

Linn County Early Childhood Iowa Governance Board MINUTES

September 22, 2020

3:15-4:15 PM via Zoom Webinar

Per Iowa Code section 21.8 an electronic meeting can be held when there are valid concerns that an in-person meeting is "impossible or impractical" (e.g. COVID-19).

Board member present via Zoom or Phone: Richard Barrett, Linda Bigley, Karey Chase, Wyatt Dagit, Karen Lewis, Dan Louzek @ 3:45pm, Patrick Munyakazi, Andrea Rogers, Drew Westberg, and Jasmine Wu.

Excused Absence: Amy DeMeulenaere, Tricia Kitzmann, Ben Rogers, Nancy Scheumann

Leave of Absence: Connie Rutz

Staff via Zoom: Chris Kivett-Berry & Kristen Peyton

Guests via Zoom: Alida Kolthoff, Morgan Bryant, Melissa Grennan, Jan Moffitt, Danielle Pershing, Diana Strahan, Melissa Williams, and Colette Stocks.

Call to order: Andrea Rogers, chair-elect, called the meeting to order at 3:19 pm with quorum present (9/14), (10/14) present at 3:45 pm.

- a. Welcome New Board Member: Welcomed new Board Member Karey Chase, United Way of ECI
- b. FY 21 Board Roster: The updated Roster was included in the agenda packet. Board Members will review for accuracy and notify ECI staff of any updates.
- c. US Chamber Report on Child Care as Essential Industry: The Metro Economic Alliance provided ECI with the link to access this important report:
https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/sites/default/files/media-uploads/EarlyEd_Minis_Report3_090320.pdf

Minutes of 8/25/20 Board Meeting:

- **MSC:** (Lewis, Dagit) Motion and Second to approve minutes from 8.25.20 Board Meeting. Motion carries unanimously.

Program Engagement:

- a. COVID/Derecho Stories from ECI Partners: ECI partners were invited to share their stories, barriers they are facing due to COVID/Derecho. Partners can share in a written or verbal format. Jan Moffitt, YPN, provided a written update, included in the packet, of how their program provided a variety of supports to families immediately after the Derecho and ongoing during recovery. Their multi-lingual Family Support Workers provided invaluable assistance to the community. Alida Kolthoff, Linn County Child Development Center (LCCDC), presented on how the classrooms remained open through the pandemic and Derecho and ways they provided supports to children, including a Facebook learning option and "Drop & Dash" activity kits for kids that remained enrolled but at home.
- b. Discuss State ECI Teleconferencing on ECI Family Support Protocol: Handout included in the packet. The State ECI office shared protocol in July that virtual formats are recommended for in-home and group-based programs to provide services. At the Sept State ECI Board Meeting the Teleconferencing Protocol was discussed. That discussion focused on local ECI Board liability if guidance was not followed or if the local ECI Board was aware that a funded program did not follow protocol guidance. An email survey was sent to Family Support programs and indicated that in-person services are occurring when vendors find it is critical to serving some families. Chris Kivett-Berry reached out to the Linn County ECI Board's insurance agent, who was unable to provide a specific answer, but did share language from Iowa SF 2338 which indicates an entity that follows federal or state guidance shall not be held liable.

Board Members had a robust conversation of the topic of the State ECI guidance on in person services as related to in-home and group-based services. Board members suggested to allow in-person services if the family support program complies with Federal or State statute, regulation, or order regarding proper COVID safety practices. In-person services should be limited and used only if the family can't be served virtually with the same quality/efficacy. If a program chooses to provide in-person services, the Linn County ECI Board will require they submit their family support program's safety practices including, at a minimum, PPE standards, social distancing requirements, and staff quarantine requirements if exposed or contracts COVID. The Linn County ECI Board will monitor this topic and edit/update their policy as warranted. Chris Kivett-Berry will share with Board members via email the protocol and slide presentation shared at the State ECI office.

