Iowa**

**Legislative Update**

Governor Branstad is asking legislators to agree on a two year budget. Last week the Senate offered a compromise that calls for the Legislature to approve a full budget for the upcoming fiscal year and a 50 percent budget for the following fiscal year. Under this plan, the Legislature would take action during the 2012 session to determine the final funding level for the FY13 budget.

On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed an [amendment](#) to [HF 645](#), the Education appropriations bill. The amendment strikes all the House bill language and appropriations and replaces it with the entire amendment. So, once again the House and Governor's proposal for preschool scholarships is taken out of the bill. The Senate also appropriates more dollars than the house for Early Childhood Iowa line items.

April 29th is the 110th day of legislative session - the last day that legislators are able to receive per diem. It is looking like we may be in session into May.

**Early Childhood Advisory Council Grant:**

The Department of Management has announced the hire of Jeffrey Anderson to the Early Childhood Iowa Office. As of April 15<sup>th</sup>, Jeff is the project coordinator for the state's early childhood advisory council grant. Jeff comes to the Department of Management with a wealth of expertise and knowledge to lead Iowa's early care, health and education system building work forward. Most recently, Jeff has served as a bureau chief at the Department of Human Services, Child Care Bureau. Jeff has also previously served on the Community Empowerment technical assistance team representing DHS.

**Levels of Excellence**

By the end of April the state TA team plans to distribute the final LOE documents for the State Board's approval in June. All documents will be included. The review matrix will describe the requirements of each item; Tool N is the general document that should provide information on procedures, timelines, etc. Additionally a Q & A documents has been created based 77 questions submitted to the EC/ offices.

**Polk County Early Childhood Iowa**

**School Readiness Partnership**

In February a brief survey was conducted with members of the Youth Development Partnership and the School Readiness Partnership. Survey results indicated that the participants think a joint meeting makes sense and future topics should include more community data, information on best practice programs and select program level data.

## **Preschool**

During the first three months of 2011, 2 programs supported by PCECI have actively worked on applying for the Reach for the Stars Grant. One program met the January 1, 2011 deadline for applying and received a \$12,000 grant. The other program was awarded a grant last week that will allow them to apply for a level 5 on the QRS.

All programs have maintained their quality standards and one recently became reaccredited by Montessori International. Several preschools have turned in updated versions of their quality tools to verify their ongoing commitment to quality. In February, the Coach hosted a QRS Re-Calibration Meeting at the Learning Resource Center in West Des Moines. Emily Brott, Regional QRS Specialist, trained approximately 15 local/ECI funded I preschool directors on the new tool.

## **Family Support**

We do not currently have a waiting list, but continue to be very full (full time case managers are typically carrying caseloads of 22-25). The Outreach Team Leader has actively recruited additional PRN Interpreters to meet the growing needs of our refugee population. During this month, four Outreach Specialists/Interpreters were recruited and hired who speak the following languages:

Burmese, Kaching, Nepali, Hindi, Karen, Mizo Chin, Lai Chin, Phalam Chin, Zo Mi Chin

## **Childcare**

We are getting ready to start the Aim4Excellence director training cohort. All of the participants seem very excited and anxious to get started. Some are choosing to start before the May 1 timeline. We will meet monthly to answer discussion questions and have an opportunity to get to know one another. The GOLD is going well. Centers are starting to get observations entered. We have results from six centers so far for the winter checkpoint. It is going to be a great tool to determine areas where training is needed.

### **Website Demo:**

The website demo was deferred to the May meeting.

### **PCECI Results Scorecard Demo:**

Terie Taylor Wolf demonstrated the results scorecard software to the board. **Results Scorecard** is a strategic management software tool designed to help non-profit and government organizations work smarter and create measurable results for their customers and communities. PCECI grantees will be submitting data for the first time in the next few weeks. Once data is received, it will be compiled into a report for the board to help with funding decisions.

### **Advocacy and Legislative Update:**

Sheila Hansen, with the Child and Family Policy Center, reported on the current state of the legislative session. Everything has stalled and legislators have been sent home. Due to bill drafting, amendments, and floor debate time, it usually takes 3-4 days to shut down the Legislature after a deal is struck. It is looking unlikely for adjournment to take place in the next few weeks.

The universal preschool issue has not received much attention in the last few weeks. It will be definitely be an item being discussed in the negotiation process. At this point, it seems unlikely the income eligibility test, supported by the Branstad Administration, will be a part of any late bills. Sheila suggested sending another action alert to our legislators.

Quorum was lost at 9:24am.

Judy McCoy Davis suggested board members check the new legislative map.

**New Business:**

Judy McCoy Davis informed the board that the State Board is looking for three new members and it would be great to have some Polk County representation.

**Old Business:**

**Public Comment:**

**Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 when quorum was lost.

DA:sw (4/29/11)