

North Iowa Children's Alliance Early Childhood Area Board Meeting

Location: Zoom Only
August 20th, 2026 @ 1:00PM - MINUTES

Board Members in Attendance: 7 of 9

X	Chris Watts- (EO)- Chair	X	Stephanie Lau (P)		
X	Ken Zimmerman- Vice Chair	X	Enos Loberg (EO)		
	Kara Volgeson (H)	X	Melinda McVey (F)		
	Sis Greiman (EO)	X	Jennifer Hepperly (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 (Webster County Public Health), Chelsie Hinton (Family Connections), Morgan Wilson (NICA First Five Coordinator), David Mesier- Cert Werks, Kathy Lloyd (CCR&R) Meghan Judisch (NICA Head Start Transportation)

The meeting was called to order by Chris Watts at 1:02pm

Approve the Agenda for August 20th, 2026

- Motion by: Enos Loberg to approve the August 20th, 2026 agenda as written.
- Motion 2nd by: Ken Zinnerman
- Motion carried unanimously

Approve Minutes from July 27th, 2026

- Motion by: Ken Zimmerman to approve the July 27th, 2026 NICA board meeting minutes as written.
- Motion 2nd by: Melinda McVey
- Motion carried. Unanimously

Tony Hiatt joined the meeting at 1:18pm

NICA Board Secretary

- Discussion: No one volunteered at this time to be the NICA Secretary.
- Motion by Jennifer Hepperly to table the NICA Secretary discussion to the next meeting
- Motion 2nd by Melinda McVey
- Motion carried unanimously

Public Comment:

- No Public Comment was given.

Family Connections Presentation:

- Discussion: Family Connections hired a new employee to replace one of their long tie employees. She will begin her training in the Parents as Teachers program next week. Once training is complete, she can start recruiting new clients. Currently there are 14 enrolled families. 7 in Cerro Gordo, 2 in Hancock and 5 in Worth. No further discussion by board members was given.

Directors Report:

- Lacey shared her directors report.

Business Items:

● **Agenda item: FY27 Annual Reports**

- *Discussion:* The board reviewed the FY26 Annual Qualtrics Report, the final FY26 ECI Fiscal Tracking Spreadsheet and the FY26 End of Year Financial Summary.
- Motion by Jennifer Hepperly to approve the FY26 Annual Qualtrics report, the Final FY26 NICA ECI Fiscal Tracking Spreadsheet and the FY26 NICA End of Year Financial Summary.
- Motion 2nd by: Enos Loberg
- Motion carried unanimously

- **Agenda item: NICA Board Financials**
 - Discussion: The board reviewed the FY27 July ECI Fiscal Tracking Spreadsheet, July Financial Outlook and FY26 Carryforward totals. Carryforward from FY26 into FY27 is \$98,511.70. There was a two-year-old check that was not cashed. Per Iowa code the check is now considered as revenue. Carryforward into F27 is now \$99,626.70. Of the carryforward dollars 12,890.59 was placed in Home Visitation and the remaining \$86,736.11 was placed in Program Discretionary.
 - Motion by Jennifer Hepperly to approve the July FY27 ECI Fiscal tracking spreadsheet, July Financial Outlook and FY26 carryforward as written.
 - Motion 2nd by: Tony Hiatt
 - Motion carried unanimously
- **Agenda item: Request for Funding Proposals or Additional Funding Requests**
 - Discussion: The board discussed the possible options of spending down funding. Some options included issuing a new RFP. Offer additional funding requests from existing contractors. Or issue Quality Improvement Grants. The board will review the Quality Improvement Application, guidelines, allowable and non-allowable expenses before issuing the release of the Quality Improvement Grants.
 - Motion by: Jennifer Hepperly to open the Quality Improvement Grants for childcare centers and registered in home childcare providers. The motion includes a \$5,000 maximum grant award to childcare centers and a maximum grant award of \$1,000 to registered in home childcare providers.
 - Motion 2nd by Ken Zimmerman
 - Motion carried unanimously
- **Agenda item: ECI Membership Fees**
 - Discussion: Lacey shared that the NICA ECI Association Fees for FY27. The fee is \$468.03. \$100 of the fee must come from an outside funding source. Lacey shared that the ECI Association Board has changed their guidelines to participate. Because Lacey is the director for three ECI boards. All three boards must agree to be apart of the ECI association in order for any board to participate.
 - Motion by Ken Zimmerman to approve the NICA ECI Membership Fees of \$468.03 with the understanding that \$100 of the fee will come from outside funding.
 - Motion 2nd by: Jennifer Hepperly
 - Motion carried unanimously
- **Agenda item: NICA Federal Employer Identification Number**
 - Discussion: Lacey shared some news about CIJDC and IPERS. IPERS is now requiring ECI areas to have their own Employer Identification Number instead of using CIJDC. Lacey started the application to apply for an EIN for the NICA board. In the application, there is a section that is requiring a social security number be inputted. It asks to list the responsible party. Lacey does not feel she meets the criteria to put in her personal social security number as an employee of the board. Lacey has talked with CIJDC, IPERS, other ECI Directors. Lacey is waiting to hear back from ICAP on how to proceed. Right now, NICA is on a provisional status to receive IPERS since we have a contract with CIJDC. No timeline was given by IPERS as to when an EIN has to be filed.
 - Motion by Ken Zimmerman to file an EIN number on behalf of the NICA board and to not have an employee input their personal information.
 - Motion 2nd by Enos Loberg
 - Motion carried unanimously

Ken Zimmerman left at 1:59pm

- **Agenda item: ECI Checklist**
 - Discussion: The board reviewed items from the ECI Checklist.
 - Motion by Jennifer Hepperly to approve the NICA Board By-laws and Policy, Employer of Record Board Policies & Procedures and Policy, NICA Strategic Alignment, NICA Community Needs Utilization, NICA Director Professional Development Plan, and Community Partnership Narrative.
 - Motion 2nd by Tony Hiatt
 - Motion carried unanimously

- **Agenda item: NICA Board Membership**

- Discussion: The board discussed the need for an additional board member and which county that board member should be from. Lacey shared that she has received an application from a board member in Hancock County.
- Motion by Jennifer Hepperly to approve that a new board member be brought on from Hancock County.
- Motion 2nd by Tony Hiatt
- Motion carried unanimously

- **Agenda item: Miscellaneous Sharing & Updates**

- Discussion: Meghan Judisch from the Head start program shared an update about when school will be starting. She also shared that there is still space for children. Lezah Hanson from Webster County Public Health- I-Smile Program shared that they will start seeing children on September 1st. They service all three counties in the NICA area.

Adjournment:

- Motion to adjourn by Jennifer Hepperly at 2:11pm
- Motion 2nd by Melinda McVey
- Motion carried unanimously

Next meeting: September 10th, 2026 at 1:00pm virtually via Zoom.