

POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room
Des Moines, Iowa
January 26, 2011

Voting Members Present: Dave Arens, Connie Boesen, Dave Discher, Mike Farrell, Terry Harrmann, Misty Hansen, Mary Gesiriech, Ka'Meka Lowery, Kittie Weston-Knauer, Chaney Yeast

Voting Members Absent: Debbie Hubbell, Becky Miles-Polka Dave Stout,

Ex-Officio Members Present: Judy McCoy Davis

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Guests Present: Mary O'Brien

Staff Present: Kate Bennett, Elisabeth Buck, Linda Dahlman, Sarah Witt

Dave Arens welcomed everyone to the Polk County Empowerment Board meeting at 8:02 Quorum was met at this time.

Year to Date Financial Statements and Audit Update:

Linda Dahlman presented the financials ending December 31, 2010 to the board.

Expenditures for the period ending December 31, 2010 were as follows:

Early Childhood

- Year to Date Receipts total \$496,545.50
- Overall spending on the budget is at 37.89%, which is slightly behind the anticipated expenditure rate of 50%. (due to timing)

School Ready

- Year to Date Receipts total \$1,462,096.50
- Overall spending on the budget is practically on target at 45.14%.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

- During the first four months of the current fiscal year, the ARRA initiative has spent on average \$5,400 monthly.
- Overall spending on the budget is at 7%

Kate Bennett explained the low spending on the ARRA funds. The legislation that Janet Peterson wrote was changed by the department of human services and stipulations were put in place regarding the market rate and age limits. Kate Bennett has a meeting scheduled next week with Charles Palmer the new head of the department of human services and plans to discuss our frustration with the process. After the meeting, she will send the board an update and talking points in order to reach out to legislators before July 1st. Mary O'Brien suggested Kate document the issues regarding the frustration to the Iowa Department of Human Services.

The 2010 fiscal year-end audit was completed in November of 2010, along with the A-133 reporting requirements.

The audit received the highest level of opinion (unqualified) with no passed audit adjustments.

Misty Hansen arrived at 8:07am.

It was moved by Terry Harrmann and seconded by Connie Boesen to approve the financials for the period ending December 31, 2010. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of December 2010 Minutes:

It was moved by Dave Discher and seconded by Mary Gesiriech to approve the minutes of December, 2010. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Administrative Update:

State Early Childhood Iowa

At its December 14th meeting, the ECI Stakeholders received an update regarding the work of the professional development component group and their structure. In addition, brief updates from the other component workgroups were provided and time allowed for discussion about each. The Alliance also had an opportunity to provide input and discuss the role of the Alliance within the new ECI structure.

Notes from this meeting will be added to the ECI Website. If you are interested in learning more about the Alliance, go to www.earlychildhoodiowa.org. The council's next meeting will be in conjunction with the ECI Congress on February 9th.

Local Early Childhood Iowa

Website and Logo

Flying Hippo design staff unveiled the new Polk County Early Childhood Iowa website earlier this month. Once pictures are selected and purchased, staff will work with the design team to load page content. Sample content pages were shared with the board.

Legislative and Advocacy

Over the next few weeks we are hosting meetings with all newly elected and re-elected Polk County legislators. With legislative input, we created an informative executive summary document that provides a brief overview of Polk County Early Childhood Iowa, key research, and summary outcomes from fiscal year 2009-2010.

Levels of Excellence Pilot Update

Charlie Bruner with the Child and Family Policy Center has agreed to take the lead on updating the Early Childhood Business Plan. As you recall, this document serves as our Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Community Plan. This updated plan is a critical element in our Levels of Excellence process. In addition to the updated community plan we are creating a portfolio based on the following categories of the Levels of Excellence review process:

- Community Plan
- Annual Report
- Operational
- Marketing
- Advocacy
- Quality Programming
- Open Meetings
- Fiduciary/Fiscal

Materials were sent to the state technical team on January 18th. The state team will meet with our board and key community stakeholders on February 2nd and go over all of the materials submitted and determine if our board is awarded a probation, complaint, quality, or model level.

Family Support

The diversity of our population continues to be significant – the full time Outreach Specialist/Interpreter who speaks Burmese and Chin recently accepted a position with a refugee agency (which is a promotion for her, but a loss for us). Luci is the only Chin speaker and has a caseload of over 30, so Visiting Nurse Services is actively recruiting people to replace her.

Childcare

All of the five new programs have been trained on the ASQ screening tool and are working to complete screenings on the children. We have contracted with Teaching Strategies to train our lead staff and directors on the new GOLD assessment. That training will take place in February. The action plan meetings that have been taking place the last six months are about to wrap up. The resource team has been meeting with the center directors to review the ITERS and ECERS observations that were completed in the fall. The center directors are working with staff to complete their action plans for improvement. One area being addressed in all programs is training for staff in the area of relationship building with children.

Advocacy Issues and Partners – 2011 Legislative Session:

Connie Boesen reported that she, Kate Bennett, and Susie Guest with Des Moines Public Schools all met with Linda Fandel, educational advisor to Governor Branstad last week. During the meeting, preschool was the topic of interest. Connie Boesen suggested funding one stream instead of the current situation of funding many streams at once that do the same thing. Kate Bennett suggested Linda send a survey to all Early Childhood Areas to determine if areas across the state have operated with a voucher system in the past.

Kate reported on the United Ways Day on the Hill, held Tuesday, January 25, 2011. A brief meet and greet with Governor Branstad and Lieutenant Governor Reynolds took place mid-morning. An additional meeting the Linda Fandel took place where the idea of a universal kindergarten assessment arose. Linda Fandel seemed to be pretty familiar with the idea and we may gain momentum in this area.

Connie Boesen and Terry Harrmann left at 9:00am.

Sheila Hansen reported to the board the importance of having an infrastructure in place should the Early Childhood Iowa areas take on the responsibility of the preschool "tuition assistance" program. Additional items to keep on the radar regarding advocacy include childcare and mental health for our young citizens.

Kate and Sheila Hansen will meet and determine talking points. The talking points as well as a list of contacts will be sent out to board members in the next couple of weeks.

New Business:

None reported

Old Business:

None reported

Public Comment:

None reported

Adjourn:

The Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board adjourned at 9:17am

Respectfully Submitted, Terry Harrmann, Secretary

TH:sw (1/26/11)