- **MSC:** (Barrett, Westberg) Motion and second to approve Linn County ECI funded Family Support programs to provide in-person services if deemed critical to serve the family, but the in-person Family Support services must be in substantial compliance or consistent with all applicable federal or state regulations, executive orders, and public health guidance related to COVID-19 applicable at the time of exposure. Each ECI funded Family Support program providing in-person services should provide their written policy documenting their COVID-19 health and safety protocols to Linn County ECI staff. Additionally, in-person services should only be provided when the same service cannot be provided virtually in an efficient and effective manner. Motion carries unanimously.

- c. Discuss Payment Parameters and FY 21 Program Work Plans: Summary included in the packet. COVID continues to limit the ability of programs to provide services such as child health screens, preschool attendance, group-based services, and child care consultations. The Derecho caused additional limitations for some programs. Linn County ECI programs are, in many ways, able to pivot in order to find a way to provide services. However, the format/model of some services continues to make this a challenge. A temporary change to service delivery is no longer the issue. Discussions of fundamental long-term changes are needed. The Board also needs to closely monitor budget utilization to ensure the carry forward threshold is not exceeded.

To support programs, the recommendation is to extend current payment parameters to Dec 31, 2020. In addition each ECI program is to submit an updated FY 21 work plan for Board review. The work plan would specify how the program will fulfill its ECI contracted services. Alternatively it could offer a new or alternative service model with different contracted goals and budget for Board action. This work plan deadline for each program is Nov 6th.

- **MSC:** (Westberg, Lewis) Motion and second to approve the request to establish a November 6th deadline for each ECI program to submit a FY 21 Work Plan, using the format provided by Linn County ECI office. Motion carries unanimously.
- **MSC:** (Bigley, Munyakazi) Motion and second to approve the request to extend current payment parameters to December 31, 2020, acknowledging that a case-by-case decision is allowed as warranted by ECI staff or fiscal agent.

Community Engagement:

a. Iowa Women's Foundation Grant & ECI Involvement: On August 26th, ECI staff was notified their Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Iowa Women's Foundation was selected to move forward with submitting a grant application. A LOI with project details was included in the packet. If grant funds are received, Child Care Ready events will be offered in Linn County in calendar year 2021 to provide participants with all of the training required to become a DHS registered child care provider. These events will be overseen by the Child Care Provider Solutions Team and ECI staff is the convener of this team. The application is due October 2nd. Applicants will be notified no later than November 13th if awarded the grant. Board members are comfortable committing \$1,000 in a match donation to the project to help cover participant incentive items such as books, computers, etc.

- b. Save the Children Grant Update: Tabled due to time constraint.
- c. Child Care Provider Freezer Restock Events (ECI & Paces): Flyer with full details in the packet.

Board Operations:

- a. ECI Association Legislative Priority Zoom Quick Poll (& Survey): Unable to complete the Zoom poll or discussion due to time constraint. Survey and details will be sent via email.
- b. ECI Community Plan Update for FY 20 Annual Report: Tabled.
- c. FY 21 Committees & Member Preference Doodle Survey: Handout included in the packet. Required committees per Linn Co ECI By-Laws are Exec and Finance. Added to the options for FY 21 are Home Visit Pilot Project and the Community Child Care Solutions Teams. Board members are expected to serve on a committee. Survey will be sent via email after the meeting for Board members to select which committee they would like to join.
- d. Board Meeting Schedule: Next meeting is October 27th @ 3:15 pm via Zoom. The meeting may be extended by 15 minutes-until 4:30pm to accommodate the breadth of topics and allow for increased dialogue.

Open Agenda: None.

Motion to Adjourn:


> **MSC:** (Wu, Westberg) Motion and Second to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:22 pm.

Recorder: Chris Kivett-Berry

Signature: 

Date: 10/22/20

Reviewer: Drew Westberg, Secretary

Signature: 

Date: 10/22/20