



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING

Zoom Meeting Only

June 24, 2020

Meeting conducted electronically pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8. The current circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor's proclamation directing that no more than 10 individuals may meet in a public gathering, and CDC guidelines regarding social distancing dictate that conducting this meeting in person is impossible or impracticable.

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

Voting Members Absent: Marvin DeJear, Nick Dial, Jem Gong-Browne

Ex-Officio Members Present: Dave Arens, Aaron Johnson, Barb Merrill

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Terry Harrmann, Brook Rosenberg

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Leann Andre, Child Care Consultant Supervisor, Child Care Resource & Referral; Kellie Dickinson, Assistant Director of Adventuretime, Urbandale School District; Jillian Herink, Executive Director, Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children; Katie McKenzie, Program Coordinator, Des Moines Public Library; Heidi LaBounty, ECQuIP Project Manager, IAIEYC; Lora Patton, Regional Director, Child Care Resource & Referral; Courtney Wolterman, Smile Squad, Dental Connections

Welcome

Board Chair Craig Sieverding called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 11:31 a.m. Quorum was met at this time. Sieverding reported this would be the last meeting for himself, Marvin DeJear, Josh Mandelbaum, and Georgia Sheriff whose board terms will be ending June 30, 2020. Sieverding thanked them for their time and service on the Polk County ECI board.

Barb Bremner thanked the members for their collaborative and innovative work on the board and in the community. She thanked Sieverding for his leadership as Board Chair.

Approval May Minutes

Minutes of the May 27, 2020 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the May 2020 minutes was made by Georgia Sheriff and seconded by Mee Yang-Lee. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

FY20 Financial Statements

Bremner presented financial statements for May 2020. Statements are a cash presentation of financial transactions which took place through May 31st 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 May 2020 totals \$14,330.58.
- At end of May 2020 School Ready funds of \$2,154,771.73 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 74% of FY20 School Ready funds. In previous fiscal year at end of May 74% 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 May \$6,456.46.
- At end of May 2020 Early Childhood funds of \$808,469.69 had been expended.
- Expenditures are 74% of FY20 Early Childhood funds. In FY19 69% of funds had been expended by end of May.

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

Nominations of Board Officers by Governance Committee (Policy 2.7)

Westergaard presented the Nomination Committee's recommendations for board officers:

- Emily Westergaard – Chair
- Ahmed Agyeman – Vice Chair

Nominations of Board Members by Governance Committee (Policy 2.4)

Bremner thanked Westergaard and Barron for their work recruiting new board members.

Recruitment had an extra challenge this year being conducted remotely. Westergaard reported the committee had five seats to fill, one female and four male, to bring membership to the maximum of 20. The Nomination Committee presented nominations:

Second Term:

- Nick Dial
- Jana Shepherd
- Ahmed Agyeman

New member First Terms:

- Dave Arens
- Tabitha Choquette
- Matthew Klemme
- Adam Montufar
- Eric Tubbs

The committee recommendations for Board Officers and Board Members approved unanimously.

Sieverding introduced Aaron Johnson to members. Johnson is a new member on the State ECI Board and is an ex officio member of Polk County ECI. Johnson is a father of four, lives in Ankeny and is currently a member of the Ankeny School Board.

Conflict of Interest (Policy 2.9)

Members received the Board Member Conflict of Interest and Annual Disclosure FY21 form. Bremner will email members a Word document of the form for them to complete and email back to her before the August meeting.

Sieverding requested members note any potential conflicts with current funded programs or agencies in the Zoom chat box during budget review and approval process. Any members with conflicts will be noted as abstained.

Fiscal Agent Agreement (Policy 4.3)

Members received the SFY21 Fiscal Agent Agreement and Supplement to “Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Fiscal Agent Agreement for Fiscal Year 2021”. The documents detail the responsibilities of United Way of Central Iowa as board fiscal agent. The documents are reviewed annually by Bremner and Sieverding.

A motion to approve United Way of Central Iowa as fiscal agent and the SFY21 Fiscal Agent Agreement and Supplement was made by Marianka Pille and seconded by Deanna Bennigsdorf. THE MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

School Ready Budget Recommendations FY21 (Policy 4.1 and 5.1)

Bremner reported last week the legislature approved status quo funding. The original allocation estimates are the final numbers for the upcoming year’s budget. Area ECI’s were advised there may be some mid-year reductions. A mid-year reduction did happen a few years ago through the School Ready contract. At that time the board was able to utilize non-contracted funds to cover the gaps so programs only received slight reductions.

