



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa – Zoom Meeting
March 25, 2020

Voting Members Present: Craig Sieverding, Ahmed Agyeman, Rob Barron, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Sandy Carter, Jem Gong-Browne, Bryan Huggins, Josh Mandelbaum, Jeanie McCarville Kerber, Charles Mercer, Marianka Pille, Jana Shepherd, Georgia Sheriff, Emily Westergaard, Mee Yang-Lee

Voting Members Absent: Marvin DeJear, Nick Dial, Matt Knoll, Eva Morales

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dave Arens, Barb Merrill

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Terry Harrmann, Brook Rosenberg

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Leann Andre, Child Care Consultant Coordinator, Child Care Resource & Referral; Jillian Herink, Executive Director, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Jeannette Luthringer, Community Health Director, Child Care Nurse Consultant, EveryStep; Lora Patton, Regional Director, Child Care Resource & Referral; Kristin Rourk, Early Childhood Special Education and Preschool Program Administrator, West Des Moines School District; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start Director, EveryStep; Courtney Wolterman, Smile Squad, Dental Connections

Welcome

Board Chair Craig Sieverding called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Quorum was met at this time. Craig thanked cabinet members and community partners for joining today's Zoom meeting given that all are working remotely.

Approval February Minutes

Minutes of the February 26, 2020 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections. *THE MINUTES APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.*

FY20 Financial Statements

Bremner presented financial statements for February 2020. Statements are a cash presentation of financial transactions which took place through February 29th 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.
- Interest accrued through February 2020 \$9,042.73.
- At end of February 2020 School Ready funds of \$1,376,490.34 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 48% of FY20 School Ready funds. In previous fiscal year at end of February 49% 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.
- Interest accrued through February \$4,728.68.
- At end of February 2020 Early Childhood funds of \$590,905.29 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 54% of FY20 Early Childhood funds. In FY19 49% of funds had been expended.

A motion to approve the February 2020 financial report for both grants was made by Deanna Bennigsdorf and seconded by Emily Westergaard. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ECI State Updates – Covid-19/Child Care: DHS guidance, coalition centers

Bremner provided members with information on impacts of Covid-19 and information received from the state ECI office:

- She is participating in twice-weekly ECI State Director Zoom meetings. These are run by the ECI state staff and include updates from state leads of Child Care Resource & Referral, Department of Human Services, and Department of Public Health.
- Guidance by Shanell Wagler, is if contracted services are not being delivered ECI areas cannot issue payments. As an example, school districts are continuing to pay staff through district contracts even though the classrooms are closed. ECI areas are advised not to issue payments unless districts have adapted service to children and families in a way acceptable to local boards.
- Des Moines Public Schools has provided a work plan which details communication between teachers and parents/guardians of enrolled preschoolers. If families express a need beyond instruction or activities their contact info is shared with the department Family Support & Services Team for follow-up and referrals.
- ECI state guidance on contracts and modification of service provision has been verbal and informal so far.
- Child Care Resource & Referral reports to DHS daily on child care center closures and regional changes. DHS has created a map with the most up-to-date center and home provider capacity. This is intended to help Essential Workers locate child care if needed.
- Communities have the ability to set up emergency child care centers if needed. Existing centers have been instructed to keep room ratios below 10, including staff and to not regroup as numbers attending drop.
- Effective March 9 the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) no longer limits the amount of absent days paid per month to childcare providers who remain open for business. This will help coalition centers meet expenses during this time.
- Since March 9 Child Care Resource & Referral reports 148 center and home providers have closed in Polk County.
- State ECI staff have discussed changing allowable carry forward funds from 20% to 30% because of the fact that some contract expenditures will be lessened. School Ready carry forward is in code. Early Childhood carry forward is determined by the ECI State Board. The ECI State Board will discuss at their next meeting April 3.

