

POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa
Des Moines, Iowa
November 30, 2011

Voting Members Present: Dave Arens, Dave Discher, Mary Gesiriech, Misty Hansen, Terry Harrmann, Natali Justiniano Pahl, Kari Lebeda Townsend, Ka'Meka Lowery, Becky Miles-Polka, Joyce Pingel, Dave Stout, Kittie Weston-Knauer

Voting Members Absent: Connie Boesen, Mike Farrell, Claudia Hawkins, Chaney Yeast

Ex-Officio Members Present: Judy McCoy Davis

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Donald Doudna

Guests Present: Darby Taylor, Anne Wallis (via skype)

Staff Present: Kate Bennett, Linda Dahlman, Sarah Witt

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

Approval of October 2011 Minutes:

It was moved by Terry Harrmann and seconded by Chaney Yeast to approve the minutes of October 26, 2011. A couple of corrections in attendance were noted. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Statements – October:

Linda Dahlman presented the October 2011 Financial Statements to the board. The audit is finished and the management letter will be dated December 7, 2011. Dave Arens asked if there were any notes on the management letter. Linda Dahlman answered there were none.

Early Childhood

- Year to Date Receipts total \$228,275.30
- Overall spending on the budget is at 20.84%

School Ready

- Year to Date Receipts total \$493,476.06
- Overall spending on the budget is practically on target at 17.56%

It was moved by Dave Discher and seconded by Terry Harrmann to approve the October 2011 financials. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Administrative Update / PCECI Director Goals:

- Kate shared information regarding the Early Childhood Advisory Council Grant, the Needs Assessment, Integrated Early Childhood Data System, Professional Development, and the Cultural Diversity, the Early Learning Challenge Grant and Parent Involvement at the state level.

- ECI Area Director Meeting (Sept 14th) Update:
 - The ECI Area Directors come together at a state-level. The purpose of the meetings is to provide assistance to the area boards, through the area directors. As part of the assistance, sharing of various projects or activities assists the boards in understanding funding opportunities that might assist the area in their community plan to fill a need. At the September meeting, the area directors heard more about current activities about Every Child Reads -0-3; and Reach Out and Read. Updates were provided for the family support work in our state and the outreach of Period of Purple Crying. Area directors provided input on the current guidance regarding insurance coverage, the draft Agreed-Upon Procedures and worked on developing marketing messages. The next meeting takes place on Wednesday, December 7th, 2011.
- The Early Childhood Iowa Congress will again be scheduled to conjunction with the winter quarter ECI Alliance meeting and the Early Childhood Iowa Day on the Hill. Mark your calendar for February 8-9, 2012 at the Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines, and the Iowa Capitol.
- Iowa was named one of six states that the Pew Charitable Trust is providing financial support and technical assistance to public education and advocacy campaigns.
- The Iowa Family Support Credentialing Program continues to grow. To date, 24 programs have earned the Iowa Family Support Credential. The Credential is hard work and does take an investment of time as does any quality improvement effort. ECI areas have increased their support of evidence-based and promising practices programs in the family support arena.

Mary Gesiriech arrived at 8:30 am.

- Kate asked board members if they see a benefit in continuing with the School Readiness Partnership. Board members offered suggestions on making the group stronger. Becky Miles-Polka suggested sending a survey to the group to seek clarity. Judy McCoy Davis reminded the board that it is a state requirement and needs to move forward.
- Polk County ECI Updates:
 - On Tuesday November 29th, United Way of Central Iowa Education Leader Initiative, Women's Leadership Connection and Polk County Early Childhood Iowa co-hosted a roundtable on Iowa's Education Transformation Blueprint. Linda Fandel and Jason Glass spoke to the group and answered questions on components of the plan and these topic areas:
 - kindergarten readiness
 - third grade literacy
 - innovation and alternative pathways for learning
 - parent and community engagement
- The PCECI board has been approached by the "4 R Kids" ECI area which includes, Adair, Dallas, Madison and Warren Counties to co-host an appreciation event with central Iowa legislators and service providers in the area. This will be an exciting opportunity for the providers of services to meet directly with legislators to discuss the success of ECI and also the ongoing unmet needs of the families they work with. The goal would be for legislators to hear from 2 or 3 families that have been positively impacted by ECI funding across areas of preschool, childcare and family support. The tentative date for the event is Thursday, December 1st from 5-7 at a location convenient for all areas.
- The Preschool Quality Coach is struggling with meeting scholarship voucher needs for families. Families and directors are contacting the Quality Coach for funding when their home school district cannot help them. Not only are school districts out of grantee money, but they have waiting lists and unfilled spots. It is troubling that spots for children are sitting unused when children are "waiting" to fill them simply due to a lack of funding.