Sieverding reported EMBARC Parent Navigator, Polk County Health Lead Poisoning, and EveryStep Healthy Start & Empowerment continued to provide services during the pandemic and the committee recommends meeting their requested amounts. DMPS Parent Engagement anticipates the same level of services going forward with the resumption of school. Des Moines Public Library was anticipating a spring launch of programming, that launch has been delayed.

Bremner reported Dental Connections has not been able to provide services in the childcare centers during COVID-19. They are working to create a service plan in collaboration with EveryStep Child Care Nurse Consultants and the ECQuIP Team to determine what centers and families are comfortable with. Meanwhile the clinic on 9th Street remains open for appointments to serve children with dental needs. A contract of \$1,000 is recommended and can be amended when service delivery is established.

Sieverding reported the committee revised the Preschool Programming funding allocations for school districts based on a new formula:

- 25% based on the number of 4 year old's enrolled
- 75% based on free and reduced priced lunch numbers

The aggregate funding total remained the same; the distribution to districts has adjusted. The committee did make sure no district would see more than a 10% change from year to year over a three-year implementation. Sheriff participated on this committee and spoke about the great care and thought put in by committee to this positive change.

EveryStep Child Care Nurse Consultant contract will be split between the School Ready and Early Childhood grants. This provides an equitable percentage of non-contracted funds for both grants.

The committee recommendations for the School Ready FY21 budget were approved unanimously. Members with a conflict of interest abstained per contract via chat: Sieverding EveryStep, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Des Moines Public Library; Mandelbaum Des Moines Public Library; Barron Des Moines Pubic Schools; McCarville Kerber Johnston School District; Sheriff, EMBARC.

Early Childhood Budget Recommendations FY21 (Policy 4.1 and 5.1)

Sieverding reported Early Childhood received a slight decrease in funding due to the funding formula change. Bryan Huggins reported the committee reviewed data for the pilot program to determine program impact. The pilot has received positive reviews from center directors. They have reported seeing positive results with staff despite their reservations at the beginning of the program. The committee encourages continued collection of data and recommends continuation of the program.

The committee prioritized maintaining status quo funding for positions delivering direct service. Jana Shepherd reported the committee considered the past non-contracted funds as a percentage of budgets and worked to maintain a similar level on non-contracted funds in the budget.

Sheriff asked if the committee had determined if Oak Academy will continue to receive their full pilot funding since they petitioned for the exception to continue to use funds operationally. Did the committee determine criteria for continuance of, or cessation of, supports? The committee did not reassess for this budget year due to the pressures on all child care programs since March. The committee will address how/when to start stepping centers off operational supports in the upcoming fiscal year.

The committee recommendations for the Early Childhood FY21 budget were approved unanimously. Members with a conflict of interest abstained via chat: Sieverding EveryStep

Committee Status (Policy 2.13)

Sieverding reported all committees will be dissolved at the end of this fiscal year. He thanked members who served on committees this year. New committees will be established in the fall when the board reconvenes.

Schedule for FY21 Board Meetings

Members received the Fiscal Year 2021 Board Meetings schedule. The next scheduled board meeting is August 26, 2020. Bremner will send out calendar invitations for the FY21 board meetings. Meetings will continue to be held virtually for the near future.

Administrative Report

- The Early Childhood Committee discussed bringing in childcare center directors at the September or October meeting to present to the board. The coalition centers worked hard during the pandemic to stay open in order to continue to serve essential worker's needs.
- Capitol Park's board made the decision to close for six weeks during the pandemic. As of May 28th the center has reopened.
- All Star Day Care had to close due to a staff member testing positive for COVID-19. Polk County ECI was able to reimburse the center for their cleaning/sanitizing expenses.
- Both Conmigo and CFI-CDC were closed in May due to staff testing positive for COVID-19. They have reopened after cleaning/sanitizing the centers and implementing protocol changes. This is going to be an ongoing challenge for centers.
- In April Iowa DHS received \$31.89 million in CARES Act funding dedicated to childcare. DHS surveyed providers and stakeholders and used that input to create a Sustainability Plan to guide distributing the funds to child care providers in Iowa.

Mee Yang-Lee departed the meeting at 12:50

- Racial disparities begin prenatally, we see evidence of this all around us and in the data we collect. These past few months have been challenging. Bremner thanked the board for their hard work and support during these difficult times.
- Bremner's Administrative Report was included in meeting materials.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Sieverding thanked the program staff for their service to the community. Working closely with the programs to make change in the community is the highlight of the board's work.

Public Comment

None reported.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Josh Mandelbaum and seconded by Georgia Sheriff. The meeting adjourned at 12:54 p.m.