
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA STATE BOARD — SEPTEMBER 2025

Meeting. The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) State Board met on September 5, 2025, via videoconference. The Board introduced the new chair of the Board and approved minutes from the previous meeting.

Early Intervention and Supports. Shelley Horak, Ed.D., M.P.H., the director of Early Intervention and Supports under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), gave an overview of the current state of early intervention and support efforts in Iowa. She also discussed implementing a primary prevention system for families to help with the early identification of needs within family homes. The Board discussed how programs and services providing early intervention for families can help alleviate the administrative burden for Child Protective Services staff and barriers for services for families in need of child welfare assistance.

Early Childhood Iowa Action Planning. The Board discussed potential changes to the ECI system in the State to consolidate the current 34 ECI area boards into larger district boards. During the public comment period of the meeting, stakeholders from the local ECI area boards asked the Board to consider what changes are necessary for the ECI system and how to prevent a slowdown or loss of services if restructuring is approved. The Board discussed those public comments and completed an activity analyzing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the current ECI system. Members of the Board discussed the current fiscal resources available to the ECI area boards, how to access more federal funding for ECI efforts, the availability of data from the ECI area boards, and whether there is resource disparity across the rural and urban areas of the State under the current system. The Board plans to continue discussions regarding potential consolidation moving forward.

Next Meeting. The next Board meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2025. The Board members discussed the possibility of an earlier special meeting to discuss restructuring.

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