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IOWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY

DENNIS C. PROUTY, DIRECTOR
IOWA STATE CAPITOL
DES MOINES, IA 50319
515.281.3566
Fax: 515.281.8027
dennis.prouty@legis.state.ia.us

**TO: CO-CHAIRPERSONS SCHMITZ AND WINCKLER AND
MEMBERS OF THE EARLY CARE BEST PRACTICES STUDY
COMMITTEE**

DIVISIONS

LEGAL SERVICES
RICHARD L. JOHNSON

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•

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•

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
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**FROM: JOHN POLLAK, COMMITTEE SERVICES
ADMINISTRATOR**

RE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Purpose. This memorandum and accompanying materials provide background information for the Early Care Best Practices Study Committee.

Charge. The Study Committee was created by the Legislative Council for the 2007 Legislative Interim and authorized for two meeting days. The Study Committee was charged to "[r]eview best practices for Iowa's early care system of programs, services, support, or other assistance made available to a parent or other person who is involved with addressing the health and education needs of a child from birth through age five."

Family Support Focus. Iowa Code provisions utilizing the term "early care" are primarily found in Code chapter 28, relating to the Community Empowerment Initiative. Code section 28.1(4) provides the following definition:

"Early care," or "early care services," or "early care system" means the programs, services, support, or other assistance made available to a parent or other person who is involved with addressing the health and

John C. Pollak

Division Administrator 2
515.281.3818
Fax: 515.281.8027
john.pollak@legis.state.ia.us

education needs of a child from birth through age five. "Early care," "early care services," or "early care system" includes but is not limited to public and private efforts and formal and informal settings.

The Study Committee co-chairpersons have decided to focus on the family support and parent education programs for families with newborns and young children rather than addressing the entire early care age range.

Background Materials. The attached publications, developed by Early Childhood Iowa, provide basic information concerning family support programs in Iowa and issues associated with the programs. Early Childhood Iowa is an alliance of stakeholders in early care, health, and education systems that affect children from birth through age five in the state of Iowa. Its purpose is to support the development and integration of an early care, health, and education system for Iowa. The stakeholders include state agencies involved with early childhood, education associations, public and private colleges and universities, service providers, health organizations, charitable organizations, and other interested parties.¹

The following publications are attached to the paper copy of this memorandum. For those accessing an electronic copy of the memorandum, the publications may be accessed from the <Additional Information> link on the Committee's internet page:

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Committees/Committee.aspx?id=215>.

1. Definition for Family Support, Early Childhood Iowa, 2/4/05.
2. Effective Family Support Programs: Issue Brief #5.

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¹ Staff support to Early Childhood Iowa is provided by the Iowa Department of Public Health through the State Maternal and Child Health Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant Program. The publications were accessed on 9/24/07 from the Early Childhood Iowa website at: <http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/index.html>.