



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LINKING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES (Early Childhood Iowa Area) Executive Committee met on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at Linking Families and Communities conference room at 822 Central Avenue, Suite 300, Fort Dodge.

Members present:

Clarence Siepker	Bob Thode
Nick Thackery	

Members absent:

None

Community Members Present

Elizabeth Stanek

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Clarence Siepker at 2:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Siepker asked if there were any changes to the agenda. No changes were required.

Early Childhood Iowa Funds

Ms. Stanek reviewed the FY27 ECI allocations and Tool G, as approved by the State ECI Board. The area’s FY27 allocation totals \$517,600.52, which is an increase of \$1,665.32 from FY26.

The Committee reviewed and scored the three applications received in response to the RFP issued in the spring. All proposals received were from programs that received funding in FY26. Committee members expressed a desire to provide additional opportunities related to literacy and noted disappointment in the limited number of applications received. Ms. Stanek reported that the Board could reopen the grant process if desired.

The Committee agreed to make the following program funding recommendations to the Board:

Agency	Program	Funding Amount
Calhoun County Public Health	Parents As Teachers/Family Foundations	\$171,000.00*
Your Own United Resources	Head Start Transportation	\$38,730.00
Plover Public Library	Sensory Story Time	\$410.00
Various Preschools	Preschool Tuition Assistance	\$26,000.00

*ICAPP Grant funds also support this program (\$51,000)



The Committee discussed FY27 operations and administrative structure. Ms. Stanek reported that State ECI staff have raised questions regarding whether local ECI areas may serve as their own fiscal agents, and that this issue was mentioned at a recent State ECI Board meeting. She also reported that many ECI areas currently utilize Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Center (CIJDC) as an Employer of Record and Fiscal Agent; however, at two separate State ECI Board meetings, HHS state staff referenced audit findings related to CIJDC that are of concern at the state level. Ms. Stanek noted that this creates uncertainty for many ECI areas.

Ms. Stanek reported that she had requested information regarding Employer of Record and Fiscal Agent services prior to those meetings. She stated that recent changes to Tool G related to ECI funding requirements, along with the elimination of health insurance, prompted further discussion of administrative options.

Ms. Stanek reviewed the proposal provided by CIJDC and presented four scenarios for FY27 administration: maintaining the current administrative structure, utilizing an Employer of Record, utilizing a Fiscal Agent, or utilizing both. The Committee reviewed the related budget information and discussed office and employee scenarios. Committee members expressed support for maintaining the office, noting that it provides visibility for the organization and that the cost is relatively low.

Ms. Stanek reported that there may be other organizations interested in serving as Employer of Record, Fiscal Agent, or both. Committee members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the organization continuing to serve as its own fiscal agent.

Motion by Mr. Thackery, second by Mr. Siepker, to recommend to the Board that Linking Families and Communities maintain an office, continue serving as its own fiscal agent if permitted, and reach out to local organizations that may be interested in serving as Employer of Record. Mr. Thode stated that he serves on the CIJDC Executive Board and abstained from voting. Mr. Siepker requested a roll call vote. Roll call vote: Mr. Thackery — aye; Mr. Siepker — aye; Mr. Thode — abstained. Motion carried by a vote of 2 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.

FY27 Board Insurance

Ms. Stanek reported that she had not yet received quotes for insurance.

SEEDS Update

Ms. Stanek provided a brief update on SEEDS noting construction is ahead of schedule. Substantial completion is set for May 8th and open interviews are set for May 13th and 14th.



Set Next Meeting

No meeting date was set. Ms. Stanek will reach out to members to set a date for June.

Adjourn

Motion by Mr. Thackery, second by Mr. Thode, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By: Elizabeth Stanek

NEXT MEETING: TBD