

Early Childhood Task Force minutes 9-22-2021, 9:00 am

This meeting was held via zoom with the following present:

Ginger Knisley, Missy Park, Carolyn Baker, Rachael Patterson-Rahn, Melissa Daugherty, Chad Reckling, Amy Hayes, Tessa Schroeder, and Paula Vandervelde.

The agenda and previous meeting minutes were accepted as written with a **motion** by Amy and a second by Missy

Introductions took place as new member, Tessa Schroeder, was in attendance.

Ginger gave an **administrative update** including updates regarding FY22 funding, IWF projects, Resilient Communities work, and Designation.

Children First RFP/Application process

Missy doesn't like the budget sheet as there is a lot to squeeze into some boxes. Ginger clarified the benefits do not need to be individually broken down but rather one lump sum per person for salary and one other lump sum per person for benefits.

Rachael would like to see as quick and painless as possible as public health staff are still dealing with COVID and now facing the collaborative services application process. Rachael also advised that the board needs to give thought to the timing of the MCH service changes and boundaries. The changes are slated to take effect 10/1/22. If the current map holds, Van Buren and Lee counties will be in different service areas. It is also unknown who the contract will be awarded to until June or July of 2022. This will impact CCNC and Dental. Perhaps the board will include language addressing this in their contracting process or have a separate process for those services.

It was suggested that it may be helpful for applying programs to have a 10-15 minute time slot for in person Q&A with the board at their May retreat.

Collaborative Services Update

Continuing discussion from above, if the current map holds true, LCHD will be in a new service area of 6 counties including Lee, Muscatine, Louisa, Washington, Henry, and Des Moines, with Van Buren County being in a cluster of 9 counties including VB, Appanoose, Davis, Keokuk, Jefferson, Marion, Monroe, Mahaska and Wapello. There is also much discussion around the CCNC position being an unfunded mandate and how that may be changed in the new system. One other concern is that the timing could coincide with the realignment of IDPH and IDHS.

ARPA (and other CARES related) funds/projects

Lee County is moving forward rather rapidly with a plan to allocate the ARPA funds while Van Buren County is being more cautious in their approach and Ginger is working on how to have ECI at the table in that process without undue liability for reporting and etc.

Some ideas to explore are a retirement fund for providers, perhaps through Northwestern Mutual, stipends to offset the costs of child care for parents, wage supports of some kind for EC professionals, hiring and retention bonuses for providers and staff at child care centers, etc.

Rachael knows of a few middle income people that choose not to work away from home due to child care expenses and she herself has used family care to avoid the costs of child care. Melissa sees a mixture of kith and kin care and people choosing to stay out of the workforce due to child care costs as well as families using CCA to reduce their child care costs. Missy sees families using kith and kin care and working opposite shifts of each other. She sees on-site child care happening at major employers in the future. There is no odd shift care available in the area. Chad shared a concern that the DHS stipends and

payment of unlimited absences has ended right when the surge in Delta Variant is happening. He says there is currently no mechanism to pay loss of revenue if a site has to close due to COVID. He shared some documents related to the economics of child care supply in the chat.

Missy reports families have been less in need of assistance with basic needs due to stimulus funds the past year and half however some are entering crisis now with the moratorium on evictions expiring. She also is aware that community action agencies now have funds to assist with past due or very old utility bills.

Other programs/business:

Chad shared further information on the realignment of IDPH and DHS. He serves on one of the committees looking at this process and says the reports are due to the governor by the first of the year. This leads us to wonder if the aim is to have changes happen to funding and Iowa Code around those departments in the 2022 session and how that timing would impact the public health entities dealing with the changes due to collaborative services. He shared there will be stakeholder meetings to gather input on the realignment in October and will share that information with the ECTF as it becomes available. An example of a recommendation is full funding of the CCNC across the state as it is a public health mandate, another is consolidation of family planning services.

Although there was not time to specifically discuss the designation process or community plan, as always the discussions throughout the meeting are relevant to our community planning process. Ginger asked ECTF members to take a look at the community and strategic plans and provide her with further input as they had time.

The next ECTF meeting will be on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at 9:30 am via Zoom

gk