

**JASPER, MARION, AND POWESHIEK (JMP) COUNTIES EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA  
BOARD MEETING Minutes**

Foundation Offices at Ahrens Park, 1510 Penrose St. Grinnell, IA 50112  
5:30 pm - Wednesday, August 27, 2025

County	Name	Present		Absent	Excused	Unexcused	Non-Board
		IP	V				
P	Patricia Hinrichs-(human services)- Board Chair		X				
M	Denise Bontrager (citizen)		X				
M	VACANT (education)-						
J	Mitzi Smith (faith)		X				
P	Doug Cameron (consumer)-			X		X	
P	Mary Lindberg (citizen)- Board Treasurer		X				
J	Britney Schnathorst (citizen)			X	X		
J	Julie Wendl (health)		X				
M	Michael Kacmarynski- (business) Board Vice Chair		X				
	Amy Blanchard (Director)	X					X
	Sara Paar (MICA Family Connections)		X				X
	Alma Silva (MICA Family Connections)		X				X
	Rachel Bardwell (Short Years Partnership)		X				X
	Danielle Kenworthy (Short Years Partnership)		X				X

- I. The meeting was called to order by Hinrichs, Chair, at 5:31pm. Smith joined the meeting at approximately 5:50 pm.
- II. Roll Call: JMP board members present include Bontrager, Hinrichs, Kacmarynski, Lindberg, Smith, and Wendl.
- III. Public Comment: Bardwell reported that Short Years is experiencing challenging situations for both staff and families. Short Years drew attention to the new Daisey data system and the immense amount of work involved in switching cases over to the new platform. Blanchard noted she does not have access to that system. Paar introduced herself as the new supervisor for Family Connections. Program was briefly serving 20 families, the intended capacity. Paar could not confirm the Parents as Teachers accreditation status.
- IV. **Motion** to approve minutes of June 25, 2025 board meeting by Kacmarynski. **Seconded** by Lindberg. Motion passed unanimously.
- V. Executive and Committee Reports
  - a. Treasurer's Report: Report current through June 30 was included in board packet to reflect year-end. New report as required by HHS was also included in the packet, current through August 22. Blanchard noted some expenses were shifted between Early Childhood and School Ready in order to meet carry-forward requirements. All expenses were related to MICA CCNC. Carry-forward totals amount to \$63,751.66. Funds will be redistributed to the new funding categories of Community Collaboration or Discretionary. Decisions will need to be made and the budget will need to be amended in Iowa Grants. Report was filed for audit.
  - b. Preschool Scholarship Report: To date, we have processed 40 preschool applications and approved 25 students for funding. That is 50% fewer than reviewed at this time last year. Board discussed the child care assistance application requirement as well as the other guidelines implemented in the new policy adopted in June. JMP will be supporting one student

that attends a preschool out of our service area because they reside within our service area and the other ECI area was unwilling to cover the \$65 per month cost due to residency restrictions. Blanchard will coordinate with the English Valley preschool to ensure the process is not too burdensome for either the preschool or the fiscal agent.

- c. Director's Report: Blanchard reported on the ongoing challenges of serving two districts as we prepare for dissolution. The next State ECI board meeting is September 5. We anxiously await the agenda.

VI. Old Business:

- a. FY26 Preschool Scholarship Guidelines: Following discussion regarding the preschool scholarship report, **motion** by Bontrager to fund extended-day preschool costs up to \$200 per month, per child for VPP school-based programs that keep students for a full day. **Seconded** by Wendl. Motion passed unanimously.

VII. New Business:

- a. Association of Early Childhood Iowa Area Boards and Advocates: After discussion, **motion** by Kacmarynski to renew JMP membership in the Association with Blanchard continuing to serve as the board's delegate. **Seconded** by Lindberg. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. FY26 Contract Monitoring Schedule: The FY26 schedule reflects our typical calendar of visits minus the contracts we no longer serve. **Motion** by Kacmarynski to approve the calendar. **Seconded** by Wendl.
- c. FY26 Budget Updates: Blanchard will need to renegotiate the submitted JMP budget in Iowa Grants to reflect the actual carry-forward. It remains to be seen which funding category is the best for carry-forward funds. Board will need to increase amount allotted for scholarships. Blanchard suggests waiting to amend the budget until the October meeting. In the interim, she challenged board members to seek opportunities in their communities that align with the new performance measure approved on June 5, one week after we had to submit our budget.
- d. FY25 Iowa Grants Annual Report: Thanks to Qualtrics, board need not approve the usual data report for Iowa grants, only the fiscal update and board matrix. **Motion** to approve fiscal update and matrix as presented by Lindberg. **Seconded** by Bontrager. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Other:: Blanchard thanked Kingrey for his service and listed a few highlights from his terms of service.

IX. Adjournment: **Motion** by Wendl to adjourn. Due to a schedule conflict for Amy, next meeting is re-scheduled for October 15, 2025 via Zoom at 5:30 pm. Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm.