



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room
Des Moines, Iowa
August 23, 2017

Voting Members Present: Matt Knoll, Ahmed Agyeman, Marvin DeJear, Nick Dial, Cindy Elsbernd, Jem Gong-Browne, Josh Mandelbaum, Marianka Pille, Jana Shepherd, Georgia Sheriff, Craig Sieverding, Emily Westergaard, Mee Yang-Lee; Sam Carrell arrived at 11:45 a.m.

Voting Members Absent: Rocio Hermosillo, Bryan Huggins, Judy McCoy Davis, Shane Schulte

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dave Arens, Terry Harrmann, Brook Rosenberg

Ex-Officio Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Leann Andre, Child Care Consultant Coordinator, Child Care Resource and Referral; Carol Bodensteiner, Board Chair, Oakridge Neighborhood; Teree Caldwell-Johnson, CEO, Oakridge Neighborhood, Amy Curtis, Child Care Consultant, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Sharon Gaddy-Hanna, Board President, Oakridge Neighborhood; Jillian Herink, Executive Director, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Ashley Otte, T.E.A.C.H. Program Manager, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Tim Shanahan, Executive Director, Bidwell Riverside Center; Kay Tannant, Healthy Start Manager, Team Lead Intake and Referral, Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa; Darby Taylor, Healthy Start Director, Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa; Stacey Walter, Early Child Care Coordinator, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Vicki Williams, Director, Oak Academy

Welcome and Introductions

Board Chair Matt Knoll welcomed board members and guests to the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting at 11:39 a.m. Board member and guest introductions were made. Quorum was met at this time.

Knoll reported JoEllen Spriggs-Dixon submitted her resignation. He and Barb Bremner will be following up with her. Bremner reported Spriggs-Dixon's resignation brings the board total to 18 members, 9 men and 9 women. By laws require 15-20 members with gender balance.

Sam Carrell arrived at 11:45 a.m.

Approval June Minutes

The June 28, 2017 minutes were presented to the board. Knoll noted that new member Jana Shepherd's name was misspelled and should be corrected. There were no additional comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Nick Dial and seconded by Craig Sieverding. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

FY17 Annual Report Board Matrix and Attendance Expectation (Policy 2.10)

The FY17 board membership matrix for the annual report and Board Member Attendance Policy 2.10 were presented to board members. The matrix documents member attendance at FY17 meetings. Knoll asked members to be mindful of the number of meetings they are not able to attend and to strive to improve on their individual attendance record in the new fiscal year. He stressed the importance of attendance to the goal members being fully informed and engaged in the work of the board. All meetings met quorum during FY17 representing 213 hours of volunteer time. Additional volunteer time was required for committee meetings and meetings with programs during spring 2017. Bremner reported the matrix is a required document for the annual report due September 15th.

Board Member Job Description and Affirmation (Policy 2.2)

The Board Member Job Description and Affirmation of willingness to carry out board responsibilities were discussed. These documents outline board member job responsibilities along with attendance policies. Board members were asked to sign the affirmation to acknowledge they had read the Board Member Job Description and agreed to uphold the duties of board membership as required by Policy 2.2. Members were asked to return the signed documents to Bremner or Jody Kanne at the end of meeting.

FY17 Final Financial Statements

Financial records for FY17 were closed in July. The final FY17 expenditure reports for School Ready and Early Childhood were presented and reviewed. Previous to the meeting the financial statements were reconciled to the general ledger for the fiscal year by Bremner and the fiscal agent. The statements represent actual expenditures, carry forward funds, and interest earned for both grants at close of FY17. These statements were used to create the final FY18 budget and expenditure reports and are the statements used to create the required FY17 financial statements for the FY17 annual report. The final records for both grants reflect these numbers:

School Ready

- FY17 Polk County ECI School Ready funding was \$2,731,452. After de-appropriation funding for FY17 was \$2,629,099.
- Carry Forward funds totaled \$84,345.64. All carry forward funds were expended by the end of April.
- Year receipts totaled \$2,629,101. Fourth quarterly payment was received of \$580,512 was received in April.
- Additional total receipts of \$11,616.56 interest.
- School Ready funds of \$266,221.06 were expended.
- Expenditures were 97.89% of total School Ready funds. FY16 97% of funds were expended.

- There will be a total carry forward of \$68,842.14 into the school ready budget for FY18.

