



**Early Childhood Iowa Area Board
Minutes
Thursday September 11, 2025
Virtual Meeting**

Board Meeting (Information)

Board Chairperson Martens convened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Attendance (Information)

(x means attendance at the meeting)

Board member	Representation	Attendance
Catherine Reaman-Gerdes	Human Service	x
Christine Lundy	Education	
Colleen Strohmaier	Business	
Jacob Gunn	Parent	x
Jessica Petter	Health	
Nancy Krause	Citizen	x
Rita Martens - Chairperson	Citizen	x
Shelley Flanery	Citizen	
Wendy Sawyer	Faith	x

4 R Kids Staff Present (Information)

Debra Schrader, Executive Director.

Others present (Information)

Valarie Cameron, Dallas County ISU Extension, Jovanka Westbrook, and Ricki Hall.

Distinction of Quorum (Information)

Board membership consists of no less than 8 members and no more than 12 members, with 9 positions filled at the beginning of the meeting; 5 or 56% of board members present at the meeting representing quorum.

Open Forum (Information)

None

Introductions (Information)

Introductions were made by Board members and the audience.

Board Professional Development (Information)

Ms. Cameron representing Dallas County ISU Extension provided a presentation on the Preschool Enrichment Project.

Agenda (Action)

Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve the September 11, 2025 agenda. Board member Sawyer seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes (Action)

Board member Sawyer moved to approve the May 15, 2025 minutes. Board member Krause seconded. Motion carried unanimously

Board Member Resignations (Information)

Board members Deb Hansen and Nancy Hopkins have resigned from the board effective September 2025.

Board Membership Applications (Action)

Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve Ms. Jovanka Westbrook and Ms. Ricki Hall's board membership applications. Board member Sawyer seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Redistricting of ECI (Information)

The state ECI Board met September 5, 2025 and redistricting of ECI was a main topic of conversation. A 2-hour planning session was conducted with no outcomes on redistricting. The State ECI Board will have a special board meeting October 17, 2025 from 9:00-12:00 to continue conversations regarding pros and cons of ECI following the 7 behavioral health boundaries or creating different boundaries.

Thrive Iowa Funding *(Action)*

Director Schrader had a meeting with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services today September 11, 2025 regarding extending the current contract for the Thrive Iowa pilot in Warren County. HHS will amend the 4 R Kids ECI Boards contract adding additional federal funding for Thrive Iowa Pilot project until December 31, 2025. The award amount is \$90,773 of which \$86,450 will be provided to Warren County Public Health for navigation, housing, and essential needs services, \$865 will go to fiscal fees and \$3,458 will go for contract administration. Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve the additional funding. Board member Krause seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance Committee *(Action)*

The Finance Committee members reviewed budgets, payment vouchers, bank statements, and fund balance reconciliations prior to the board meeting. Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve the May and June 2025 expenditures in the amount of \$150,502.74 and 226,067.68 respectfully and July 2025 in the amount of \$66,488.24. Board member Sawyer seconded. Motion carried unanimously. It was noted the rate of spending for FY25 was 86% of school ready funding, 95% of early childhood funding, and 75% of ARPA funding. Rate of spending for FY26 was 4% of ECI funding and 63% of ARPA funding.

Board Program and Service Committee

The Committee met August 21, 2025 from 9:00 by Zoom. Board member Sawyer reported for the committee. Minutes and supporting documentation from the Program and Service Committee were provided.

Annual Report *(Action)*

The committee reviewed in depth the FY25 financial statements, FY25 annual reports from providers, analysis and effectiveness of programs, local and state performance measures, and family support comparison documents. Director Schrader noted that all data has been entered into the state data base system and will be submitted on or before the due date of September 15, 2025. It was noted that the school ready carryover was 10.8% and the early childhood carryover was 9.3% and 20% is allowed. All but \$105,119.75 of the carryover has been allocated to FY26 programming. Board member Sawyer moved to approve the FY25 annual report materials and the financial statements. Board member Krause seconded. Motion carried unanimously. A process will remain in place for contractors to request additional funds for FY26 in the event there are emerging needs.

Board Process Committee

The committee did not meet.

Administrative Update *(Information)*

Director Schrader disseminated an administrative update.

- Mercer Health and Benefits Fundraiser;
- Quarterly payments;
- ECI funding categories;
- New FY26 contract requirements;
- End of the year financial records;
- Annual report/data;
- Mid-Iowa Foundation balance;
- Files and office cleaning;
- LSI staffing;
- ECI director meetings;
- FY26 performance measures/HHS challenges;
- Thrive update;
- State ECI board meeting update;
- Association Conference November 13, 2025;
- Success story;
- Out of office dates.

Miscellaneous Board Updates *(Information)*

None

Next meeting *(Information)*

Board Chairperson Martens adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m. The next meeting is November 20, 2025 and will be virtual.