



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa
Conference Room F
September 27, 2023

Voting Members Present: Sam Early, Kevin Abler, Dave Arens, Rob Barron, Sandy Carter, Alicia Chilton, Suzanne Cohrs, Matthew Klemme, Eva Morales, Marianka Pille, Eric Tubbs, Emily Westergaard; Participating via teleconference: Deanna Bennigsdorf, Tabitha Choquette, Christian Ramirez, Stephen White; Adam Montufar joined via teleconference at 8:02 a.m.

Voting Members Absent: Jessica Bruning, Shay Scholtes

Ex-Officio Members Present: None

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aaron Johnson, Barb Merrill

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Leann Andre, Child Care Consultant Supervisor, Child Care Resource & Referral; Brianne Emunah, Healthy Start & Empowerment Coordinator, EveryStep; Ruaa Khaleefa, Child Care Business Supervisor, Lutheran Services in Iowa; Dena Lewerke, Economic Development Coordinator, Lutheran Services in Iowa; Nick Wuertz, Director of Refugee Services, Lutheran Services in Iowa

Welcome

Board Chair Sam Early welcomed members and called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

Approval August Minutes

Minutes of board meeting August 23, 2023, were presented. Rob Barron noted he joined the meeting via teleconference at 12:09 p.m. Kanne will make that correction.

A motion to approve the corrected August 2023 minutes was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Alicia Chilton. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adam Montufar joined via teleconference at 8:02 a.m.

July/August FY24 Financial Report

Kevin Abler presented the July/August FY24 financial report. End of August is 17% through the fiscal year. Expenditures are tracking with historical data.

Audit committee is comprised of Abler, Chilton, Klemme, and Cohrs. Committee meets monthly to review School Ready and Early Childhood expenditure reports and use this information to create the presentation via PowerPoint. These documents are included monthly in board meeting materials.

School Ready

- FY24 School Ready funding is \$2,965,062
- Carry Forward funds total \$304,473.51
- FY24 Total School Ready funds \$3,269,535.51
- Interest accrued through August 2023 totals \$849.12
- Expended School Ready funds end of August 2023 total \$147,382.02
- At the end of August 2023 5% of School Ready had been expended. End of previous August 2022 5% of funds had been expended.

Early Childhood

- FY24 Early Childhood funding is \$969,361
- Carry Forward funds total \$141,469.91
- FY24 Total Early Childhood funds \$1,110,830.91
- Interest accrued through August 2023 totals \$392.40
- Expended Early Childhood funds at end of August 2023 total \$36,562.81
- At end of August 2023 3.3% of Early Childhood had been expended. End of previous August 2022 4% of funds had been expended.

A motion to approve the July/August FY24 Financial Report was made by Marianka Pille and seconded by Rob Barron. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

School Ready budget has a line for the Parent Navigator program. No communication from EMBARC or RIVA to date. Will be on the agenda of the November and or December meeting to determine utilizing these funds.

Lutheran Services in Iowa: Child Care Business Development Program

Nick Wuertz, Director of Refugee Services; Dena Lewerke, Economic Development Coordinator; and Ruaa Khaleefa, Child Care Business Supervisor presented LSI's Child Care Business Development Program. Nick Wuertz discussed the long history of LSI in Iowa and their Immigrant/Refugee programs. Polk County ECI began funding the Child Care Business Development program in July 2013. The program is a model for an HHS funding proposal and is now being introduced in Black Hawk, Buena Vista, Scott, and Woodbury counties. Wuertz thanked the board for their support of the program which has been critical to its sustainability. Dena Lewerke and Ruaa Khaleefa reported on the history of the program, services provided to individuals enrolled in the program, and the impact on both providers and the families they serve.

Administrative Report

Administrative Report included with today's materials.

- Bremner thanked members who attended the September 13th Funded Partner meeting at the Community Foundation C3 Center. This was an opportunity for the Community Foundation to hear from programs and for funded partners to network. After the event Eva Morales has worked with DMPL to set up Simple Steps book stations at the Juvenile Justice Center.

- DMPS received \$3.3 million over the next three years from the City of Des Moines to add six new preschool classrooms. Classrooms are elementary buildings and are full. The Department of Education uses previous year enrollment numbers to determine subsequent year funding so this investment will allow for increased enrollment when these funds end.
- Shalom Community Impact has moved to a new location which will allow them to expand services. A flyer for a November Uplifting New Iowans Event is included in today's materials, and members are encouraged to attend.
- Governor-appointed Boards & Commissions Review Committee has recommended maintaining the Early Childhood Iowa State Board while eliminating the Early Childhood Stakeholders Alliance and the Child Care Advisory Committee. Committee recommends removing the gender balance requirement for all boards and commissions. This is a struggle for rural ECI areas but is important for small boards to maintain.
- Capital Park Early Learning Center is holding an open house, October 18th from 4-5 p.m. Members are invited.
- Included is a profile of an in-home child care provider participating in the newly funded program at Oakridge: Prepare 2 Care.
- Bremner met with YWRC. They have hired a new program manager.

Old Business

- Christian Ramirez provided an update on the Community Foundation Child Care Crisis event which he attended. Panelists included: Deann Cook, President, Iowa Women's Foundation; Rob Burnett, Vice President of Science Learning, Science Center of Iowa; Dave Stone, Advocacy Officer, United Way of Central Iowa; Ryan Page, Child Protective Services, Iowa Department of Health & Human Services and Mu Da Paw, Community Resource Navigator, Lutheran Services in Iowa.
- Early thanked members who have donated funds to meet the membership fee for the Association of ECI Area Boards and Advocates. The goal is to show the board commitment to advocacy for ECI by attaining 100% participation. A reminder email will be sent out after today's meeting.

New Business

- Early shared the first social event of the year is scheduled for October 12th. This will be a 7:45-8:45 a.m. breakfast gathering at HomeGrown in the Crescent building, 555 17th St., Ste 102, Des Moines, IA 50309

Public Comment

- Brianne Emunah invited members to EveryStep's Roll Baby Roll! event today at 11:15 a.m. at the Capitol. This is their annual walk to raise awareness on infant mortality.

Adjournment

Abler made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Cohrs seconded. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Early adjourned the meeting at 9:21 a.m.