Early Childhood

- FY17 Polk County ECI Early Childhood funding was \$1,202,320.
- Carry Forward funds totaled \$215,459.24. All carry forward funds were expended by the end of April.
- Year receipts totaled \$1,202,320. Fourth quarterly payment of \$300,580.00 was received in April.
- Additional total receipts of \$7,034.13 interest.
- Early Childhood expenditures were \$1,299,840.37. Expenditures were 91.68% of total Early Childhood funds. FY16 81% of early childhood funds were expended.
- There will be a total carry forward of \$124,973.00 into the early childhood budget for FY18.

The end of year expenditure reports were used to complete the required FY17 Financial statements for the FY17 School Ready grant and the FY17 Early Childhood grant. These have been reviewed by the fiscal agent and will be signed by the fiscal agent and included with all required annual report documents.

Bremner shared the State TA Team has shared that after state books are closed at the end of August if the budget shortfall is under \$50 million, the governor will determine how to address the shortfall. In the event the shortfall is over \$50 million a special session will be called. All local ECI's have been advised there is likely to be a reduction to the current year funding for ECI areas.

FY2017 Polk County ECI Annual Report: Indicators, Program Outcomes, Financial Statements

Members were presented with the FY17 Annual Report: Performance Measure, Data & Investment History report for each funded program. This document lays out the performance Measure outcomes and funding history for each program. Bremner asked members to review the data entered for the programs they reviewed during the investment cycle during spring 2017. Bremner asked to keep this information for reference throughout this year. It will also be available in a folder on Google drive. Bremner reported she has been meeting with programs and the UWCI Data Team to review information, edit program performance measures, and to strengthen the Scorecard reporting system data. The FY17 Polk County ECI Annual Report Performance Measure, Data & Investment History data is uploaded to the iowagrants.gov system for annual report data required September 15th.

Members also reviewed updated Indicator Data for Polk County ECI. This document outlines the indicators the board chose during the 2015 Levels of Excellence process. Bremner pointed to the immunization rates as something she is researching for information to be evaluated this fall. She also noted although the teen birth rates continue to drop, this is an area for the board to monitor given recent state and federal funding changes.

A motion to approve the FY2017 Annual Report financial statements and program outcomes for submission to the State was made by Sam Carrell and seconded by Jem Gong-Brown. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Stay Bonus – FY18 Pilot Update

Meeting materials included a letter regarding the FY18 Stay Bonus Pilot Program from Oakridge Neighborhood CEO Teree Caldwell-Johnson and Board President Sharon Gaddy-Hanna. The letter was received by Polk County ECI staff on August 22nd and forwarded to all board members that day. The letter outlined concerns regarding the child care center stay bonus pilot, a request for the board to grant discretion to Oak Academy for participation in the pilot, and a request to allow Oak Academy flexibility for use of funds allocated to the center.

Knoll provided a brief background on the work of the Early Childhood committee during FY17. The committee met five times November through June to review all programs receiving early childhood funds. Discussion of the funds invested in the coalition child care centers focused on how to directly impact children, how to document the impact, and evaluation of challenges to the centers to provide consistent quality care. The committee explored options for funds allocated to centers and set as a goal improving the retention of directors and staff at all eight centers. Part of the process included meeting with funded EQUIP consultants working in the centers. The committee identified staff turnover as a consistent challenge affecting center quality and consistency of care. Knoll stressed members discussed the centers as an aggregate and stated the board's charge is to raise the access and quality of child care in all of Polk County. He stated three of the eight centers raised concerns with impacts of the pilot on their center: Bidwell-Riverside, Conmigo, and Oak Academy. July 6th Bremner met with three Conmigo board members to hear their concerns. Bryan Huggins and Bremner met with Oak Academy leaders July 11th to discuss the pilot. August 16th Knoll, Bremner, and Huggins met with Tim Shanahan, Executive Director of Bidwell Riverside, and two Bidwell Riverside board members to discuss their concerns.

Teree Caldwell-Johnson, CEO of Oakridge Neighborhood, addressed the board to highlight a few of the reasons the new pilot is not warranted at Oak Academy. She cited Oak's strong staff wages and benefit package and stated staff retention at Oak Academy is not a problem. She listed strengths and achievements of the center. She referred members to the letter from Oakridge Neighborhood for their detailed arguments and their request.

Sharon Gaddy-Hanna, Oakridge Neighborhood Board President, addressed members to share the Oakridge board's belief the new pilot does not fit their center's needs. During the past 18 months Oakridge Neighborhood reviewed their overall agency benefits, performance, and leadership structure. Gaddy-Hanna stated Oakridge has a strong benefits package, work environment, and leadership which their board believes is more critical to maintaining staff rather than a retention bonus pilot. Gaddy-Hanna requested the Polk County ECI board review its decision to allocate funds to the pilot for all eight centers. She requested the board revise the funding decision in a way that provides centers the opportunity to dive deeper into their specific needs and to allow Oak Academy the flexibility to administer the bonus dollars as they see fit.

