

**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, June 24, 2026

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

- I. The meeting was called to order by Hinrichs, Chair, at 5:30pm.
- II. Roll Call: JMP board members present include Cameron, Bontrager, Hinrichs, Kacmarynski, Lindberg, Schnathorst, Smith, and Wendl. A quorum was present.
- III. Public Comment: Bardwell and Murray shared impact stories with the board including the educator's success helping a teen mom of two earning a GED and a young mom of five gaining confidence and changing harmful parenting habits. Paar reported outreach efforts including local libraries to meet families and a newly enrolled prenatal mom of twins.
- IV. **Motion** to approve minutes of May 20, 2026, board meeting by Kacmarynski. **Seconded** by Bontrager. Motion passed unanimously.
- V. Executive and Committee Reports
 - a. Treasurer's Report: Report current through June 19 was included in board packet. Lindberg noted projected carry-forward is expected to be about \$40,000, not \$93,000 as Blanchard had predicted previously. Blanchard noted some cells on the fiscal tracking sheet provided by the State are not pulling forward to the report correctly, particularly the Wage Enhancements funding line. Corrections are noted in blue ink for the board. Report was filed for audit.
 - b. Preschool Scholarship Report: June report summarizes investment by preschool and totals children served. Funding guidelines and parameters will remain largely unchanged for FY27 though the attestation form will be a new addition.
 - c. Director's Report: Blanchard noted completing IPIB Open Meetings and Public Records Training on June 17. She will share link to register with the board. Confusion remains on the requirement for boards. Guidelines say "governmental boards" must comply but JMP is considered "quasi-governmental." At least two board members have completed this training in the past.

VI. Old Business:

- a. HHS Early Childhood and Family Services Plan- Bill was signed by Governor on June 2, though no mention was made of this at the State ECI board meeting on June 5. Blanchard and Hinrichs have reviewed the FAQ page on the HHS website which indicates the ECFS areas will align with behavioral health districts. If this will also apply to ECI remains unclear, but feels inevitable. Blanchard will continue to track the FAQ for updates.

VII. New Business

- a. Quality Improvement Grant for Bear Creek Kids Campus: Request from Bear Creek for \$2,500 will support their efforts to achieve an IQ4K rating in alignment with recommendation from their Child Care Consultant. **Motion** to approve the \$2,500 request from Bear Creek by Lindberg. **Seconded** by Kacmarynski. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. FY27 JMP Preschool Scholarship Application and Parent Attestation Form: Blanchard shared the attestation form distributed by the State with only minor changes to reflect JMP input. Form will be included in the application packet for parents. **Motion** by Wendl to approve the scholarship application packet as presented. **Seconded** by Smith. Motion passed unanimously.
- c. FY27 JMP Board Meeting Calendar and Contract Monitoring Schedule- Documents were included in the board packet for review and must be uploaded to Iowa Grants by July 31 per the 15-page calendar of demands issued by HHS. Brief discussion about the February 24, 2027 meeting agenda items. **Motion** by Kacmarynski to approve the documents as presented pending a bold font amendment for the February meeting. **Seconded** by Wendl with amendment included. Motion passed unanimously, and with a chuckle.
- d. JMP Board Membership in FY27- after review of the succession calendar, **motion** to approve one-year extensions to the terms of Schnathorst and Wendl by Kacmarynski. **Seconded** by Lindberg. Motion passed unanimously with Schnathorst and Wendl abstaining, though they are graciously in favor of the extension. Carl Meck submitted an application to join the JMP board. **Motion** by Kacmarynski to approve Meck as a new Poweshiek County representative. **Seconded** by Cameron. Motion passed unanimously.
- e. FY27 JMP Board Election of Officers: Hinrichs has agreed to continue to serve as Chair if the board will have her. Schnathorst has kindly offered to serve as Vice. After discussion, Meck was nominated as Treasurer, which was a surprise to him that he handled beautifully. He accepted the nomination humbly, despite the enthusiastic endorsement by the JMP board of said nomination. Gleeful **motion** to approve the slate of Hinrichs, Schnathorst, and Meck by Kacmarynski. **Seconded** cheerfully by Lindberg. Motion passed unanimously.
- f. Conflict of Interest Forms: Blanchard distributed paper copies of the FY27 conflict of interest forms, citing her collection of previous forms as a treasure trove of the board's evolution over the years. Board questioned if this form was issued by the state or was local to the Foundation. Blanchard responded it is an old ECI version that serves both purposes. Board wondered if the completed forms will also need to be uploaded to Iowa Grants. Blanchard does not believe that is a requirement. Yet.
- g. FY27 JMP Board Policy Manual: HHS has been hosting regular meetings with ECI directors to build a 170-page policy manual. Blanchard does not enjoy that process. JMP must upload the current board policy manual to Iowa Grants by July 31. JMP last completed a full review of policies in FY21. Most recent update was in FY23. Board will create a calendar for policy review soon enough. Blanchard will not enjoy that process either.

- h. Departing Board Member Recognition: Cameron and Lindberg have served a combined total of 22.5 years on the JMP board, dating back to just after the three-county merge. They have overseen more than \$8.2 million dollars of investment in early childhood during their service. They have weathered a change in directors, budget cuts, program cuts, contract kerfuffles, State of Iowa division changes, legislative season roller coasters, and shrinking local control. Through it all, they offered valuable insight, countless hours, fierce advocacy for the families and children that don't have a seat at the board table, and a commitment to serve JMP to the best of their ability. And they did all that with good humor, incredible wisdom, and a remarkable spirit of cooperation. For their many years of service, the board gifted them an inadequate bouquet of flowers and a hand-written note.

VIII. Other:

- IX. Adjournment: As his final hurrah, **motion** by Cameron to adjourn. Seconded by everyone. Officially adjourned at 6:36 pm. Meeting was followed with conversation over pizza, salad, pasta, and dessert for all. Everyone in attendance was gifted a clearance-priced geranium in a clearance-priced mug with a note of gratitude from the director. Next meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2026 via Zoom.