



**POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING**  
**Children & Families of Iowa Child Development Center**  
**801 Forest Ave.**  
**Des Moines, Iowa**  
**October 23, 2019**

**Voting Members Present:** Rob Barron, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Marvin DeJear, Bryan Huggins, Matt Knoll, Josh Mandelbaum, Jeanie McCarville Kerber, Eva Morales, Jana Shepherd, Georgia Sheriff, Craig Sieverding

**Voting Members Absent:** Ahmed Agyeman, Sandy Carter, Nick Dial, Jem Gong-Browne, Charles Mercer, Marianka Pille, Emily Westergaard, Mee Yang-Lee

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** None

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Dave Arens, Terry Harrmann, Barb Merrill, Brook Rosenberg

**Staff Present:** Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

**Guests Present:** Marian Godwin, Research Associate, United Way of Central Iowa; Casey Kelley, Director, Children & Families of Iowa Child Development Center

**Welcome**

Board Chair Craig Sieverding welcomed board members. Casey Kelley, Director, Children & Families of Iowa Child Development Center (CFI-CDC) was introduced to the group. Kelley provided a brief overview of the child care center. She has been the center director for the last 18 months. The center serves children 6 weeks of age up to 10 years. They have four Early Head Start classrooms and are the only therapeutic child care classroom in Central Iowa. Children and Families of Iowa has a second center, Teddy Bear Town (TBT), which is onsite at SCAVO. That center operates on the Des Moines Public School's schedule making their staff available to support CFI CDC's school aged programs during breaks and holidays.

Kelley provided a tour of the facility to members.

Sieverding called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

**Stay Bonus Retention Pilot Update**

Marian Godwin, Research Associate, United Way of Central Iowa, provided an update on the Stay Bonus Pilot which is in its third year. Pilot data has been collected in spreadsheets and Godwin presented FY18 End of Year Summary, FY19 End of Year Summary, FY20 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Summary and a definition document. These definitions were developed after analyzing the FY18 data and determining there was no baseline data or continuity in collecting the data. Key points of discussion:

- Oak Academy’s bonus amount is calculated based on staff retention, however they received a wavier to use the funds for operational expenses.
- Members would like to compare FY19 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter numbers to FY20. Godwin will pull those numbers.
- Members would like to see the data collected when staff leave. Why are they leaving?
- Members would like to see data on length of staff employment.
- Members would like to see more qualitative data:
  - Why are staff leaving?
  - What is the center baseline?
  - When are staff leaving?
    - Do those dates align with when bonuses are paid out?
- Kelley reported the stay bonus is a motivator for employees. Many staff plan vacations, repairs, and larger purchases based on bonus payments.
- Kelley reported this year Early Head Start is basing stipends on attendance and the number of “call-ins” which is when staff call to say they can’t come in that day.. She has seen a positive effect on employee’s calling in knowing their stipend will be lower if they miss more days of work.
- Sheriff asked if more resources were needed to help with the hiring and on-boarding process. Would that help with 90-day retention issues?
  - Kelley stated they are currently working on revamping their orientation to help with the retention issue.

**Approval September Minutes**

Minutes of the September 25, 2019 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

*A motion to approve the September minutes was made by Deanna Bennigsdorf and seconded by Matt Knoll. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

Members commented they appreciated the off-site meetings and the opportunity to obtain an in-depth look at specific programs. Members recommended a shortened agenda for off-site meetings.

**FY20 Financial Statements**

Barb Bremner presented the financial statements for September 2019. These statements are a cash presentation of financial transactions which took place through September of fiscal year 2020.

**School Ready**

- FY20 Polk County ECI School Ready funding is \$2,818,639.00.
- Carry Forward funds total \$80,629.94.
- Total School Ready funds in FY20 budget are \$2,899,268.94.
- First quarterly payment of \$704,659.50 received September 11<sup>th</sup>.
- Interest accrued \$911.27.
- At end of September 2019 School Ready funds of \$337,542.46 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 11.6% of FY20 School Ready funds. In previous fiscal year at end of September 10.7% of funds had been expended.

## **Early Childhood**

- FY20 Polk County ECI Early Childhood funding is \$954,796.00.
- Carry Forward funds total \$139,252.23.
- Total Early Childhood funds in FY20 budget are \$1,094,048.23.
- First quarterly payment of \$238,699.00 received in July.
- Interest accrued \$1,584.56.
- At end of September Early Childhood funds of \$102,530.11 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 9.4% of FY20 Early Childhood funds. In FY19 10.3% of funds had been expended.

Bremner pointed out in school ready Des Moines Public Library has not invoiced yet and plans for the main campaign to occur in spring. The library has hired Katie McKenzie to lead the Simple Steps campaign as part of her role. Additionally, Linda Roe retired this month. Bremner is not expecting much invoicing on this contract until spring.

No comments or changes were required.

*A motion to approve the September 2019 financials was made by Georgia Sheriff and seconded by Josh Mandelbaum. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

## **Advocacy and Association of ECI Area Boards**

The results of the Association of ECI Area Boards survey were presented to the members. Eva Morales reported the Advocacy Committee met to discuss the Association of ECI Area Boards membership. Although this is the first year for the Association, the committee recommends joining the Association with the hope to help create a stronger, more unified voice. The committee recommends reviewing the benefits of the membership after the first six months to determine to continue membership with the Association and how to make future dues payments.

The committee recommends the lobbying dues be paid through individual donations from current and past members, and the membership dues be paid with administrative dollars. Bremner will work with the Association and United Way to determine the best way to accept donations. The advocacy committee will discuss fundraising ideas for the upcoming fiscal year.

Sieverding spoke with McKinley Bailey, ECI director and organizer for the Association, and Bailey reported 25 of 38 ECI area boards have voted to join the Association and indicate they will be moving forward with or without Polk County ECI's membership. Sieverding spoke with his internal Government Relations department about the structure of the Association and the fee structure. The individuals he spoke with thought this seemed to be a typical situation for Associations seeking to have a voice at the Capitol

Bremner reported she met with Senator Peterson and Representative Oldson. Both were supportive of the Association and the definite need for a unified voice for the children.

Barron raised his concerns: over the high dues for Polk County ECI relative to other areas and the effectiveness of the dollars being spent; there are no clear guidelines on how decisions will be made; this is a new association with no track record.

Members agreed there is traction on advocacy for early childhood issues, and it would be good for Polk County ECI to have a seat at the table to contribute to the work. Bremner was asked to keep members informed as to the time commitment and if there become items which she cannot cover because of the time demands of the Association.

Sieverding ask for a vote on the Committee's recommendation to join the Association of ECI Area Boards and Advocates, with lobbying dues coming from private donations and membership dues paid with administrative funds for FY20.

*The committee's recommendation was approved by 10 votes; Rob Barron opposed.*

Josh Mandelbaum departed at 12:56 p.m.

#### **Administrative Report**

- Bremner's Administrative Report will be included in November materials.

#### **Old Business**

None.

#### **New Business**

None.

#### **Public Comment**

None reported.

#### **Adjourn**

*A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bryan Huggins and seconded by Deanna Bennigsdorf. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. The meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.*