Program and Service Committee Minutes
Thursday August 28, 2026
By Zoom
9:00 A.M.

Attendance
Nancy Krause and Debra Schrader were in attendance by Zoom. Nancy will be the reporter for the September 10, 2026 board meeting.

FY26 Annual Report Review *(information)*
The committee reviewed the FY26 annual report materials that included financial statements, annual report snapshot of the effectiveness of programs. Attached are highlights of the review. Annual report information will be posted on the website.

FY26 Annual Report Approval *(action requested)*
It is consensus to recommend approval of the FY26 annual report, executive summary, and early childhood Iowa financial statements. The due date for board approval is no later than September 15, 2026.

Lutheran Services in Iowa Correction Action Plan Update *(information)*
The committee reviewed the progress of the home visitation program administered by Lutheran Services in Iowa. The corrective action plan was implemented November 2025 with weekly updates and changed to bi-weekly updates in FY27. To date, the program is fully staffed and the program is serving 9 families. The corrective action plan continues to be monitored by the ECI director and will be reviewed at the next committee meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00. Next meeting is scheduled for Friday October 23, 2026 at 9:00 by Zoom.

FY26 Executive Financial and Program Highlights

Financial Stewardship

The 4 R Kids Early Childhood Iowa Area Board continued to demonstrate strong fiscal management during FY26. A total of $1,279,715.12 in Early Childhood Iowa funding was available for direct programming, with $1,133,926.45 (88.9%) expended to support services for children and families. The remaining $145,788.67 (12.9%) will carry forward into FY27, well below the 20% carryover permitted by Early Childhood Iowa/HHS. Of the carryover, all but $33,284.44 has been allocated to support future programming. Board investments were strengthened through contractor partnerships that leveraged 10.3% in additional funding, with significant support provided by United Way of Central Iowa and Child Abuse Prevention funding.

Contractor Accountability

Contractors continued to demonstrate exceptional accountability and compliance with board expectations.

- 100% submitted final payment vouchers by the July 20, 2026 deadline.
- 100% completed annual reports by the required deadline.
- 100% of payment vouchers were accepted, with no vouchers rejected during the fiscal year. Minor issues were corrected quickly, reflecting strong fiscal oversight and communication.

Contractor Performance

Contractors evaluated their overall performance against program benchmarks using a four-point scale.

- 42% (5 of 12) reported exceeding expectations.
- 17% (2 of 12) reported meeting expectations.
- 25% (3 of 12) reported partially meeting expectations.
- 16% (2 of 12) reported not meeting expectations.

Overall results were consistent with the previous fiscal year, indicating stable program performance despite ongoing workforce and policy challenges.

Family Support Services Highlights

Family support programs continued to provide critical home visitation services across the area, although staffing shortages within Lutheran Services in Iowa's New Parent Program continued to affect overall performance.
Highlights include:

- 1,670 home visits completed, only slightly below the previous year's 1,743 visits.
- 127 families served, comparable to FY25.
- 94% of visits were conducted in person, with 6% provided virtually.
- 100% of newly enrolled families met the Board's targeted enrollment criteria, demonstrating continued success in reaching families with the greatest need.
- 63% of participating households were low income.
- 61% of caregivers were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP.
- 21% of caregivers identified as Hispanic/Latino.
- English was the primary language spoken by 67% of families; Spanish was the second most common language at 16%, while 17% of families spoke other languages.
- 67% of caregivers had a high school diploma, GED, or less.
- 17% of target children were identified with delays or disabilities.
- All five family outcome measures remained consistent with the previous year, demonstrating stable program effectiveness.

Child Care and Preschool Programming Highlights

Early learning initiatives continued to strengthen access to quality services for young children.
Highlights include:

- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation exceeded program benchmarks.
- Circle of Security and professional development training for early learning providers also exceeded expectations.
- Preschool tuition scholarships declined from the previous year, and may be due to new HHS requirements requiring families to first apply for Child Care Assistance, creating additional barriers for both families and preschool providers.
- Transportation continues to limit preschool access, as many transit providers remain unwilling to transport young children.
- New HHS participant survey requirements were implemented late in the fiscal year, creating implementation challenges for several service providers.

Overall Assessment

FY26 reflected another year of strong fiscal stewardship, excellent contractor accountability, and stable program performance. While workforce shortages, transportation barriers, and new state reporting requirements created challenges, contractors continued to deliver high-quality services and leverage additional community resources. The Board remains well-positioned entering FY27, with responsible financial management, strong compliance, and continued focus on improving outcomes for children and families across the 4 R Kids Early Childhood Iowa service area.