



## Iowa Council for Early ACCESS

Sept. 27, 2024  
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building, ICN Room  
400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
[Agenda](#)

**Iowa Council for Early ACCESS Call to Order:** Annette Hyde called the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS (ICEA) to order at 9:37 a.m., September 27th, 2024 and introductions were made.

**Council Members Present In Person:** Michael Bergan, Julie Watts and Kimberly Villotti

**Council Members Present Virtually:** Jess Burger, Annette Hyde, Peg Macek, Tonya Weber, Karen Lauer, Rozanne Warder, Julie Jones, Shelley Horak, Eric Locke, Micki Beard and Karen Thompson.

**Council Members Absent:** McKaylee Heuton, Sarah Haberl and Gayle Murray

**Guests:** Amy Mason and Gale Randall

**Early ACCESS Staff Present:** Tonya Krueger, Dee Waddell, Meghan Miller and Abby Patterson

**Approval of Minutes:** February 9th, 2024 and May 10th, 2024. Michael Bergen made a motion to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Kimberly Villotti. The minutes were approved.

### **ACTION: Vote 2024-2025 ICEA Slate**

Annette Hyde stated the need to vote again on the ICEA slate. The roles were reviewed. Jess Burger made a motion to approve the committee chairs. Peg Macek seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **DISCUSSION: Family Story**

Amy shared her and her daughter's story with the Council. Amy is a mom to three children, her daughter is four years old. Presley was born in March of 2020 and is currently in a 4-year old preschool program. Right around her first birthday, Presley began to experience sleeping problems. Around 20 & 30 months she had trouble with gestures. They also noticed some issues with sensory and energy around a Fourth of July party. They decided to be proactive and schedule her for autism screenings after an issue with responding to her name and sounds.

They began to get involved with Early ACCESS. She met with an audiologist at the AEA to see if it was a hearing issue. They concluded that she qualified for Early ACCESS and began services. They soon started having weekly meetings with therapists through Early ACCESS. They then were able to get Presley set up with an affiliated daycare/preschool. Amy praised the AEA and Early ACCESS staff for being so thoughtful and helpful in assisting both Presley as well as Amy and her husband. She thanked them for going above and beyond and framing Presley's actions as positive and helpful.



### **DISCUSSION: Legislative Updates**

Representative Michael Bergen shared updates on the legislation that affect the Council. He stated one of the aspects of open records/open meetings is that scheduled meetings ahead with agenda, topics and minutes are posted and available to all those attending the meeting. Prior to July 1, the legislation and bylaws allowed virtual meetings for weather or emergency related situations. With Covid, these needed to be modified. New legislation on boards and commission reduced the amount of these boards but also meeting practices such as virtual participation. He asked to make sure that this is balanced with ensuring we share open information. Because of the law change, the Council's bylaws need to be updated. He informed the Council that the bylaws will need to be changed to reflect the new legislation. He will be working closely with Dee Waddell to make these changes and stated those will be available for review and consideration for future action.

### **DISCUSSION: Differentiated Monitoring and Supports 2.0 Summary of Visit**

Dee Waddell gave an update on the recent OSEP visit. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Department of Education recently visited the Iowa Department of Education to conduct a visit to find out how the Iowa Department of Education implemented the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The team focused on Early ACCESS (Part C) and Special Education (Part B).

The members of the Council who were interviewed expressed the interview process went smoothly and they felt both confident and prepared by the Council. Kimberly Villotti thanked them for their participation.

Dee updated the next steps following their visit. OSEP will release their report prior to 120 days following their visit. Kimberly Villotti also told the group that the entire month of September is still a question-answer period so the Department could still be called on to answer questions.

Dee also shared some of the content of the conversations with the group. The Early ACCESS State Team began with sharing the overview of the inter-agency system. All of the members of the state team for Early ACCESS were in attendance and represented. They then went over the Early ACCESS theory of action regarding supporting personnel and providers and building up the confidence of families to help with their children's development. They then discussed the Council and the signatory agencies. Dee shared eight content areas with OSEP: Comprehensive Child Find, ISSP Provisions of Services, Family Outcomes, Early Childhood Outcomes, Early Childhood Transitions, State Systemic Improvement Plan, Fiscal Management, and Dispute Resolution.

### **DISCUSSION: Early ACCESS Data Review (include AEA EA Reporting)**

Dee Waddell shared how data for the Annual Performance Report (APR) data are in the ACHIEVE system. The APR data are in the areas of: Comprehensive Child Find which includes the referral and identification process; IFSP Service Provision which includes IFSP development and service delivery; and Early ACCESS transitions which includes preparing families and children for a smooth transition when the children turn three.



**Signatory Agency Updates:**

**Child Health Speciality Clinic:**

Tonya Krueger shared the CHSC annual report completed in August. This report highlighted Health Assessments; CHSC has seen an increase in requests for health assessments in the last year. The increase has come from AEAs who previously hadn't engaged in the process. Another service reflected in the report is service coordination and family navigation.

Peg Macek also shared that Dr. Bernat, a geneticist with the University of Iowa Health Care, is the new CHSC Medical Director.

**Department of Education:**

Kimberly Villotti added that the Department has recently released the new table of organization for our agency. She stated that the Special Education division has seen many changes, and encouraged council members to review the changes. She noted Early Childhood serves across two divisions, Special Education and PK-12 Learning.

**Department of Health and Human Services:**

Shelley Horak shared that HHS is trying to work on increasing low engagement rates with families and encouraging them to utilize early intervention services. She also stated that Abby Patterson started with them in March 2024, as a member of the Early ACCESS State Team.

**Adjourn:** Annette Hyde adjourned the ICEA meeting at 11:36 pm. The next meeting will be December 6th, 2024.