



**Early Childhood Iowa Area Board
Minutes
Thursday September 10, 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)

Board member	Representation	Attendance
Catherine Reaman-Gerdes	Human Service	x
Christine Lundy	Education	x
Jacob Gunn	Parent	
Jessica Petter	Health	x
Nancy Krause	Citizen	x
Rita Martens - Chairperson	Citizen	x
Shelley Flanery	Citizen	x
Wendy Sawyer	Faith	
Ricki Hall	Citizen	x
Jovanka Westbrook – Vice Chairperson	Citizen	x

4 R Kids Staff Present (Information)

Debra Schrader, Executive Director.

Others present (Information)

Val Cameron (Dallas County ISU Extension).

Distinction of Quorum (Information)

Board membership consists of no less than 8 members and no more than 12 members, with 10 positions filled at the beginning of the meeting; 8 or 80% 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)

Representatives from Dallas County ISU Extension provided a presentation about the preschool enrichment project and the new literacy project.

Agenda (Action)

Board member Reaman-Gerdes moved to approve the September 10, 2026 agenda. Board member Board member Lundy seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes (Action)

Board member Petter moved to approve the May 21, 2026 minutes. Board member Westbrook seconded. Motion carried unanimously

Board Membership and Recruitment (Information)

There are two board membership positions on open on the board. Recruitment efforts continue.

Board Membership Application (Action)

Board member Krause moved to approve Ms. DeAnna Dermody's board membership application. Board member Reaman-Gerdes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Membership Resignation (Information)

It was noted that Board member Ms. Colleen Strohmaier has resigned from the board.

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 2026 expenditures in the amount of \$113,370.59 and \$125,221.94 respectfully; July 2026 in the amount of \$63,850.10. Board member Westbrook seconded. Motion carried unanimously. It was noted the rate of spending for FY26 was 12.9% of early childhood Iowa funding and 100% of ARPA funding. It was noted rate of spending for FY27 is 5%.

Board Program and Service Committee

The Committee met August 28, 2026 by Zoom. Board member Krause 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 FY26 financial statements, FY26 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 has been submitted into the state required data base, Qualtrics by the due date of August 30, 2026. The financial statements are due in Iowa Grants no later than September 15, 2026. It was noted that the early childhood funds carryover was 12.9% and 20% is allowed. All but \$33,284.11 of the carryover has been allocated to FY27 programming. Board member Petter moved to approve the FY26 annual report materials and the financial statements. Board member Hall seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Corrective Action Plan (Information)

The committee reviewed Lutheran Services in Iowa's update on the corrective action plan. LSI will stay on a corrective action with bi-weekly updates. The committee will review progress at the next meeting.

Next committee meeting is October 23, 2026 at 9:00.

Board Process Committee

The committee met August 12, 2026 by Zoom. Board Member Lundy reported for the committee. Minutes fro the Board process Committee were provided.

FY26 Marketing and Public Awareness Evaluation (Information)

The committee reviewed efforts of the past fiscal year in regards to marketing and public awareness. It was noted that \$894.79 was spent on activities which is less than the previous fiscal year. It was also noted a marketing and public awareness plan is not a requirement of a local ECI board but the board continues with the practice.

Policy and Procedures (Information)

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services originally required that local ECI boards adopt sixteen policies and procedures, since that time the State ECI board took action on August 7, 2026 to not require local boards to adopt these policies and HHS should send out a FY27 contract amendment deleting this requirement. To date HHS has yet to send a contract amendment.

Board Membership (Information)

The committee discussed board membership requirements and potential openings.

ECI Director Recommendation

Board member Westbrook moved to hire Ms. Nancy Krause as the 4 R Kids Executive Director due to Director Schrader's retirement. Board member Reaman-Gerdes seconded. Motion carried; Board member Krause abstained from the motion.

Administrative Update (Information)

Director Schrader disseminated an administrative update.

- State director meeting update;
- ECI designation and monthly monitoring checklist requirements;
- Director transition update;
- ICAP grant application;
- SF2488 study committee update;
- Association update;
- Contractor payment process update;
- Success story;
- Early childhood committee updates;
- Professional development;
- Marketing and public awareness update;
- Out of office dates.

Miscellaneous Board Updates *(Information)*

- Board chairperson Martens announced the 4 R Kids ECI board will have a holiday luncheon on December 11, 2026 at 11:30 at location to be determined.
- ECI Executive Director thanked the board for the support over the years and will greatly miss everyone.

Next meeting *(Information)*

Board Chairperson Martens adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m. The next meeting is November 19, 2026 and will be virtual.