



Levels of Excellence Summary and Recommendation

Name of ECI Area: **4 R Kids**

Counties/Area Served: **Adair, Dallas, Madison and Warren Counties**

LOE Materials Received by December 31, 2013?

Yes

ECI Board Members Present at Site Visit:

Bob Ockerman, Cynthia Moffitt, Joyce Kooker, Bena Owens, Janice Jensen, Terry Johnson, Kendalyn Huff, Samantha Finneseth, Khristan Kaufman, and Marlin Marckmann

Others Present at ECI Board Review:

Deb Schrader (4 R Kids director), **Dave Arens** (ECI State Board member), **Leone Junck** (ECI State Board member), **Vicki Sickels** (Quad County 4 Kids director), and **Leslie Stonehocker** (CCR&R)

Attendees of Community Partner Meeting:

Jovanka Westbrook (Partners in Family Development), **Corinne Lambert** (United Way of Central Iowa), **Ann Cockran** (Dallas County Public Health), **Paula Klocke** (New Opportunities), **Stephanie Claussen** (Adair County Public Health), **Myra Willms** (ISU Extension), **Craig Hertel** (ISU Extension), **Cathy Weatcraft** (CCR&R), **Terry Wangberg** (Southwestern Community College), **Stephanie Potter** (Dallas County Public Health Nursing Services), and **Leone Junck** (ECI State Board member)

State TA Team Reviewers: **Tami Foley and Shanell Wagler**

Reviewer Summary

Strengths

- Board members shared that they've learned to work together for the four-county area. One strength identified was that they've built trust in each other and strengthened operational processes.
- The board reviewed and incorporated other agency/organization needs assessment data into the community plan.
- Meeting minutes reflect implementation of the board's fiscal responsibilities through actions that included:
 - Monitoring the fiscal agent contract that included a satisfaction survey of contracts receiving reimbursement
 - Discussions related to a contractor's performance and expenditure of funds
- Community partners shared that there is a good relationship between the advisory committees and the board and at least one board member attends each advisory committee meeting.
- The board holds two contractors meetings each year. At least one board member attends these meetings. Board members and community partners said that these meetings are a method to collaborate together.
- Both community partners and the board shared a successful strategy the board uses for contractors to submit quarterly data.

Areas for Improvement

- Continue to identify strategies to gather needs assessment data from targeted populations most affected by Early Childhood Iowa funds to identify strengths, needs and gaps in services.
- Continue to build on the board’s existing communication tool for assuring services are provided for children ages prenatal – 5 years and their families when families or services cross ECIA boundaries. The current tool addresses only preschool services and does not include a bordering ECIA, Quad Counties 4 Kids.
- Although the reviewers felt the fiscal assessment data presented in the community plan was informative, the ECIA director shared at the board’s on-site meeting that she felt it served no purpose. The reviewers recommend that the board request state technical assistance to better understand the connection between the fiscal assessment and understanding needs and gaps in services within the ECIA when making funding decisions.
- Continue to build relationships with the four school districts (three in Dallas County) in your ECIA that do not participate in the Statewide Voluntary 4-Year-Old Preschool Program to encourage them to pursue this state funding.

Technical Assistance Offered or Requested

Board members did not identify any technical assistance needs during the on-site visit. The reviewers recommend technical assistance related to the connection between the fiscal assessment and understanding needs and gaps in services within the ECIA when making funding decisions.

Recommendation to the ECI State Board

Rationale for Recommendation

The board met the required criteria for a recommendation of model.

Recommended LOE Level: Model

Signature of ECI Facilitator

Date

Signature of Local Board Chair
Person

Date