- To follow up on our activities reported in October, 2011; First Children's Finance is now ready to launch a second request for applications for the Growth Fund. To this end, we are very happy to announce that we have hired a new Business Development Specialist, Angie Duncan, to support the Growth Fund and other business assistance to child care in Central Iowa, including Polk County. Angie starts on Thursday, December 1.
- The coalition centers have recently completed their first checkpoint for the new GOLD Assessment tool. We are in the process of pulling off reports that will help to guide future consultation and training. The reports are giving us a sense of what children are demonstrating age appropriate skills. After talking with directors it has been noted that additional training is needed in basic computer skills and using the on-line tool. I hope to start setting up those trainings in December. Ten of the 17 programs are using the on-line system. The remaining programs are using the paper pencil recording system.
- Between our 2 case managers they are currently serving 19 families (22 parents, and 23 preschool/head start children). They continue to receive appropriate referrals so their caseloads continue to grow. It would appear that the majority of families they are working with have never been served by a social service agency. They are encountering a significant number of parents with mental health needs and also indicated that hunger is a big problem among the families they are working with. Angie indicated that the majority of the preschoolers she is working with have been exposed or have been victim of a lot of trauma, which is finding its way into the preschool classroom.

PCECI Family Support Initiative Annual Report Evaluation:

Darby Taylor, Healthy Start & Empowerment Project Director for Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa shared a power point presentation on the Des Moines Healthy Start and Empowerment Project.

- Healthy Start provides comprehensive home-based services to address perinatal health, child health, social services, parenting, and child development for high-risk families with pregnant women and children under two years of age in a nine zip-code area.
- Empowerment (ECI) expands geographic area to all of Polk County and age of child to six.

Risk factors, infant mortality rates, case management services, participant ethnicity, trends, language factors, population changes, income, employment status, and indicators were all discussed in the informative presentation.

Anne Wallis with Iowa State University was connected via Skype to share her results of the Annual Report Evaluation of this program. Her evaluation concluded that Visiting Nurse Services is reaching the right families. There is a very high percentage of families identifying a medical home. Referrals are handled appropriately. When polled, 95% rated the experience with the program as good or very good.

PCECI Director Compensation Discussion and Action:

Kate shared a couple of documents with board members. The first, Performance Goals for 2012, which include:

- Community Collaboration and Convening
- Program and Financial Audit Procedures
- Public Policy & Advocacy
- Levels of Excellence
- Results Based Reapplication Process

The second document she shared was the Fiscal Year 2012 Outcome Summary which includes a report on Preschool and Early Learning, Health, and Parent Education and Family Support. 2012 Legislative Requests include:

- Restoring funding to the FY2008 funding levels to allow Polk County to continue to meet the needs of our at-risk families and prepare them for kindergarten
- Adopt a standardized universal kindergarten assessment measure to allow us to track our progress and improve our planning
- Increased collaboration among state agencies to support a statewide comprehensive early childhood system

Dave Arens passed out copies of a memo he created in regards to Early Childhood Coordinator Compensation. The memo states Kate is performing at the "Above Average" or "Exceeds Requirements" levels that were the top two ratings on a five point rating scale.

A motion to approve the salary increase was moved by Mary Gesiriech and seconded by Dave Stout. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

New Business:

None reported

Old Business:

None reported

Public Comment:

None reported

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

DA:sw (12/9/11)