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## FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

January 9, 2018



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### EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA (ECI) STATE BOARD MEETING

**State Board Meeting.** The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) State Board met on January 5, 2018, in Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting began with a brief review of the annual report, which the Board approved. This year, the committee responsible for the annual report focused on making the report more interactive when viewed online, including inserting hyperlinks from charts to further data for each ECI area. The report will be available in late January.

**Other Business.** The Board also approved changes to "Tool FF," which is used by area boards to ensure consistency in definitions and goals across the State. Most of the changes were updates to language within the tool to align it with best practices and legislative changes.

The Board heard a presentation on Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS), a voluntary child care rating system for child care centers, preschools, home care programs, and school district-run child care facilities. An advisory team is working toward creating an updated system, Iowa Quality Rating for Kids (IQR4K), which the team plans to roll out in January 2019. The new structure will shift away from a point-based model, in which centers and providers are only able to show existence or nonexistence of a desired characteristic, to a system of continuous improvement. The new system also includes new comprehensive areas and changes to existing areas, including professional development, nutrition and physical development, teaching and learning, and provider qualifications.

The Board also heard information about the ongoing process of strategic planning and a presentation on the Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Work Group.

**Administrative Update.** ECI staff provided an administrative update to the Board, including information on the changes that have been made to the Early Childhood Grant funding formula. Grant funding which flows through Department of Human Services and primarily goes to ECI areas to support child care costs. The changes to the funding formula will take place over the next five years.

**ECI Summit.** ECI will be hosting an early childhood systems summit on October 3, 2018. The summit will include keynote speakers and breakout sessions designed around early childhood topics, including nutrition; importance of data in decision-making; mental health; brain science; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education; and others. More information will be available soon.

**Next Meeting.** The next ECI State Board meeting will be April 6, 2018.

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