

North Iowa Children's Alliance Early Childhood Area Board Meeting

Location: Zoom Only
May 14th, 2026 @ 1:00PM - MINUTES

Board Members in Attendance: 8 of 9

X	Chris Watts- (EO)- Chair	X	Stephanie Lau (P)		
X	Ken Zimmerman- Vice Chair	X	Enos Loberg (EO)		
X	Shana Butler (H)	X	Melinda McVey (F)		
X	Sis Greiman (EO)		Jennifer White (HS)		
X	Tony Hiatt (E)		Vacant (C)		

Representation: F=Faith, EO=Elected Official, B=Business, E=Education, HS=Human Services, P=Parent/Consumer, H=Health, C=Citizen, LOA=Leave of Absence

Others in Attendance: Lacey Waller (Director), Lezah Hanson (Oral Health), Meghan Judisch (NICAO Head Start Transportation)

The meeting was called to order by Chris Watts at 1:03 pm.

Approve the Agenda for May 14th, 2026:

- Motion by: Tony Hiatt to approve the May 14th, 2026 agenda as written.
- Motion 2nd by: Ken Zimmerman
- Motion carried unanimously

Approve Minutes from April 16th, 2026:

- Motion by: Enos Loberg to approve the April 16th, 2026 NICA board meeting minutes as written.
- Motion 2nd by: Tony Hiatt
- Motion carried unanimously

Approve Financial Report:

- Discussion: Lacey Waller gave a financial update for expenditures through April 2026. This included a review of the directors' financial outlook for anticipated spending and the NICA April ECI Fiscal Tracking Spreadsheet. There were no concerns
- Motion by Shana Butler to approve the financial reports as presented.
- 2nd by: Ken Zimmerman
- Motion carried unanimously

Motion by Shana Butler to approve the NICA April ECI Fiscal Tracking Spreadsheet as presented.

- Motion 2nd by: Ken Zimmerman
- Motion carried unanimously

Director's Report:

- Discussion: Lacey Waller provided a report on local ECI area and statewide activities, including updates on relevant legislation. There were no father questions. Lacey also discussed the recent release of a mandatory ECI board checklist that has 125 total items for board review. The TA team has provided a break-down of what is expected to be completed each month. Lacey put the checklist in her directors' report for board members to have access to the link for review. The board checklist will be reviewed at each NICA board meeting moving forward. Lacey also discussed the *ECI Transition Plan Update*: ECI State Technical Assistants Liz Ernst, Amanda McKee & Amanda Winslow initiated a meeting held on April 22 with Chris and Heidi Nederoff (T4F) board chair, Lacey Waller and Gloria Glora Carr (T4F, FMC Admin Assistant) to discuss the direction of the three areas (FMC/T4F/NICA). The State TA Team was informed that Lacey has been contracted for services with the FMC and T4F areas for the remainder of FY26, working additional hours while maintaining her position with NICA. The Board discussed that FY27 would be the year to work through the merger process to potentially merge into one board of 10 counties by July 1st, 2027. Logistically, the three boards could meet separate but there is value in working together. Sharing coordination is a good idea and should save on expenses with one fiscal agent and one employer of record. A consensus of the board was to have one fiscal agent and employer of record for the three areas. Lacey will follow up with Cerro Gordo County being the fiscal agent and Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Center being the employer of record. Gloria Carr will only serve the NICA board as preschool scholarship coordinator. The hiring of Gloria for preschool scholarship coordination is still to be determined. The FMC board meets on May 19th and the T4F Board meets on May 28th. A transition plan will continue to be developed based on the guidance from Tool U. All three boards will work together to form a work group and continue to work on a transition plan.

Business Items:

- **Agenda item: FY27 Request for Proposals**

- Discussion: Lacey Waller and the RFP Committee discussed the FY27 RFP Applications that were submitted.
 - NICAO Head Start Transportation- \$58,843.00
 - NICAO Professional Development- \$5250.00
 - Preschool Tuition Assistance-\$30,000.00
 - Webster County Public Health Dental Services- \$54,145.00
 - Worth County Public Health Car Seat Safety Education \$25,000.00
 - Worth County Public Health Public Awareness Fairs \$13,000.00
 - Worth County Public Health Essential Needs- \$22,000.00
 - Cert Werks Professional Development- \$8,300.00
 - ISU Extension & Outreach Worth County Early Literacy- \$2,442.00
 - Mason City Chamber of Commerce- Wage Enhancement Program- \$50,000.00
 - Special project for future service type to be determined- \$26,046.93
 - Mercy One Family Connections Parents as Teachers- \$156,000.00
 - Lutheran Services in Iowa Healthy Families of America \$35,000.00
 - In Program Discretionary the RFP committee recommended funding \$295,026.93.
 - In Home Visitation RFP totals were \$191,000.00.
- Motion by Ken Zimmerman to approve the RFP review committee's recommended FY27 program funding requests Once carryforward is determined \$12,890.59 additional dollars will be taken from the home visitation carryforward to fully fund LSI's RFP request of \$35,000.
- Motion 2nd by: Sis Greiman
- Motion carried unanimously

- **Agenda item: FY27 Fiscal Agent Contract Agreement**

- Discussion: The board discussed Cerro Gordo County being the fiscal agent for the NICA, T4F & FMC ECI boards for fiscal year 2027. The Cerro Gordo County board of supervisors have yet to make a decision on being the fiscal agent for fiscal year 2027.
- Motion by: Enos Loberg to approve Cerro Gordy County as the North Iowa Children's Alliance fiscal agent at \$5,000.00 contingent upon the approval of the Cerro Gordo County Board of Supervisors and the T4F and FMC ECI board's approval to enter into an agreement with Cerro Gordo County as their fiscal agent.
- Motion 2nd by: Ken Zimmerman
- Motion carried unanimously

