

# Woodbury County Early Childhood Committee Meeting

## Siouxland Human Investment Partnership

Minutes

**Present:** Brenda Jenkins - Northwest Area Education Agency (Committee Chair), Erika Fuentes – Crittenton Center, Linsey Gilbert – Community Action Agency of Siouxland/Child Care Nurse Consultant, Jennifer Weber – Western Iowa Tech Community College, Stephanie Bolles – Building Blocks/Apple Tree Corporate, Mallory Berkenpas – Lutheran Services in Iowa, Lexy Klemish - Siouxland District Health, Kate Connealy – Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools, Valesa - Parent Partners

Staff Present: Kerri Hall – Siouxland Human Investment Partnership

Guest Presenter: Ryan Page – Health & Human Services Des Moines

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday June 6, 2023 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Meeting Site: ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86199815356?pwd=NGxqTS9Vc25LWTdkSXh0Yi9RZVNBZz09>

- Introductions
- Legislative Updates
  - HHS
  - Ryan Page, Director of Child Care of HHS shared what was shared at the ECI State Board. (see attached slides)
    - Beginning July 1, initial front door eligibility is increased to 160% FPL from 145%. House File 707.
    - Increases for CCA reimbursement rates.
    - CCA Pilot, 1 year- waiting for “green light”
    - Other childcare initiatives discussed also
      - Included discussion on the importance of filling out the 2023 Market Rate Survey! It’s the only data source to find the gap to give legislators accurate information.
    - CC Bureau
- Early Childhood Iowa
  - Fiscal Year 2024
    - Updates

- **SF561 - Health and Human Services Budget.**

This bill was passed and now contains all ECI funds for local areas (both Early Childhood and School Ready). Which means:

- **100% of ECI funds, beginning in FY24 will come out of the HHS budget - there will no longer be funds coming into ECI from the Dept. of Education (DE).**

- **Funding categories are still listed in the budget.** Since there is no language change, expect to follow the same rules for each of the following categories:

- Admin
- Quality (formerly SR - from DE)
- General (formerly SR - From DE)
- Early Childhood

○ **Funding for State level ECI has not changed (professional development, I2D2, etc.).**

• **NO changes to Chapter 256I, which establishes ECI, of which I am aware.**

**Decategorization** related:

- **SF561 - Health and Human Services Budget.**
  - Decat allocation \$1.7 million

**Child Care** related:

- **HF 707 - Child Care Assistance**
  - CCA eligibility increases to 160% of the Federal Poverty Level(FPL).
  - Work requirements increase to an average of 32 hrs/wk/mo.
  - Requirements for special needs children: 200% FPL and 28 hrs/wk/mo for work.
  - Increases child care provider payments.
  - Prohibits HHS from increasing rates or changing eligibility without legislative action.

- House File 561, there are (University of Iowa) funds available for vision screens. Other ECI areas are tapping into the Lion's Club for that.

ECI Guiding Principles

- Children and families are our 'North Star'
- Equity
- Brain science
- Data is a valuable resource
- Diverse partnerships
- Accountability

Goals and Strategies

- **GOAL 1: Promote a coordinated infrastructure to advance the early childhood system.**
  - 1. Expand collaboration and coordination among state and local programs and agencies serving young children and their families.
  - 2. Develop and nurture effective public-private partnerships at a state and local level.
  - 3. Infuse data-based discussions and decision-making processes throughout the early childhood system.

- Goal 2: Build public will for investing young children and their families
  - 1. Communicate the value of The First 2,000 Days as the most critical stage of the human lifecycle.
  - 2. Partner with families and communities to improve communication about what young children and families need and how the system responds.
  - 3. Engage families as leaders and advocates for a comprehensive early childhood system.
- Goal 3: Transform the early childhood workforce through formal education, great professionalism, increased skills and competence, and new approaches to implementing best practices.
  - 1. Create a larger, more skilled early childhood workforce.
  - 2. Provide new or expanded early childhood workforce supports to enhance the quality of early childhood programs and services.
  - 3. Support existing child care to achieve full enrollment and full fee collection, generating revenues that cover per child costs: Opportunities Exchange, Iron Triangle\*
  - 4. Continue to support statewide T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Iowa and Child Care and WAGES® Iowa
  - 5. Implement an aligned salary scale for early childhood system adopted career pathways for the early childhood workforce sectors; inclusive of levels tied to increasing skill in the field
- Goal 4: Ensure that young children and families receive the services they need when they need them.
  - 1. Improve equitable access to high quality early learning opportunities and services for vulnerable and underserved children and families who have at-risk factors.
  - 2. Expand and improve access to high quality early learning opportunities and services for young children and their families; with intentionality to better serve vulnerable and underserved populations.
  - 3. Improve transitions among early childhood programs and between the early childhood and K-12 education systems.
- Goal 5: Improve the quality of early childhood services for young children and their families across early care and education; health, mental health, and nutrition; and family support services.
  - 1. Promote and incentivize the use of evidence-based programs and services across the early childhood system.
  - 2. Adopt a collective impact approach to investing in high-quality, evidence-based services, programs, and activities across the early childhood system.
  - 3. Incentivize programs to transition from implementing promising practices to the adoption of evidence-based strategies and program delivery
- Woodbury County/SHIP
  - ECI Grant Review
    - Updates

