

Children First Meeting Minutes

11-15-18

This meeting of the Children First Board was called to order by board chair, Mark Meek at 9:30am with the following present:

Board members: Carolyn Baker, Jolene Dilks, Don Hunold, Alka Khanolkar in at 9:35 during item #3, Mark Meek, Dave Kirchner, Mike Linnenbrink, Amanda Manning-Maras, Chad Reckling, and Regina Wells
Quorum was met with 9 of 11 members present and maintained with 10 of 11 present when Alka arrived.

Guests: Kristin O'Toole and Cyndi Malik of CCR&R

Director: Ginger Knisley

Board members not present: Kayla Schwartz (arrived at noon for the retreat portion)

There was a **motion** by Dave with a second by Amanda to accept the agenda for today's meeting as written. All voted aye.

There was a **motion** by Mike with a second by Regina to approve the minutes and attendance report from the previous meeting as written. All voted aye.

Program update to the board

Kristin and Cyndi shared flyers with the board for the programs currently funded by Children First which include Building the Pyramid Quality Improvement Project and Business Kits for newly registered providers or those in the process of becoming registered. There is currently one provider signed up for the business kit. The Building the Pyramid training is scheduled for this Saturday and has 20 providers enrolled from 10 programs. Kristin and Cyndi left the meeting at the end of their presentation.

Director Report

Ginger gave a written Director Report including meetings attended, legislative update, and an update on the recent State ECI board meeting. There was a lengthy discussion about substance abuse issues and the possible DFC funding for Lee County. There is clearly a substance abuse issue in the community and family support programs report fairly widespread drug use among clients which is very concerning to board members. It is proving difficult to locate an agency willing to serve as the fiscal agent for the DFC grant. The question was raised about whether or not a business such as a bank could serve in that capacity. There is general concern for the lack of effectiveness of previous prevention and awareness efforts and a belief that proactive efforts are needed at an early age. On a positive note, Chad shared that the federal government is issuing regulations on e-cigarettes. Also discussed was the number of organizations that can potentially collaborate on and benefit from the provider forums. Efforts are underway to schedule these monthly in February, March and April. There are exciting discussions with the IWF regarding statewide supports for child care providers such as health insurance, rapid response teams to keep struggling centers open, and substitute pools.

Quarterly Report Summary

Ginger shared a written summary of first quarter reports with the board. All funded programs are on target at this time in terms of performance as well as fiscally.

Financial reports

There was a **motion** by Jolene and a second from Don to accept the October 2018 expenditures report as written. All voted aye.

Public Comment

There was no response to a call for public comment.

Adjourn

There was a **motion** by Mike with a second by Alka to adjourn the meeting at 10:40am. All voted aye.

See page 3 for retreat notes from this day.

The next meeting of the **Children First Board** is Thursday, January 17, 2019 at **9:30am** at a Keokuk location to be determined.

gk

Date minutes approved _____ Board officer signature _____

Children First board retreat notes:

2019 Board meeting calendar

Board members reviewed the proposed 2019 meeting calendar that was drafted using the same locations, times and topics as 2018 and agreed that this is a format that works for them and for the communities they serve. They are interested in looking into having some meetings at business board rooms in various communities such as Siemens, Dupont, and even the sheriff's department. Ginger will look into this. In regards to the budget approval process it was decided that there is no need for a separate meeting from the May retreat for approving budget decisions. Applicants can be called if there are specific questions that need to be answered prior to approving the budget. One item being added to a few months is an opportunity for board members to share something with fellow board members such as an article they have read on early childhood or a legislative issue they are aware of. An item to be added to the standing agendas each month is a space for board members to report events, meetings and presentations they have participated in.

FY20 RFP and score sheet

Ginger had emailed the new forms to board members earlier in the week for review. Kayla had commented via email that she liked the new score sheet. Ginger explained that she combined the RFP and renewal application forms attempting to streamline them into a more user friendly document that also provided an opportunity for applicants to report out their history of performance. She rewrote the score sheet to more clearly follow the new form. Board members expressed that this was a better form and they would use it this coming year and could make edits if needed the following year. In reviewing the forms it was decided that the policy on indirect/administrative costs needs to be amended and Ginger will present the new policy at the January meeting.

Board membership and recruiting

Jolene shared that she plans to take a position at a child care center in Ft Madison when it changes ownership in the next month or so. It has been the policy of the state office that since this board funds a CCNC that is available to all child care centers, employees of centers cannot be board members due to conflict of interest. Historically, when a conflict has presented itself, the board member has been permitted to complete their current term. When Jolene starts employment with the center, Ginger will check with the state office for guidance. Ginger also needs to take a close look at the gender balance. It was also questioned if a board member can start new terms if they change what sector they are representing such as Don moving to the business sector or Kayla or Mandi moving to the consumer sector. Ginger will research these issues.

Lunch discussion with child care directors

Board members invited child care directors to join them for lunch and have a discussion around what they feel is or is not working in our area, what may be missing, and ideas they have to stimulate child care businesses.

Sarah Tweedy and Laura McDowell joined the board for lunch. They shared passionate testimony about the benefit and value in hugs and laughs they get to share with young children and the critical importance of the work they do to create decent humans. Board members expressed that they should give testimony at career days at the schools in the area.

They shared that WAGE\$, TEACH, CCNC, PWP, and dental are all very beneficial programs.

They do miss the small local conference put on by the ECTF (which Sarah is a member of), and the bus trip to the state IAEYC conference in Des Moines that used to happen as a regional event. There was value in the area providers feeling part of a team and going to the training as a group. It was also a

financial benefit to providers to have the training and transportation etc paid for. Sarah still closes her center for a day and takes her staff to the Fall Institute at her expense.

In terms of ideas to stimulate child care businesses there is no real easy answer. Sarah feels you have to have a director/owner who is actively involved with their staff and good at team building in order to have a successful program. Help with trainings and paperwork, retirement plans of some kind, and local professional development and networking opportunities are all appreciated and needed.

Sarah shared that staffing issues have gotten much worse. She has a great retention rate but when she has to hire, it is difficult to find people who fit well with the center and have basic skills. The trainings required are much greater than in the past and fingerprinting and background checks have to be completed prior to hire and can take a month.

Challenges for families include being too busy and overscheduled. Lacking natural support networks, resources, compassion from others, and small town attitudes and discrimination are all reality for many young families. Families need to be taught how to be families and also people in communities no longer tend to parent other children in the “takes a village” model. Some young families are regularly struggling to meet basic needs of clothes, food and basic skills.

A discussion of the CCNC position took place including the statewide difficulty filling CCNC positions. Our current CCNC is planning to retire at the end of this fiscal year. Ginger plans to have a planning session with the LCHD prior to the RFP release to discuss possible solutions including sharing with other areas.

ECTF guiding documents

Board members reviewed the Mission, Goals, Roles and Responsibilities of the ECTF. They are pleased with the current structure and the two way communication that takes place between the board and the ECTF. There were no recommendations for changes at this time.

Indicators and funded programs and activities

Board members reviewed a document Ginger created charting the five state result areas and how the funded programs, indicators and the director activities fit under each. There is a noticeable gap in funded programs under Safe and Supportive Communities but board members feel that the activities that board members are taking on to advocate with other groups would fit here.

Also provided was the chart of trend data on the indicators the board tracks. Board members question if Amish and Mennonite communities in the area impact immunization rates or teen birth rates. Ginger will research this. It was mentioned that substance abuse again becomes an issue for discussion as the high rates of child abuse in Lee County are closely linked to drugs.

Board members thanked Don for his years of service to Children First and encouraged him to consider filling the business sector position if allowed by the state office.

gk