Oakridge Neighborhood Board Chair Carol Bodensteiner addressed the board to express that centers in the coalition are not the same, have differing needs, and funding considerations should be specific for each center. A summary of her primary questions:

1. Utilizing point-in-time data reviewed by the committee seemed to not accurately show staffing retention or accurately identify a problem. Did the subcommittee consider a trend line? Oakridge feels this data is not reflective of their center's staffing turnover.
2. Were other criteria and distribution options considered and discussed before recommending the stay bonus pilot?
3. Oakridge Neighborhood board has concerns regarding the state budget uncertainty and the sustainability of the pilot program. Should Oak Academy staff expect to continue to receive these bonuses in subsequent years? If not, that is going to be a disappointment to staff.
4. What is the pilot's metric for success? Is there an evaluation process? What does success/failure look like?

Caldwell-Johnson spoke to acknowledge the diverse needs of the coalition centers. She asked board members to give consideration to the points outlined in the Oakridge letter and to consider allowing for flexibility in distributing the funds to centers.

Addressing Bodensteiner's questions, Knoll stated evaluating data was a critical consideration for the committee when examining the centers and ways to directly impact the children in their care. Though turnover data was point-in-time it was the same point-in-time for all centers. The committee met with Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children consultants to review center data and discuss challenges facing centers. Members stressed data collection throughout the pilot as a necessary evaluation tool. This will include documenting, when possible, reasons staff leave. Committee and consultants discussed surveying staff receiving stipends to help measure the impact funds from staff perspective. Knoll explained the committee was creative and explored options prior to recommending the pilot. For all funded programs, the board is challenged to quantify and document how the outcomes resulting from investments. Addressing the question of sustainability, Knoll stressed the pilot is a 12-month commitment. Center staff have been told this is a one-year pilot. Center directors are clear there should not be an expectation of a continuation; outcomes need to be evaluated.

Tim Shanahan, Executive Director of the Bidwell Riverside Center, shared Bidwell reports the highest center average wage, with approximately 75% of the center budget going to staffing expenses and any revenue reductions impact their people. He stated Bidwell, like Oakridge, offers an excellent employee package which is a factor in their strong employee retention. Shanahan suggested the board consider determining center wage criteria, and if a center meets criteria be allowed funding spending flexibility.

Marvin DeJear stated the mission of the board has always been to make a better impact on low income children and asked the board to keep that mission in mind while making this decision.

Cindy Elsbernd departed at 12:50 p.m.

Brook Rosenberg stated he feels there is a disconnection between employers and employees, especially among the younger generation. Rosenberg stated internal surveys have shown salary is not necessarily the most important aspect of employee retention; flex time, PTO, and insurance packages play more into their decisions. Rosenberg suggested having the centers set a retention goal and assigning the bonus to that goal.

Josh Mandelbaum suggested that because the centers have different strengths and challenges, the committee discuss allowing for flexibility in spending. He suggested centers help provide the board a better understanding of their center data and trends. Sam Carrell asked if there are state requirements connected to the pilot and if the board has the ability to refine the pilot to address the expressed concerns. Bremner provided the board has this discretion. Georgia Sheriff suggested many pilots have a control, and that if a center met identified criteria and was granted flexibility that could serve as the control.

Stacey Walter, Early Child Care Coordinator, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children stated the pilot provides an opportunity to provide a measurable focus to track how invested funds impact center quality. She stated the directors and classroom staff of centers already signed up are very excited to participate in the pilot.

Mandelbaum asked if we provide centers the options of flexibility in spending how does the board tie those to current measures and to the retention goal.

Ahmed Agyeman departed at 1:00 p.m.

Jem Gong-Browne requested the Oakridge Neighborhood letter and the meeting input be reviewed at a meeting of original committee members and all interested board members with an update provided at the September meeting. Bremner will schedule a meeting for the committee to review the letter from Oakridge Neighborhood and today's discussion. All board members will be invited to attend the meeting.

Administrative Report

Since the meeting ran past the designated 1:00 ending time the Administrative Report will be sent to members electronically.

Old Business

None.

New Business

With the resignation of JoEllen Spriggs-Dixon, Sieverding requested the Governance Committee meet to confirm the board is in compliance in all required areas of representation: human services, health, education, faith, business, and consumer. They could also discuss the two openings on the board.

Public Comment

None reported.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Marvin DeJear and seconded by Jem Gong-Browne. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.