



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING

Zoom Meeting Only

November 18, 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: Emily Westergaard, Ahmed Agyeman, Dave Arens, Rob Barron, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Sandy Carter, Nick Dial, Bryan Huggins, Matt Knoll, Matthew Klemme, Jeanie McCarville Kerber, Charles Mercer, Adam Montufar, Eva Morales, Marianka Pille, Eric Tubbs, Jana Shepherd, Mee Yang Lee; Jem Gong-Browne joined at 8:32 a.m.

Voting Members Absent: Tabitha Choquette

Ex-Officio Members Present: 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; Julie Buntmeyer, Family Support, Lutheran Services in Iowa; Lanette Nelson, Healthy Start Outreach Manager, Nella Saunders, Orchard Place/Child Guidance; EveryStep; Leslie Taft, Healthy Start/Stork's Nest Manager; Darby Taylor, Community Health Vice President, EveryStep; Tray Wade, President and CEO, EveryStep; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start Director, EveryStep

Welcome

Board Chair Emily Westergaard called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

Approval October Minutes

Minutes of the October 28, 2020 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the October 2020 minutes was made by Dave Arens and seconded by Bryan Huggins. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Statements October 2020

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

School Ready

- FY21 Polk County ECI School Ready funding is \$2,787,342
- Carry Forward funds total \$296,753.93
- Total School Ready funds in FY21 budget are \$3,084,095.93
- Interest accrued through October 2020 totals \$3,291.69

- Expended School Ready funds end of October 2020 total \$523,137.29
- Expenditures are 16.96% of FY21 School Ready budget. At end of October 2019 17.19 % of FY20 budget had been expended

Early Childhood

- FY21 Polk County ECI Early Childhood funding is \$928,174
- Carry Forward funds total \$123,624.28
- Total Early Childhood funds in FY21 budget are \$1,051,798.28
- Interest accrued through October 2020 totals \$1,347.31
- Expended Early Childhood funds end of October 2020 total \$129,897.43
- Expenditures are 12.35% of FY21 Early Childhood budget. At end of October 2020 20.5% of FY20 budget had been expended

A motion to approve the October 2020 financials was made by Jeanie McCarville Kerber and seconded by Marianka Pille. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

EveryStep – Healthy Start & Empowerment

EveryStep staff presented on the Healthy Start and Empowerment program. Information was provided how they have pivoted during COVID to continue to keep staff employed, provide essential services to their clients, both contactless and virtually, and have stepped in to fill gaps for other non-profits identified due to COVID-19 and August's Derecho. Presenters were Tray Wade, President and CEO; Darby Taylor, Community Health Vice President; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start Director; Lanette Nelson, Healthy Start Outreach Manager; and Leslie Taft, Healthy Start/Stork's Nest Manager.

- Wade – Initially EveryStep opened a COVID-specific Hospice unit at an administrative office which was previously a Hospice facility. Unit has since closed; however they are in close contact with hospitals in case they would need to reopen. They helping Wesley Life deliver Meals on Wheels meals and working with other non-profits to help fill gaps in services.
- Taylor – The switch to telehealth has been challenging. The Senior Leadership Team continues to meet three times per week to work through barriers.
- Winn – Client assessments are conducted virtually with case managers, participants, and interpreters. Referrals are down. More individuals are home making it easier to complete screenings. Participants look forward to meeting with their case managers.
- Nelson – Targeted outreach at WIC clinics was getting underway when the pandemic began. Outreach was modified to include mailings and social media platforms letting clinics and individuals of services.
- Winn – Intake Team continues to meet weekly to make referrals to get families to resources. They continue working closely with partners to connect families to essential services. Although phone visits are working well, it is easier for case manager to miss red-flags when not meeting with clients in-person. It is taking longer to make referrals; abuse cases are more extreme.
- Taft – Stork's Nest is a healthy behavioral program for pregnant women. Moms earn points based on healthy choices which can be used to receive essential items: cribs, car seats, bottles, etc. Beginning in March contactless deliveries were made to participants; in September they added drive-through hours. Participants schedule a time for pick-up.

Bremner and Westergaard thanked EveryStep staff for the program updates and the innovative ways the agency continues to provide services to the community during COVID-19.

Mee Yang Lee departed the meeting at 9:07 a.m.

Members were divided into breakout rooms for further discussions with EveryStep staff. Member breakout room discussion:

- Are your clients with school aged children experiencing struggles with the hybrid schooling model?
 - Case managers and the Literacy Specialist are providing supports and resources to families struggling with virtual learning. The families face many challenges with so many districts in Polk county and each districts model varies. Many families face language barriers, keeping up with technology adds additional barriers.
- McCarville Kerber asked what school boards should be considering?
 - Nella Saunders, Orchard Place, expressed the need to consider the different cultures in the district. Many parents need assistance with the technology.
 - Julie Buntmeyer, LSI, reiterated considering the number of families that do not speak English or understand technology. Because of these barriers, parents struggle to assist their children in learning.
 - Taft suggested access to online tutoring.
 - Wade suggested streamlining communications. Families receive multiple emails daily with both school updates and action items from teachers. Tag emails action item versus updates?

Administrative Report

Bremner's Administrative Report was included with today's materials and will be emailed with minutes. Included in report is an update from the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children on T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ along with quotes from funded programs provided to the State TA Team at their request as they seek information to share in the state annual report. An additional folder has been added into Board Business on GoogleDocs. This folder contains program review materials from last year for reference by members as programs are discussed.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

Adjourn

Jeanie McCarville Kerber made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Dave Arens seconded. Westergaard adjourned the meeting at 9:28 a.m.