The Ida/Woodbury Co. ECI Grant Review Committee convened in May and made a motion to the SHIP Board to get a 2<sup>nd</sup> for their recommendations. Board approved committee recommendations

May 19, 2023. There was an increase in funds due to the funding formula and all applicants received amount requested.

5% of the appropriation is distributed among all 99 counties

35% of the appropriation is distributed based on the population in the ECI Area that is age 0-5

60% of the appropriation is distributed based on the population in the ECI Area that is age 0-5 and at or below 185% of poverty

- Woodbury County
  - Early Childhood Programs
    - Updates

Linsey Gilbert (CCNC)

getting summer programs up and going. Noticing many diabetic kids lately; Mercy has dissolved their diabetic ed program. Linsey has taken it over on her own.

Lots of CPR getting summer staff up and ready to go.

Lots of applications for IQ4K, Amber has been diligent with encouraging programs to apply.

Erika Fuentes (Crittenton Center)

Busy with a lot of stuff. Between the “Mansion” (Crittenton Center Therapeutic Home – formally known as the Shelter) and child care are all going well.

Jennifer Weber (WITCC)

Working w/ lots of TEACH students this year

working with lots of part time

Safe Sitter program offered this summer for middle school students looking at providing babysitting services. Also looking at some child care centers for putting the plug in for future child care careers. It’s a national curriculum. Basic child care skills, CPR First Aid, basics in behavior, working with parents, how they get paid

Expanding partnership with UNI. Have a UNI advisor on campus. In the fall will have a UNI faculty member on campus. Looking at EC endorsement.

Still have a partnership with BVU

Work a bit with Bellevue working on a business degree; working on the business side of childcare.

Stephanie Bolles (B. BLKS & AT)

Crazy time at Building blocks & Apple Tree

School age kids are back in centers

Have 6 centers total. 2 of 4 are working on IQ4K applications.

Beginning an I-T EC-PBIS training tonight

Lexy Klemish (SDHD)

Hired a new family referral specialist, Sara Anderson doing new referrals for HOPES program submitted new self-assessment for HOPES accreditation

Health Fair on July 15.

Mallory Berkenpas (LSI)

LSI was a successful bidder to provide Healthy Families America / HOPES to Plymouth & Cherokee Co.

Received infant-mental health endorsement; Alyssa is almost there. She is getting the supervisor endorsement

June 1, LSI ribbon cutting for new office space.

Jan-March, served 16 families; 104 home visits (33% prenatal),

- Preschool Scholarship Guidelines
  - Updates

Kerri shared changes suggested for the Preschool Scholarship Program. Woodbury Co. ECI Committee has recommended the final draft for approval

- Agency Updates / Other Business
  - Northwest AEA

Our main office has moved to 5800 Al Haynes Drive in Sioux City. Several satellite offices are also undergoing changes.

Sue Moran EC Director, is updating assignments due to caseloads & resignations.

Our [preschool summer newsletter](https://www.smores.com/wsy07) is available for anyone to read. <https://www.smores.com/wsy07>

The Early Childhood State Coordination Team meets on a regular basis. Members include EC AEA and Iowa Department of Education staff. [EC SCT summaries](#) are included on the linked form. Much discussion on multi-tiered systems of support has been a focus this past year.

EAGL (Early ACCESS Grantee Leadership) - meets monthly to review factors for evidence-based practice and compliance. Sue Moran and Teresa Hobbs attend.

- Next Meeting is TBD