



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa
1111 9th Street, Conference Room F
December 15, 2021

Voting Members Present: Ahmed Agyeman, Kevin Abler, Dave Arens, Deanna Bennigsdorf, Sandy Carter, Tabitha Choquette, Suzanne Cohrs, Sam Early, Bryan Huggins, Emily Westergaard; Participation via teleconference: Matthew Klemme, Adam Montufar, Eric Tubbs, Jana Shepherd; Rob Barron arrived at 11:39 a.m.; Marianka Pille joined via teleconference at 11:53 a.m.

Voting Members Absent: Jem Gong-Browne, Charles Mercer, Eva Morales

Ex-Officio Members Present: Aaron Johnson, and Barb Merrill participated via teleconference

Ex-Officio Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Leslie Taft, Program Manager, EveryStep; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start Director, EveryStep both via teleconference

Welcome

Board Chair Ahmed Agyeman called the Polk County Early Childhood Iowa Board meeting to order at 11:36 a.m. Quorum was met at this time.

Approval October Minutes

Minutes of the October 27, 2021 meeting were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the October 2021 minutes was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Sam Early. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Financial Report October/November 2021

Deanna Bennigsdorf presented the Audit Committee report. Administrative expenses for both grants are within budget at 37% at end of November. School Ready has expended 21% of budget, compared to 24% at this time last year. Early Childhood has expended 27% of budget, compared to 17% last year.

Rob Barron arrived at 11:39 a.m.

Bennigsdorf shared the three-year amount of donations by board members for the membership fee for the ECI Area Boards and Advocates Association. These fees vary annually based on 3% of Polk County ECI's total administrative allocation.

Members asked for information regarding the total for all member ECI areas of donations and total grant funds used for membership. Bremner will email information to members.

School Ready

- FY22 Polk County ECI School Ready funding is \$2,865,988.⁰⁰
- Carry Forward funds total \$337,907.⁹⁵
- Total School Ready funds in FY22 budget are \$3,203,895.⁹⁵
- Interest accrued through November 2021 totals \$1,427.74
- Expended School Ready funds at end of November 2021 total \$683,429.31 or 21% of the budget total.
- At the end of November 2020 24% of School Ready had been expended.

Early Childhood

- FY22 Polk County ECI Early Childhood funding is \$947,808.⁰⁰
- Carry Forward funds total \$118,891.⁷⁵
- Total Early Childhood funds in FY22 budget are \$1,066,699.⁷⁵
- Interest accrued through November 2021 totals \$484.65
- Expended Early Childhood funds at end of November 2021 total \$284,959.39 or 27% of budget total.
- At end of November 2020 17% of Early Childhood had been expended.

A motion to approve the 2021 financials was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Suzanne Cohrs. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

School Ready: New Grants

Deadline for applications for funding was October 29. The committee (Agyeman, Arens, Bennigsdorf, Cohrs, Huggins, Klemme, Westergaard) met on November 17th. Agyeman reported the board had budgeted \$200,000 in School Ready and \$75,000 in Early Childhood funds for new funding. A total 31 applications were received totaling \$690,180 in requests. Grants Review Committee recommended funding for 12 School Ready applications totaling \$142,600. The remaining \$57,400 will move to Emergency Contingency funding.

Bryan Huggins reported the child care center requests for the Early Childhood grants have been put on hold. Bremner shared the centers became eligible to apply for federal funds through Iowa Workforce Development and DHS Child Care Challenge Grants. This \$10 million application process was released in mid-November with a deadline of December 10th. DHS will be release awards in mid-January. The committee will review applications which do not receive Child Care Challenge funds.

Centers will be eligible for \$227 million in Stabilization grants. This grant will be based on operational expenses. Centers will need to show revenue loss during the pandemic or that they continued to provide services to child care assistance families during the pandemic. All coalition centers should be eligible for this grant.

Marianka Pille joined via teleconference at 11:53 a.m.

Bremner will notify programs after today's meeting of their award status. Contracts will be issued to agencies awarded funding through DocuSign. Bremner will work with the agencies on performance measure reporting guidelines.

A motion to approve the Grants Review Committee funding recommendations was made by Emily Westergaard and seconded by Kevin Abler. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Administrative Report

Bremner's Administrative Report was included in today's packet.

- Federal funds becoming available for centers. The ECQuIP team continues to work with the centers to make them aware of new funding sources and guide them through the application processes.
- The Governor's Child Care Task Force released their final recommendation report. A link to the December 16th webinar presented by Early Childhood Iowa detailing the implementation of these recommendations is included in today's report.
- Bremner met with the Preschool Advisory Group the beginning of December. The group raised concerns over preschool funding. With enrollment dropping last year due to COVID, that impacted this year's funding. The legislature passed a short-term fix last session, using pandemic funds to fill that gap, however those funds have not been released. This may become an advocacy issue once the legislature convenes in January.
- Bremner shared Dave Arens has been appointed to the State ECI Board.

Old Business

None

New Business

- Early recommended members review the Governor's Child Care Task Force recommendations. He shared he has just completed his MPA capstone focused on child care and workforce challenges and offered to share his findings with members.
- Bremner reported seven of the coalition centers are partners with Early Head Start. In January federal masking mandates will take effect for those centers. Additionally, all EHS classroom staff will be required to be vaccinated by January 31st.
- Bremer reported she will begin working with agencies in February to gather data for the annual review process. Committee's will meet in-person with the programs in April to review program data and determine FY23 funding.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Bennigsdorf made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Adler seconded. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agyeman adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.