- **Agenda item: FY27 Employer of Record Contract Agreement**

- Discussion: The FY27 Employer of Record budget was presented by Lacey. The Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Center (CIJDC) budget includes the following breakdown.
 - CIJDC Administration yearly fee of \$1,729.00
 - Director's salary & benefits at \$32,655
 - Communication stipend \$700.00
 - Travel expenses for the director and preschool scholarship coordinator (\$1,000.00)
 - Preschool Scholarship Coordination & Benefits \$8,881.00.
 - Total contract amount is \$44,965.
- Motion by Enos Loberg to approve the FY27 Central Iowa Juvenile Detention Center NICA budget of \$44,965 plus the \$1729.00 employer of record fee. and enter into an agreement with CIJDC as the NICA Employer of Record. We hope to have the CIJDC Employer of Record Contract reviewed at the next meeting.
- Motion 2nd by Tony Hiatt
- Motion carried unanimously.

- **Agenda item: FY27 NICA Budget**

- Discussion: The Total NICA Allocated funding for FY27 to NICA is \$539,871.87. Home Visitation: \$178,109.41 and Program Discretionary: \$335,017.93. Admin: \$26,744.53, Based on the funding allocated a budget was created and reviewed by the RFP committee for FY27. Community Planning & Collaboration budget line has been eliminated per the state ECI boards funding formula listed in Tool G. The ECI state budget formula now categorizes ECI board budgets as follows, Admin, Program Discretionary and Home Visitation. The ECI Director salary and any other employees are now considered a service type in Tool O. Carryforward totals are yet to be determined. Lacey will have a better idea come June. Any remaining carry forward dollars will be placed in program discretionary. The approved FY27 budget will be entered into Iowa Grants for submission to the state by June 1st.
- Motion by Ken Zimmerman to approve the proposed FY27 NICA budget as presented.
- Motion 2nd by Enos Loberg
- Motion carried unanimously

- **FY27 NICA Meeting Dates & Times:**

- Discussion- Lacey Waller shared a timeline for potential NICA FY27 Meeting Dates and Times. The board

discussed having a face-to-face meeting in November rather than in January due to potential weather conflicts. Lacey will switch the proposed face to face meeting from January to November and share the new meeting dates with the board. The board would like to continue to meet on the second Thursday of the month at 1pm unless noted otherwise.

- Motion by Enos Loberg to approve the proposed NICA meeting dates and times.
- Motion 2nd by Sis Greiman
- Motion carried unanimously
- **FY27 Charlie Brown Community Daycare:**
 - Discussion- Charlie Brown Community Daycare received funding for their requested quality improvement grant back on March 1st, 2026 for their playground resurfacing project. Charlie Brown notified Lacey that their project is projected to not be completed in time. Charlie Brown wanted to make sure that all funding for their project was raised prior to them starting their project. Their required project completion deadline is June 30th, 2026.
 - Motion by Ken Zimmerman to keep Charlie Brown Community Daycare Memorandum of Understanding Agreement as signed. No additional changes can be made.
 - Motion 2nd by Enos.
 - Motion carried unanimously.
- **FY26 Preschool Enhancement Mini Grants:**
 - Discussion- Lacey Waller shared that the allocated funding under preschool scholarships will not all be used by the end of the year. Which would leave unspent funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year. Lacey discussed doing preschool enhancement mini grants for the current contracted preschool programs. A timeline for preschools to submit their proposals and due dates were presented. The preschool enhancement mini grants would allow for preschools to purchase items they need for their classrooms. The six current contracted preschool programs are, Tugs, Little Lambs, West Fork, Sugar Plum Preschool, Kinderhaus and Newman Preschool & Childcare.
 - Motion by Sis Greiman to approve offering a FY26 Preschool Enhancement Grants only to the NICA contracted preschools as well as the proposed timeline for preschools to turn in their applications for review. Preschools can apply for up to \$815.
 - Motion 2nd by Ken Zimmerman
 - Motion carried unanimously
- **Board Membership Applications:**
 - Discussion- The board is still pursuing potential board members for the vacant board position. Lacey Waller shared that no new applications were received. Ken stated that he will share this opportunity with local libraries to see if they are interested in becoming a board member. Enos is not seeking reelection for Worth County Supervisor. He would like to move into the role for the NICA board as a citizen representative once his term is up as a county supervisor. Once a new county supervisor is elected in Worth County they will replace Enos as Worth County's Board of Supervisors NICA board representative. Lacey will review the current board matrix to see if Enos is even eligible to volunteer on the board in a different capacity.
 - Motion by Enos Loberg to recognize that no new board membership applications have been received. The applications continue to be listed on the NICA website.
 - Motion 2nd by Tony Hiatt
 - Motion carried unanimously
- **Miscellaneous Updates & Sharing:**
 - Discussion- no updates were shared.
- **Adjournment:**
 - Motion to adjourn by Sis Greiman at 2:08pm.
 - Motion 2nd by Tony Hiatt
 - Motion carried unanimously

Next meeting: June 1th, 2026 at 1:00pm

North Iowa Children's Alliance Early Childhood Area Board
[North Iowa Children's Alliance](#)