



**Early Childhood Iowa Area Board  
Minutes  
Thursday April 16, 2026  
Virtual Meeting**

**Board Meeting (Information)**

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

**Attendance (Information)**

(x means attendance at the meeting)

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

**4 R Kids Staff Present (Information)**

Debra Schrader, Executive Director.

**Others present (Information)**

Alyssa Barton (Lutheran Services in Iowa).

**Distinction of Quorum (Information)**

Board membership consists of no less than 8 members and no more than 12 members, with 11 positions filled at the beginning of the meeting; 8 or 73% 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. Alyssa Barton representing Lutheran Services in Iowa provided a presentation on home visitation that utilizes the Healthy Families America model.

**Agenda (Action)**

Board member Petter moved to approve the April 16, 2026 agenda. Board member Shelley seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes (Action)**

Board member Krause moved to approve the February 19, 2026 minutes. Board member Westbrook seconded. Motion carried unanimously

**Board Membership and Recruitment (Information)**

There is a Dallas County board membership open on the board. Recruitment efforts continue.

**Legislative Update (Information)**

ECI Director Schrader provided an overview of HF2712 (House policy bill), SF2483 (Senate policy bill) and SF2488 (Senate HHS appropriations bill). The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services has proposed to move 58 home visitation contracts along with 40%

of the local ECI funds to be administered by HHS. HHS indicated that they need to have control of the home visitation programs to bill federal IV-E funds, which is false. HHS can bill the federal IV-E funds while maintaining contacts at the local level. The appropriations bill has the same amount of funding for ECI as the previous year at \$29,256,799. It is unknown when or if the policy bills will be debated in the Senate and House. The legislative session is to adjourn April 21, 2026.

#### **Contractor Onsite Review Report** *(Information)*

Director Schrader provided a detailed FY26 contract performance review report to the board. The onsite program onsite reviews took place in February, March, and April 2025. The report included onsite monitoring, a review of each agencies fiscal audit, review of client files and client enrollment criteria as well as the effectiveness of the programs.

#### **Lutheran Services in Iowa Contract Amendment** *(Action)*

Lutheran Services in Iowa will continue with corrective action through the fiscal year due to not replacing staff which impacted their budget; therefore, their budget will have \$25,000 that will not be spent in FY26. Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to reduce the home visitation contract \$25,000. Board member Petter seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Bylaws Changes** *(Action)*

The board bylaws were reviewed at the February 19, 2026 board meeting where one minor change to the bylaws is recommended. This is the second reading of the bylaws. Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve the changes to the bylaws. Board member Westbrook seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **ECI Director Compensation and Review** *(Action)*

The board had discussion regarding compensation for the executive director. Board member Krause moved to provide for an 5% raise for the executive director for the new fiscal year starting July 1, 2026. Board member Flanery seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Director Schrader thanked the board for the compensation package for the upcoming year.

#### **Finance Committee** *(Action)*

The Finance Committee reviewed budgets, payment vouchers, bank statements, and fund balance reconciliations prior to the board meeting. Board member Petter moved to approve the February and March 2026 expenditures in the amount of \$95,540.60 and \$93,424.36 respectively. Board member Flanery seconded. Motion carried unanimously. It was noted the current rate of spending for FY26 is 63.0% for ECI funding and 100% of ARPA funding. It is to be noted that local ECI boards are allowed to carryover up to 20% of the early childhood Iowa fund the 4 R Kids ECI board is expected to under the 20% carryover requirement.

#### **Board Program and Service Committee**

The committee will meet May 1, 2026.

#### **Board Process Committee**

The committee did not meet. The next meeting will be in August or September.

#### **Miscellaneous Board Update**

None.

#### **Administrative Update** *(Information)*

Director Schrader disseminated an administrative update.

- Legislative update;
- State ECI board member's update;
- State ECI board update;
- FY27 funding and allocations;
- Credit card update;
- HHS policy and procedure manual update;
- Tool O and community collaboration and planning performance measures;
- FY27 request for proposal update;
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter payment received;
- Onsite contractor visits;
- FY25 fiscal audit review;
- Success story;
- Out of office dates;
- Marketing and public awareness activities.

**Miscellaneous Board Updates** (*Information*)

None

**Next meeting** (*Information*)

Board Chairperson Martens adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m. The next meeting is May21, 2026 and will be virtual.