



**POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING**  
**United Way of Central Iowa – Leadership Room**  
**December 18, 2019**

**Voting Members Present:** Rob Barron, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Bryan Huggins, Jana Shepherd, Craig Sieverding, Emily Westergaard; Josh Mandelbaum arrived at 11:35 a.m.; Mee Yang-Lee arrived at 11:39 a.m.; Members participating via teleconference: Sandy Carter; Nick Dial, Jem Gong-Browne, Matt Knoll, Charles Mercer, Eva Morales, Marianka Pille, Georgia Sheriff

**Voting Members Absent:** Ahmed Agyeman, Marvin DeJear, Jeanie McCarville Kerber

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** Dave Arens, Brook Rosenberg

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:** Terry Harrmann, Barb Merrill

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

**Guests Present:** Amy Curtis, ECQuIP Early Childhood Center Consultant, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children (IAEYC); Johnna Haggerty, ECQuIP Early Childhood Center Consultant, IAEYC; Laura Linnenbrook, T.E.A.C.H. & WAGE\$ Coordinator, IAEYC; Lora Patton, Regional Director, Child Care Resource & Referral; Kelli Soyer, Associate Director, The Coalition for Family and Children's Services; Lisa Stocksleger, ECQuIP Literacy Consultant, IAEYC; Jennifer Stritz, ECQuIP Early Childhood Center Consultant, IAEYC; Leslie Taft, Stork's Nest Manager, EveryStep; Shanell Wagler, ECI Technical Assistance Team Member, Department of Management, Early Childhood Iowa; Stacey Walter, ECQuIP Project Manager, IAEYC; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start & Empowerment Director, EveryStep

**Welcome**

Board Chair Craig Sieverding called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 11:33 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

**Approval November Minutes**

Minutes of the November 20, 2019 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

*A motion to approve the November minutes was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Deanna Bennigsdorf. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

Josh Mandelbaum arrived at 11:35 a.m.

**FY20 Financial Statements**

The November and December expenditure reports will be presented at the January meeting.

### **Quality Improvement Funds**

Members were presented with a supply and materials request of \$38,197.96 from the ECQuIP team for coalition centers. Of this request, \$8,430.00 would cover the IAEYC Fall Institute registrations and \$29,767.96 will address pilot center material requests as identified by the ECQuIP team based on ITERS or ECERS environmental rating tools. Previously materials and equipment for coalition centers were funded through quality contracts prior to the implementation of the Stay Bonus pilot. Bremner reported in FY19 \$50,000 was allocated to the Capacity Building, Quality Support for Pilot Centers line item. With the full amount not being expended in FY19, the line item was adjusted to \$25,000 for FY20. Bremner is requesting the board move \$15,000 from the non-contracted line Other Services, Contingency/Emergency Funds. Currently the Contingency/Emergency Funds has an available balance of \$102,215.95.

Mee Yang-Lee arrived at 11:39 a.m.

Stacey Walter, ECQuIP Project Manager, reported the ECQuIP team was established in 2002 to support centers serving low-income families to achieve quality child care programming. Typically fulfilling these requests is shared with United Way – Women United funding, however those dollars have been earmarked for larger construction projects this fiscal year. Amy Curtis, ECQuIP Early Childhood Center Consultant, explained the items requested are necessary to replace broken items and hazards in the centers that could affect both the safety of the children and the centers ratings during the QRS evaluation site visit process. Lisa Stocksleger, ECQuIP Literacy Consultant, reported she is working with centers to provide more focus on literacy and writing skills which requires new supplies. Johnna Haggerty, ECQuIP Early Childhood Center Consultant for infants, toddlers and 2-year olds, added there are new STEM expectations for these ages.

Members discussed ways to proactively meet these needs. Walter reported the team works with the directors to make sure center budgets include consumable goods. Many of these centers do not have the ability to cover the amount of supplies necessary for quality programming and support wages for employees. Many rely on donations and grants to help cover classroom material costs. Sheriff requested members proactively pursue a way to meet center's ongoing instructional supply and material needs. She requested this item be added to a future agenda for further discussion.

Sieverding requested the 100 Acre Woods request for \$877.00 be removed from request of \$29,767.96 materials cost since center is located outside of Polk County. Sieverding made motion to move \$15,000 from the Other Services: Contingency/Emergency Funds line to budget line Capacity Building: Quality Support for Pilot Centers. This increases this budget line to \$40,000.

*A motion to approve moving \$15,000 Early Childhood funding and approving the \$37,320.96 funding request was made by Deanna Bennigsdorf and seconded by Rob Barron. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.*

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

Members were presented with a draft of the Association of Early Childhood Iowa Area Boards and Advocates 2020 Legislative Agenda. Bremner reported she is a member of the Associations

Advocacy team which has met with the area associations to create the agreed upon agenda. The team will meet again in January to streamline the messaging.

Members received a letter and donation form requesting donations to raise the fees to cover the costs of membership in the Association. United Way of Central Iowa will be the fiscal agent for the donations making them tax deductible for donors.

Brook Rosenberg raised concerns related to the association and the proposed agenda:

- The ask seems too narrow, unrealistic ask
- There appears to be no statewide public/private partnerships
- Should the ECI director be the representative for the Association

Bremner will share upcoming meeting dates with the board for those who are able to participate. Members agreed this is an opportunity for a unified message with ECI boards, the State board, Iowa Women's Foundation, and other early childhood focused organizations

Members received a document listing their legislative representative. Members were asked to contact their legislator before session starts January 13th, introducing themselves and thanking them for their continued support of early childhood issues. Sample letters were included in today's meeting packet. Please share feedback with Bremner.

### **ECI Needs Assessment and Preschool Development Grant and Renewal**

Shanell Wagler, ECI Technical Assistance Team Member, Department of Management, Early Childhood Iowa reported on the *Early Childhood Iowa We Are ECI: Strategic Plan 2019-2020*. Iowa was one of 47 states to receive a planning grant for this work. Many individuals and organizations throughout the state helped develop the Early Childhood Needs Assessment and set the goals in the strategic plan.

Wagler reported Iowa's Needs Assessment was one of four states that met all federal requirements. The Strategic Plan was approved with no suggested changes. Iowa has applied for a \$30 million, 3-year implementation grant. If approved, there would be an opportunity for local grant options.

Josh Mandelbaum departed at 12:35 a.m.

Wagler walked members through the *Polk County ECI Needs Assessment Brief* document completed by Iowa State University.

Wagler indicated if the 3-year grant funding was received, they would like to provide grants for:

- Area ECI's to address statewide voluntary preschool access
- Expand projects focused on two generational programming
- Expansion of child care private/public partnerships
- \$2 million per year to expand T.E.A.C.H and WAGE\$ programming statewide

Wagler indicated they may prioritize distributing grants for areas of Iowa where there are child care deserts.

Wagler encouraged members to sign up on the website <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov> to be notified of new information, upcoming webinars, and ECI State Board Meeting dates.

### **Administrative Report**

A written report was included with meeting materials. Highlights include:

- December 12<sup>th</sup> the *Des Moines Register* ran an article highlighting child care issues.
- Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children has closed the position for the ECQulP Project Manager position. She is ready to begin the review process. Bremner and Kate Bennet with United Way will be involved in the interview process.
- Bremner and United Way staff continue to meet with Capitol Park staff. The center had a slight dip in enrollment in November. The preschool contract with DMPS is in place.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Public Comment**

None reported.

### **Adjourn**

*A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Rob Barron. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.* The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.