



Iowa Council for Early ACCESS
Meeting Minutes September 17, 2021
[Meeting Agenda](#)

Iowa Council for Early ACCESS Call to Order: Emma Bouza, Chair, called the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS (ICEA) to order at 10:03 a.m. with a quorum noted on September 17, 2021 in room B100 of the Grimes Building.

Council Members Present: Michael Bergen, Eric Locke, Ryan Hubbert, Aaron Cronk, John Fuller, Annette Hyde, Julie Jones, Megan Lancaster, Stephen Mandler, Jessie Marks, Ryan Tomlinson (joined after start), Julie Allison, Kimberly Villotti, Emma Bouza, Karen Thompson, Melissa Grennan, Tonya Weber (joined after start)

Council Members Absent: Marcus Miller-Johnson, Jerrica Brink, McKaylee Heuton, Johnathon Wunderlich, Donal Welch

Early ACCESS Staff Present: Dee Gethmann, Tonya Krueger, Teri Mash, Kate Small

Guests Present: Sonya Sellmeyer, Mollie Koopmans, Jacqueline Penning

Approval of Minutes: Bouza asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made by Ryan Hubbert and a second from Annette Hyde to approve the minutes from the Iowa Council for Early ACCESS meeting held May 15, 2021. Motion was approved unanimously with no changes to the minutes.

OSEP SPP/APR Target Setting FFY 2020-2025: Kate Small presented background information on target setting for the State Performance Plan (SPP) 2020-2025, which includes a set of indicators established by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) all states must address. Three target setting options were developed based on baseline, historical data, and trend analysis for each of the indicators presented to the ICEA. Additional considerations for targets included: most targets increase; must be ambitious and achievable over six years; and must show improvement over baseline. OSEP has established that targets cannot be set below baseline. Target setting discussion for each indicator included: current targets and baseline and setting new targets using analysis based upon 1) conservative; 2) mid-range (average annual change), and 3) ambitious (end in mind) target setting approaches. Small reviewed the process used for reaching consensus on target setting options. The Council used plurality to select the recommended target setting option.

Indicator C2: Services in Natural Environments: Indicator data: percent of infants/toddlers receiving Early ACCESS services primarily in natural environments. The members discussed circumstances when children may not receive Early ACCESS services in the natural environment such as health reasons or environmental reasons. Currently, data indicate 96.60% of children receive Early ACCESS services in natural environments. The national pandemic has increased the use of various other environments such as outdoor settings as well as service provider locations to incorporate social distancing and cleaning procedures. The ICEA discussed the continued public concerns and need to implement precautions.

ICEA recommendation Indicator C2 Target: Option 2 Mid Range - Average annual change; maintain the same target for 2020 and 2021; increase by the positive average annual change (0.4%) each year thereafter.

Indicator C4: Family Outcomes: Indicator data includes: A) families know rights, B) communicate their child's needs, C) help their child develop and learn. Proposed target options: 1) conservative set at new baseline add average positive change for all three outcomes add average positive change (1%) for all three outcomes, 2) mid-range keep 20-21 at baseline, add average positive change for each outcome (1.95%, .04%, 1.09%), 3) ambitious keep 20-21 at baseline, calculate the average rate of growth needed to reach the national averages (91%, 91%,93%) for each outcome. The ICEA discussed the following considerations: COVID; new survey; and additional factors relevant to family outcomes.

ICEA recommendation Indicator C4 Target: Option 2 Mid Range - Target set for 2020-21 at baseline; add average positive change for each outcome (1.95%, 0.04%, 1.09%) each year.

Family Story: Bouza introduced Mollie Koopmans and invited her to share her family's experiences with Early ACCESS. Koopmans shared her family's journey when her son, Nolan, was born in 2019. Nolan was diagnosed with Down Syndrome at birth. After the diagnosis, a social worker at the hospital walked her through what the future would look like for Nolan and recommended that she utilize Early ACCESS services. The Area Education Agency region's Early ACCESS service coordinator contacted the family to set up a meeting with the whole family. The AEA lead teacher, who also served as the Early ACCESS service coordinator, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, and other specialists provided support for the family. Visits were focused with a goal in mind. Early ACCESS has helped with accountability and what is practicable for their family. Early ACCESS has been available consistently. She hopes all families with children of special needs get a similar experience.

Committee Reports: Bouza asked for committee reports and updates. The public policy committee held a meeting prior to the ICEA meeting and discussed early childhood mental health and contacting the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) when concerns arise. The committee shared the discussion included: involvement of Child Protection Centers (CPC) with Early ACCESS; utilize federal dollars coming to the state for mental health; support for families and children that are CAPTA referrals to Early ACCESS; and connections with parent partners through DHS. Consideration of future activity: Start on a small scale, pick a county or two (concerted effort to partner with AEA and DHS); Collaborate with Intensive Care Units at Iowa Hospitals; Keystone AEA will work on public relations on why a baby needs a "teacher."

