LINKING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

BOARD MINUTES –6/11/2026

LINKING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES (Early Childhood Iowa Area) met on Thursday, June 11, 2026 at 12:30 p.m.

***Members present*:**

Tammy Varland
Clarence Siepker
Dave George
Justin Daggett
Pastor Nick Thackery

Members absent:

Bob Thode

Community members present:

Elizabeth Stanek
Hillary Eide

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Clarence Siepker at 12:30 p.m. Quorum was met.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Siepker asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. Ms. Stanek reported that new financial statements were not available yet and that the program presenter had was not able to attend as planned. Ms. Stanek presented a revised agenda with those changes.

MOTION: Mr. George moved to approve the revised agenda as presented.
SECOND: Ms. Varland
Discussion: None
ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Board Minutes

Mr. Siepker asked if there were any changes or additions to the board minutes from the May 15, 2026 meeting. No changes were suggested.

MOTION: Ms. Varland
SECOND: Mr. George
Discussion: None
ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.

SEEDS Updates

Ms. Stanek reported that construction is completed, though punch list items remain. Sign for the front has been ordered and should be put up in the next week. An open house/ribbon cutting will be scheduled before months end, no date has been set. Future Ready Iowa grant funding requests have been submitted and all grant dollars claimed. Grant reimbursement has been timely, at around 30 days. Ms. Stanek reported that repayment of the short-term loan to the City of Fort Dodge by June 30th will be achieved.

Ms. Eide gave an update on center operations. Thus far, 66 families have inquired about services. 3 families have committed, interviews have been held and a list of potential staff is ready for when the time comes. Lots of interest for infants and toddlers at this point. Have made a connection with Friendship Haven and working through CACFP regulations for the food program.

Executive Committee Recommendations.

Mr. Siepker reported that the Executive Committee had met on June 3rd and June 8th to review and discuss a shift to an employer of record, insurance for the upcoming year and recommendations for the FY26 and FY 27 ECI budget.

The Executive Committee recommends that Pocahontas County be the Employer of Record for the Executive Director beginning July 1, 2026 with a contract for $137,643.

> ***MOTION:*** Ms. Varland made the motion to accept the recommendation of the Executive Committee to contract with Pocahontas County to serve as the Employer of Record for the Executive Director with a start date of July 1, 2026 at an amount of $137,643.
> ***SECOND:*** Mr. Daggett
> ***Discussion:*** None
> ***ACTION:*** Motion passed unanimously

The Executive Committee recommends approval of the insurance quote for Cincinnati Insurance as provided from Kingsgate Insurance.

> ***MOTION:*** Mr. George made the motion to accept the insurance quote as provided from Kingsgate Insurance
> ***SECOND:*** Ms. Varland
> ***Discussion:*** None
> ***ACTION:*** Motion passed unanimously

The Executive Committee recommends decreasing preschool tuition assistance by $15,000 as the funding was not used this year and increasing coordination by the same amount for close-out costs.

> ***MOTION:*** Mr. Daggett to accept the recommendation and adjust the budget for FY26.
> ***SECOND:*** Ms. Varland
> ***Discussion:*** None
> ***ACTION:*** Motion passed unanimously

The Executive Committee recommends decreasing preschool tuition assistance by $15,000 as the funding was not used this year and increasing coordination by the same amount for close-out costs.

> ***MOTION:*** Mr. Daggett to accept the recommendation and adjust the budget for FY26.
> ***SECOND:*** Ms. Varland
> ***Discussion:*** None
> ***ACTION:*** Motion passed unanimously

The Executive Committee recommended the following funding plan be finalized for July 1, 2026 for ECI:

Program	**Agency**	**Amount**
Family Foundations Parents As Teachers	Calhoun County Public Health	$171,000.00
Head Start Transportation	Your Own United Resources	$38,730.00
Preschool Tuition Assistance	Various Preschools	$26,000.00
Audit	TrustPoint, LLC.	$7,800.00
Preschool Scholarship Coordination	Pocahontas County	$20,000.00
Sensory Story Time	Plover Public Library	$410.00
Community Collaboration	Pocahontas County	$130,000.00
Employer of Record	Pocahontas County	$5,660.00
Fiscal Agent	Linking Families and Communities	$9,000.00
Office Expenses	Linking Families and Communities	$9,970.96
Board Insurance	Kingsgate Insurance/Cincinnati	$7,000.00

MOTION: Mr. George to accept the recommendation and approve the funding plan for July 1, 2026.
SECOND: Mr. Daggett
Discussion: None
ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

Director Update

Ms. Stanek reported the following from the June 5th ECI State Board meeting:

- State ECI Board had disbanded the Lakes Area Board (Clay, Dickinson, Osceola, & O'Brien Counties) in December 2025. The HHS auditors reported back stating no fraud indicators were detected. State ECI Team raised concerns over PTO tracking, remote employees and oversight not clearly defined.
- Areas that have been their own fiscal agent were allowed to remain their own fiscal agent for FY27. This topic will be addressed by the state board in Oct. 2026. Those that have served as their own fiscal agent include:
  - Building Families (Hamilton, Humboldt & Wright Co.)
  - Linking Families and Communities
  - Thriving Families Alliance (Pottawattamie, Monona, Harrison, Shelby, Cass, Mills, Montgomery, Fremont & Page Co.)
  - Siouxland Human Investment Partnership (Woodbury & Ida Co.)
- Merging of the following boards were approved.
  - Merger of Adams, Union, Taylor & Ringgold Co. Board with Clarke, Decatur & Wayne Co Board – Effective July 1, 2026. These boards were coordinated by the same staff person.
  - Merger of Clinton & Jackson Co. Board with Dubuque Co. Board. – Effective July 1, 2026. Clinton & Jackson Co. Board lost their staff person.
  - Merger of Howard, Allamakee, Winneshiek & Clayton Co. Board (lost staff and Board not interested in continuing as a board) with Buchanan, Delaware & Fayette Co. Board – Effective July 1, 2026.

Ms. Stanek also reported that the State ECI Board & HHS greatly increased the amount of paperwork and uploads into the Iowa Grants system and that additional requirements for policies have been put into place that the board will work through in the coming meetings.

Adjourn

With no further business, Mr. Siepker asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION: Mr. George
SECOND: Ms. Varland
Discussion: None
ACTION: Motion passed unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 1:24 pm

- Respectfully Submitted By: Elizabeth Stanek

Next Meeting: September 10, 2026