- Bremner will be in contact with each funded contract to determine service delivery for the remaining FY20 contract.
- Westergaard raised concern over districts not receiving reimbursement. Some board contracts with districts include community outreach and supports for families. Bremner will contact district administrators to see what modification of service delivery they are able to implement.
- Members requested Bremner ask the Association to look into the School Ready carry forward allowance which is determined by the Governor.
- Bremner reported ECI state office will provide draft FY21 amounts using FY20 numbers. State revenue will be impacted; for planning purposes an estimate of 10-15% reduction in funding is advised.
- ECI state office anticipates state funding will be issued in a two-month contract for July and August. A subsequent contract will then be issued. Local ECI areas will need to issue contracts accordingly. Guidance will be provided by the state ECI office.

Sieverding asked the community partners to share how their programs are adapting:

- Cindy Winn, EveryStep, reported direct care workers are meeting with clients virtually, via teleconference. This is an uncertain time for their vulnerable families, many want to continue to meet. Case managers are making sure families understand what Covid-19 is and the impacts to our community.
- Courtney Wolterman, Dental Connections, reported their main clinic is currently only accepting emergency appointments. Child care centers are limiting outside visitors. No visits are occurring. These will be rescheduled with individual centers when allowed.
- Leanne Andre, Child Care Resource & Referral, reported consultants are connecting through call or teleconference with providers. All trainings are on hold; they are looking into webinars for essential trainings. Parents are being told to contact CCR&R if their provider closes to find openings at another providers. Both families and centers fear enrolling new children at this uncertain time.
- Jeannette Luthringer, EveryStep, Child Care Nurse Consultants, reported they are providing assistance to open providers via text, phone, and email with limited onsite consultation. Working with provides to help locate resources: thermometers, cleaning supplies.
- Jillian Herink, IAAYC, reported ECQuIP consultants have spoken with all coalition directors and the team held a teleconference yesterday. ECQuIP provided Bremner a spreadsheet with detailing center capacity, enrollment, and anticipated supply of necessary items: paper products, sanitizers, wipes, diapers.
- Bremner shared provider issues with supplies are statewide. DHS and CCR&R are working with suppliers to locate and distribute once acquired.
- The Iowa Small Business Relief fund will issue grants \$5,000-\$25,000. All coalition centers have been encouraged to apply for these funds. The deadline is March 31st. The first few days the website was overloaded and inaccessible.
- Child Care Resource and Referral's website is updated daily for provider information.
- Lora Patton, Child Care Resource & Referral, reported they are working with the Iowa Woman's Foundation to help contact statewide suppliers like Hy-Vee and Fareway to provide exclusions to limits for providers. CCR&R regional directors meet daily with DHS to

share information. Directors have daily calls with consultants so they have the most up-to-date information. Consultants are overwhelmed with providers needing support. DHS is continuing to do some licensing site visits; they are also in charge of approving any temporary sites. These sites must meet regulations and guidelines.

- Georgia Sheriff asked if the teleconference check-ins included opportunities to discuss self-care and domestic abuse assessments.
- Patton reported consultants continue to provide community meeting/family checks as a part of their teleconferences. Consultants provide follow-up and resources when necessary.

Coalition Centers – Emergency Funding

Bremner reported no funding requests have been received at this time. The board has \$66,368.73 in School Ready non-contracted dollars available and \$87,215.95 in Early Childhood non-contracted dollars to support program needs as they arise. Sieverding supported being responsive to requests as needs arise. Bremner and Sieverding will work to create a process to document program requests and service delivery models. Members discussed how to continue to support programs that currently are not serving children and making sure there is equity in the funding provided in response to requests. Bremner reported she is working with CCR&R to determine broader community needs which could open the door for new funding opportunities.

Program Review Process and Timeline

Bremner asked members to continue to work in committees reviewing materials and submit any questions for the programs to her. Bremner will compile committee questions and submit to partners. Bremner is anticipating funding will be reduced for FY21. It is not expected to have final numbers from the state for the June meeting to determine full FY21 funding for programs. Programs will receive contracts for the first two months of FY21. Once final numbers are received from the state amended contracts will be sent out.

Administrative Report

No Administrative Report was filed.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Public Comment

None reported.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.