Approval of Executive Committee Membership: Bouza asked for a motion to approve the ICEA Executive Committee membership. A motion was made by Hubbert to approve the membership. Hyde seconded the motion. Passed by unanimous vote. The Executive Committee membership includes: Emma Bouza, Chair; Aaron Cronk, Vice Chair; John Fuller, Parent Representative; and McKaylee Heuton, At-Large Representative.

ACHIEVE- Iowa's IDEA data system update: Dee Gethmann provided an update on Iowa's ACHIEVE system and the statewide plan to fully implement the ACHIEVE system no later than September 15, 2022. The system will include all IFSPs and IEPs by June 30, 2023. The ACHIEVE system will go live for Early ACCESS on April 15, 2022. All IFSPs must be moved to the new system by June 30, 2023. More information will come from the AEA Special Education Directors for each region. The ACHIEVE Family Portal will be ready by Fall, 2022. Gethmann shared that ACHIEVE will improve processes of intake, referral, evaluation and assessment, services, and transitions. Family members will be able to view their child's calendar, access resources and support, see their family's plan, referred to as a family guided routines based intervention (FGRBI) plan, and be able to share how the plan is going. Council members can view the [ACHIEVE Google Site](#) to see progress updates.

Karen Thompson shared concerns about a need for gap-filling measures during the time that families don't have access to the ACHIEVE system for the first few months of the system being live. The ICEA members discussed suggestions to increase family involvement such as providing examples of ACHIEVE outputs of the IFSP, IEP, and reports so families may provide input, share outputs with ASK Resource so they are better able to support families in preparation for meetings.

Title V programs, Iowa Department of Public Health: Bouza introduced Analisa Pearson, Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), and invited Pearson to provide information on Title V. The presentation provided information about Title V services as well as connections with Early ACCESS referrals for early intervention services. The Title V services include the provision and promotion of family-centered, community-based, coordinated care for children with special health care needs (CHSC), and the facilitation of community-based systems of services for children and their families.

For more information, view the [Title V Child and Adolescent Health presentation](#).

OSEP SPP/APR Target Setting FFY 2020-2025 (continued): The ICEA continued the discussion and decision making regarding recommendations for targets of Iowa’s SPP 2020-2025.

Indicator C5-Child Find (Birth to one): Indicator data: percent of infants/toddlers, birth to one, with IFSPs; and **Indicator C6-Child Find/(Birth to three):** Indicator data: percent of infants and toddlers, birth-3, with IFSPs.

The ICEA discussed proposing a new baseline due to procedural changes with eligibility, including establishing parameters for prematurity and clarification of foster care was not considered a condition that results in eligibility for Early ACCESS. Children in foster care must be referred to Early ACCESS for an evaluation to determine eligibility. Discussion included the need to reach infants, reach out to child care providers, have child find days at the local level with community providers such as physicians. Additional information discussed included national data in comparison to Iowa data. Iowa has one of the least restrictive eligibility criteria in the nation. The ICEA also discussed a projected decrease 0-3 in population. It was noted that Iowa’s total population has been stable. Iowa’s Part C, Early ACCESS, child count data declined potentially as a result of the COVID pandemic.

ICEA recommendation Indicator C5 Target: Option 3 - ambitious, end in mind, 2020 and 2021 targets set at baseline; calculate average yearly increase needed to reach the national average 1.36%.

ICEA recommendation Indicator C6 Target: Option 3 - ambitious, end in mind, 2020 and 2021 targets set at baseline, calculate average yearly increase needed to reach halfway to the national average (3.70%).

Indicator C3 - Early Childhood Outcomes. Small stated that target options are not yet available. She reviewed the historical data for the indicator and stated that Iowa is proposing the 2017–2018 data collection year as the new baseline for C3 due to procedural clarifications that came into effect regarding eligibility as well as the practice change regarding re-evaluations at annual meetings. She added that the data for both FFY19 and FFY20 are likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Early ACCESS State Team will work with the Executive Committee to determine the options for presenting target options for Indicator C3.

Bouza asked for a motion to approve the Council’s agreed-upon recommendations of target options for each of the SPP indicators (C2, C4, C5, C6). A motion was made by Michael Bergan and a second from Locke. Motion was approved unanimously. The ICEA recommendations will be reported to the Iowa Department of Education and signatory agencies as the target proposals for the SPP 2020-2025.

Indicator	Option	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
C2	mid-range	96.60	96.60	96.64	96.68	96.72	96.76
C4A	mid-range	79.84	79.84	81.79	83.74	85.69	87.64

C4B	mid-range	85.86	85.86	85.90	85.94	85.98	86.02
C4C	mid-range	83.25	83.25	84.34	85.43	86.52	87.61
C5	ambitious	1.08	1.08	1.15	1.22	1.29	1.36
C6	ambitious	2.46	2.46	2.77	3.08	3.39	3.70

Updates and Closing Discussion: Tonya Krueger provided the Council with a [Child Health Specialty Clinic Report](#).

Adjournment: Bouza asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Hyde and a second from Melissa Grennan. Motion was approved unanimously. Bouza adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m.