

Budget Unit Brief

FY 2017



Early Childhood Iowa Initiative General Aid

Overview

The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) initiative was established to allow the state and communities to work together to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of early care, education, health, and human services provided to families with children from age 0-5. The ECI is administered by the ECI State Board. The ECI State Board promotes a vision for a comprehensive early care, education, health, and human services system in this state. The Board consists of 21 voting members, 15 citizen members, and six state agency members. The six state agency members are the directors or their designees from the following departments: Economic Development Authority, Education, Human Rights, Human Services, Public Health, and Workforce Development. The ECI State Board includes four legislators as nonvoting members.

The State Board provides oversight and manages the School Ready Grant (SRG) funding made available from the General Fund appropriation to the local ECI Area Boards. The SRG funding is distributed based on data from the most recent United States Census according to the following formula:

- 45.0% based on children age 0-5 with family income up to 185.0% of the federal poverty level.
- 35.0% based on the total children age 0-5.
- 20.0% base funding allocated equally among the 99 counties.

The purpose of an ECI Area is to enable local citizens to lead collaborative efforts in strategic planning, oversight, and managing of programs and available funding from federal, state, local, and private sources. The focus of the ECI Area is to achieve the following desired results:

- Healthy children.
- Children ready to succeed in school.
- Safe and supportive communities.
- Secure and nurturing families.
- Secure and nurturing early learning environments.

The ECI State Board oversees 38 ECI Area Boards that follow county boundaries - see the map at the end of this document.

General Aid

The ECI General Aid has received a General Fund appropriation of \$5.4 million since FY 2012. Within the appropriation are three separate funding allocations for specific purposes, as follows:

- *Early Childhood Iowa Office and Technical Assistance.* An allocation of \$265,950 is provided to the ECI Office within the Department of Management for technical assistance and to provide skill development and support for training the ECI State Board. The ECI State Board cannot use these funds for legal fees, fiscal agent fees, or liability insurance. The allocation also cannot be used by ECI staff in completing administrative responsibilities such as work related to ECI Board meetings, issuing and monitoring of contracts, and processing payment claims.

More Information

Early Childhood Iowa: <http://www.earlychildhoodiowa.org/index.html>

Iowa General Assembly: <http://www.legis.iowa.gov/index.aspx>

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- *Quality Improvement.* An allocation of \$2,318,018 is to be used by local ECI Areas to improve the quality of early care, health, and education programs. The ECI Areas can use the funding for additional staff and for the reimbursement of staff. The ECI State Board allocates \$30,000 to each ECI Area under this allocation to support staff. The ECI State Board can reserve a portion of this allocation, not to exceed \$88,650, for the technical assistance expenses of the ECI State Office. The remaining funds under this allocation are distributed 50.0% based on land area and 50.0% based on the total children age 0-5 in each of the ECI Areas.
- *Professional Development and Training.* An allocation of \$825,030 is used to support professional development and training activities for people working in early care, health, and education. Professional development and training is available to the ECI State Board, ECI Area Boards, and the Early Childhood Stakeholders Alliance. The Alliance supports and provides broad input to the ECI State Board in developing a high-quality early childhood system that meets the needs of children and their families. The Alliance includes members from any organization that touches the lives of young children age 0-5.

Funding

Funding includes the allocations described above with a remainder of approximately \$2.0 million distributed through the SRG formula to the ECI Areas.

Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapter [256I](#)

[249](#) Iowa Administrative Code

[541](#) Iowa Administrative Code [chapter 9](#)

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