



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING
United Way of Central Iowa
Leadership Room
February 25, 2026

Voting Members Present: Alicia Chilton, Kevin Abler, Dave Arens, Jessica Bruning, Sam Early, Matthew Klemme, Megan Schultheis, Eric Tubbs;
Participating via Teams: Jake Al-Mazroa, Tabitha Choquette, Suzanne Cohrs, Josh Laraby

Voting Members Absent: Gabrielle Brooks, Crhistian Ramirez, Stephen White

Ex-Officio Members Present: Brook Rosenberg

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Aaron Johnson, Emily Westergaard

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: Adriana Flores, Program Manager; Molly Gosselink, Vice President Community Health Services; Cindy Winn, Healthy Start Director, all with EveryStep; via Teams Alyssa Barton, Service Coordinator, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)

Welcome

Board Chair Alicia Chilton welcomed members and called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m. Quorum was met at this time. Guest introductions were made.

Approval December Minutes

Minutes of board meeting January 28, 2026, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the January 2026 minutes was made by Dave Arens and seconded by Shay Scholtes. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

January FY26 Financial Report

Kevin Abler presented the January FY26 financial report. Expenditures are tracking as expected with no concerns. EveryStep has submitted December and January invoices for both the home visitation and coordinated intake contracts. Young Women's Resource Center, ISU Extension, and Jai Olive are showing low expenditure due to the contract amendments; no concerns with these contracts at this time.

Bremner reported Expenditure Report, Column G shows contract amendments approved at the January meeting. All contracts have been fully executed and updated invoice sheets have been sent to programs.

A motion to approve the January FY26 financials was made by Sam Early and seconded by Matthew Klemme. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Governance: Policy updates

Bremner reported the policies included in today's materials focus on personnel and staffing. HHS has requested ECI directors participate in weekly meetings to review a proposed HHS Policy and Procedure manual and provide input. Recommended changes to the Polk County ECI Policy and Procedure Manual are indicated in red and are based on the HHS manual draft.

Members discussed recommended changes. Members were asked to review the document and submit any questions to Bremner. Eric Tubbs offered to review the policies and meet with Bremner to further revise. The board will vote on the updated version at the March Meeting.

HSB623/SSB311 updates

Bremner reported both bills made it through the first funnel. HSB623 was assigned a new number today, SSB311 will be renumbered. She thanked members for their involvement in communication with legislators. The statewide grassroots efforts have been impactful, with legislators encouraging HHS to be more collaborative.

Discussions:

- The legislation would move all home visitation contracts to HHS and HHS would draw down federal funding through the Families First IV-E funds. Doing this would remove approximately half of current ECI funding.
- Community voices have been important. Dave Arens and Brook Rosenberg reiterated member correspondence with legislators has been impactful.
- The Association will hold their Legislative Breakfast March 24th 7:30 – 9 a.m. at the Capitol.

Program review committees and timeline

Bremner reviewed Program Review Committees. Members have been split into three review committees; each committee will review program outcomes and budget requests and score programs. Current process does not include committees meeting with programs. Committees will review and then committee leads will meet with Bremner prior to the April meeting.

Administrative Report

- Administrative Report was included in today's materials.
- Bremner has been attending the HHS weekly Friday meetings to review the HHS Policy and Procedure Manual.
- Mid-year program reporting is due Thursday, February 26th at midnight. Bremner will submit required reporting via the state portal and share with members after submission.
- The next ECI State Board meeting is Friday, March 6, from 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Comment

- Cindy Winn thanked board members for their continued support for services for families in Polk County and across the state. She invited members to the 5th annual Baby Bloom event at Grand View College March 25th from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Adjournment

Jessica Bruning made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Abler seconded. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chilton adjourned the meeting at 12:27 p.m.