



POLK COUNTY EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA BOARD MEETING

United Way of Central Iowa

Leadership Room

June 17, 2026, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Voting Members Present: Dave Arens, Alicia Chilton, Suzanne Cohrs, Sam Early, Matthew Klemme, Shay Scholtes, Megan Schultheis, Eric Tubbs; Jessica Bruning arrived at 11:37 a.m.; Kevin Abler arrived at 11:46 a.m.; Participating via Teams: Crhistian Ramirez

Voting Members Absent: Jake Al-Mazroa, Gabrielle Brooks, Tabitha Choquette, Josh Laraby, Stephen White

Ex-Officio Members Present: None

Ex-Officio Members Absent: Brook Rosenberg

Staff Present: Barb Bremner, Jody Kanne

Guests Present: None

Welcome

Board Chair, Alicia Chilton welcomed members and called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.
Quorum was met at this time.

Approval May Minutes

Minutes of board meeting May 27, 2026, were presented. There were no comments or corrections.

A motion to approve the May 2026 minutes was made by Suzanne Cohrs and seconded by Matthew Klemme. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

May FY26 Financial Report

Matthew Klemme presented the May FY26 financial report. Expenditures are tracking as expected. Child Care Center Wage Enhancement contracts are not expected to be fully expended; contract amounts are intentionally set based on full staffing and retention of all staff. Bremner estimates \$500,000 in carry forward funds at this time.

Jessica Bruning arrived at 11:37 a.m.

Barb Bremner noted the FY27 budget approved at the May meeting includes \$567,000 in carry forward funding. The difference in the submitted budget and actual carry forward after closing of FY26 financials will be balanced from the non-contracted line item in the budget.

A motion to approve the May FY26 financials was made by Dave Arens and seconded by Sam Early. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Nominations: Officers & New Members (Policy 2.4 and 2.5)

Shay Scholtes reported the Nominating Committee had the goal of recruiting a minimum of five and up to nine new members. The committee received eight applications. Scholtes provided background information on the eight candidates. Bremner met with all applicants. The committee made the following recommendations for board officials and membership:

Officer nominations

- Shay Scholtes – Chair
- Jessica Bruning – Vice Chair

New member nominations

- Arens, Andrea
- Carlson, Janelle
- Mays-Sims, Tiara
- Miller, Jamie
- Moore, Paige
- Riser, Quinlan
- Rosenberg, Brook
- Thandayathapany, Nalina

A motion to approve the committee's New Member recommendations was made by Suzanne Cohrs and seconded by Eric Tubbs. Dave Arens abstained. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

A motion to approve the committee's Officer recommendations was made by Dave Arens and seconded by Sam Early. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Kevin Abler arrived at 11:46 a.m.

Conflict of Interest (Policy 2.9)

Members received the Board Member Conflict of Interest & Annual Disclosure FY27. Chilton asked members to complete the form and return to Kanne after the meeting.

FY27 meeting calendar – proposed

Members received the FY27 Board Meeting Schedule. Meetings will continue to follow the same meeting schedule, meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month, alternating between morning and midday. Bremner will send out calendar invitations for meeting dates and times for the upcoming fiscal year.

HHS/ECI State Board Policies Procedures Section 3

HHS/ECI State Board Policies and Procedures Section 3 was included in meeting materials. Section 3 focuses on contract monitoring, contract issuing, and RFPs. Section 3 has been approved by the ECI State Board and is a required document for all ECI areas. Bremner will incorporate into the Polk County ECI's Policy and Procedure Manual.

Section 4 will be the next policy and procedure issued by HHS and will be discussed at an HHS-scheduled ECI director meeting June 23rd.

Chilton suggested adding a committee next fiscal year to focus on HHS policy changes to evaluate impacts on the board's work and calendaring of tasks.

Advocacy Update

Governor Reynolds signed SF2488. Members are encouraged to reach out to candidates over the next few months to introduce ECI's work. SF2488 includes an "interim study committee" to review impacts of transitioning home visiting services to HHS Early Childhood and Family Services System (ECFS) districts. In July the Association of ECI Areas and Advocates will begin to review Iowa Code 256i to compile recommendations and prepare for the convening of the study committee.

Gubernatorial candidate Rob Sand announced Dave Muhlbauer as his running mate. Muhlbauer is a citizen member of the ECI State Board and understands ECI and the importance of local ECI areas.

Administrative Report

Bremner's full report was included in today's materials.

- Bremner attended the June 5th State Board meeting; she reported the board is considering two new policies on "corrective action plans" and "adverse events."
- HHS ECI has \$829,000 in professional development funds committed to five contracts. The Association continues to advocate for some of this funding to be used to support ECI director professional development opportunities.
- Four ECI areas submitted merger requests which were approved.
- Long-time 4 R Kids director, Deb Schrader, has submitted her resignation.
- The ECI State Board has seven citizen openings out of the total 15 required citizen members. Members were asked to reach out to Bremner with potential nominees.
- Bremner and Chilton met with ICOACH and Shalom regarding their FY27 funding requests. Shalom would add an additional instructional day for 4-year-olds utilizing a current teacher and retired teacher volunteers. ICOACH would open a third classroom to address their current wait list of children. Bremner and Chilton felt the board decision to meet the application requests for additional funding was supported by the information shared during these meetings.
- Bremner attended EMBARC's annual fundraising event.
- Polk County ECI's FY27 budget has been approved by HHS; a few programs will be categorized in new service types which will affect the measures they report on.

Old Business

Members are asked to attend an Iowa Public Information Board training regarding open meetings and public records. Training is available July 15th.

New Business

None.

Public Comment

None.

Board Appreciation

Chilton and Bremner thanked Arens, Choquette, Klemme, and Tubbs for their time and service on the Polk County ECI Board. All four joined in 2020 and served six years.

Ramirez was thanked for his service as his first term ends; he has decided not to renew membership for a second term.

Adjournment

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

Chilton adjourned the meeting at 12:21 p.m.