



## IOWA COUNCIL FOR EARLY ACCESS

December 6, 2024  
9:00 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.  
Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
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 9:15 a.m., December 6, 2024

**Council Members Present:** Annette Hyde (virtual) Michael Bergan (virtual), Jess Burger (virtual) , Peg Macek (virtual), Julie Jones (virtual), McKaylee Heuton (virtual), Eric Locke (virtual), Tonya Weber (virtual), Julie Watts (virtual), Gayle Murray (virtual), Karen Thompson (virtual), Rozanne Warder (virtual)

**Council Members Absent:** Kimberly Villotti

**Guests:** Lee Symonds (virtual)

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

**Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS meeting on September 27, 2024.

**Family Story:** Lee shared the story of her son Logan who was born during the COVID pandemic. Logan sat, crawled, walked and played at all of his age appropriate milestones. Around 15 months old, she and her husband noticed Logan stopped responding to his name, making eye contact and had little interest in other children. The family contacted their doctor and discussed the possibility of autism. They received a referral to Grant Wood AEA for Early ACCESS services to meet with an IFSP Team, including an autism specialist and speech language pathologist. The Early ACCESS providers supported the family with many resources and support for their son and family. They joined a play group with other families receiving services which was helpful for Logan's socialization and for the parents to discuss strategies. As Logan approached his third birthday, the family worked with the IFSP team to help prepare them for preschool services. The IFSP team helped the family prepare for transition from Early ACCESS to preschool, and they were so grateful for early intervention services.

**Executive Committee Report: ICEA By-laws. First Reading of [By-law Changes](#).** The Council started the process of reviewing and revising the Council bylaws. The first draft was reviewed and presented to the Council by Chairperson, Annette Hyde. The Council reviewed the revisions, article by article, to ensure the bylaws were reflective of Iowa Administrative Code for Early ACCESS and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C. The Council reviewed membership requirements and discussed recruitment efforts as applicable. It was noted the recruitment of a parent representative with a child under six years old was needed. The *appointment process* and *attendance* sections were reviewed with no comments or suggestions. When reviewing the use of a designee to represent appointed members, it was determined to remove this section of the bylaws



to ensure members represent persons appointed by the Governor of Iowa. The *non-discrimination* section was updated with new language and revisions were suggested. Additionally, the Council noted new requirements relating to changes in hybrid/virtual meeting changes.

**Early ACCESS APR & Data Review.** The Early ACCESS Coordinator, Dee Waddell, gave an overview of the Early ACCESS Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators and data. The data addressed Child Find B-1, Child Find B-3, Timely Evaluation, Timely services within 30 days and services provided in natural environments. When reviewing referrals for Birth-1, data were reviewed from 2020-2021 to 2023-2024. The data represented the percent of infants with IFSPs compared to Iowa's population birth to 1 and birth to 3. Council members suggested adding a geographical AEA map to data for reference. Ms. Waddell also discussed Early ACCESS transition and the pathways from Early ACCESS to Special Education or community services.

### **Signatory Agency Updates:**

**Department of Education:** The Iowa Department of Education has two Early ACCESS positions currently open. The IDEA Part C Data Manager position in particular will be essential to the Council to assist with data collection, management and dissemination.

**Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).** Shelley Horak discussed the six pilot sites that HHS has implemented for Early Childhood outcomes. She will plan to share more data about the program at upcoming Council meetings. She shared they have been emphasizing a new model "More Good Days for Families" motto. Ms. Horak also shared the fact that there is a low uptick in Early Access services. Additionally, HHS supported the facilitation of a meeting last week to discuss potential strategies and recommendations to enhance CAPTA referrals to Early ACCESS. The participants compiled a list of recommendations to help ensure children in Iowa receive the most helpful services possible. Ms. Horak will plan to share the recommendations and accompanying data at a future Council meeting.

**Child Health Specialty Clinics (CHSC).** Peg Macek shared that CHSC has been looking at neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) to see if this should be a condition which would be an automatic qualifier of eligibility for Early ACCESS. The Early ACCESS CHSC Liaison, Tonya Krueger, shared they will be hiring a service coordinator to provide services in the Sioux City office. She encouraged Council to recommend anyone they knew in the area with experience working with families with children with special needs to reach out to Ms. Krueger or CHSC to apply for the position.

**Additional Announcements and updates:** No other updates were given.

**Adjourn:** A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Annette Hyde adjourned the ICEA meeting at 11:48 a.m. The next meeting will be Friday, February 7, 2025.