



Iowa Community Empowerment
Lean Activities
Update - 9/28/09

Purpose:

“This event will define Empowerment’s role in a world class early care, health and education system at a state and local level, to help young children and their families be successful.”

Objectives:

1. Improve efficiencies at the state level
 - Examine the capacity of the state Technical Assistance (TA) team to support the local boards
 - Examine the current involvement of mandated state agencies and the level of integration within their agencies
 - Determine how to engage other state agencies’ involvement
2. Improve efficiencies at the local level
 - Examine structure of the Community Empowerment Areas
 - Revisit Community Empowerment’s role as a convener and coordinator of early childhood services
 - Ensure each Community Empowerment Area knows the needs of their constituents
3. Find a balance between maximizing flexibility at the local level and meeting state level requirements, including but not limited to, fiscal, quality and legislative.
4. Clarify Community Empowerment’s role, responsibilities and relationships within the larger system, ie; Early Childhood Iowa
5. Establish consistent performance accountability for the services provided in Community Empowerment Areas.
6. Examine governance structure to identify opportunities to support coordination and integration of:
 - Preschool services
 - Family support services
 - Child care services
 - Child health services
7. Examine the branding of “Community Empowerment”
8. Identify hindrances to the system’s success
9. Examine structure for state funding and make suggestions to the Legislature if necessary
10. Ensure the Empowerment structure provides local areas with the tools and support needed for good fiscal accountability

Update on Activities Supporting the Community Empowerment Lean Activities:

During September, 2009, Community Empowerment Lean activities were reviewed and discussed in order to gather additional input. Groups included:

- September 8th, Early Childhood Iowa Council
- September 10th, Early Childhood Iowa State Agency Liaison Team
- September 11th, Iowa Empowerment Board
- Public meetings held in regional locations:
 - September 15th – Iowa City (28 attendees, 14 areas)
 - September 17th – Winterset (36 attendees, 11 areas)
- September 23rd, Community Empowerment Coordinators

Input from these meets is being collected and reviewed by the Lean Team. Workgroups have been formed to move the Recommendations from the Lean Team forward. Following are updates from each workgroup:

- Levels of Excellence
- Local Structure
- State Structure
- Marketing

A map was developed that depicts 2008 Woods and Poole estimates of 0-5 children for each county. This map will be added to the website along with other Lean materials.

A draft depiction of the state structure has been developed. The current draft will be added to the website.

Levels of Excellence Workgroup
Update 9-14-09

The work of this group is based on the following premises:

- Good work should be recognized and rewarded
- All empowerment areas do not perform at the same level
- Empowerment boards that have demonstrated a high level of accountability should be offered greater decision making flexibility
- High performing empowerment areas need a venue to share their expertise with other empowerment areas
- Poor performing empowerment areas need swift and concrete consequences that are not limited to the redesignation process every three years.

Key Points:

1. Levels of Excellence is a tiered approach to recognize the performance of a local empowerment board.
2. Current practice only allows two levels of recognition; unconditional designation or conditional designation
3. Suggested tiers are: Emerging, Capacity building and Model
4. Detailed descriptions and examples of all three levels will be developed in order for there to be a clear understanding of what is needed to reach each level
5. Recommendations for action for poor performing areas that are not at the emerging level will be developed
6. We are utilizing lessons learned from other state models
7. Potential rewards for high performance include:
 - *Waivers granted for increased flexibility for using School Ready funds (not limited to solely categorical uses)*
 - *Access to national technical assistance*
 - *Mentorship to other empowerment boards*
8. Potential consequences for poor performance (not meeting emerging level) include:
 - *Conditional status*
 - *Intensive technical assistance*
 - *Peer Mentorship*
 - *Area Merger*
 - *Receivership*
 - *Dissolution*

For More Information:

http://www.empowerment.state.ia.us/about_us/lean_activities.html

To volunteer to serve on this workgroup, please contact: Janet.Gartin@iowa.gov

The State Structure Workgroup
September 15, 2009 Update

The State Structure Workgroup has begun to meet. The current membership includes:

Gregg Cummings, Iowa Head Start Association
Sheila Hansen, Child and Family Policy Center
Gretchen Hageman, Department of Public Health
Diane Moore, Department of Education
Michelle Stover-Wright, Child and Family Policy Center
Rep. Cindy Winckler
Judy McCoy Davis, Member of the Iowa Empowerment Board
Jeff Anderson, Department of Human Services
Kate Bennett, Polk County Empowerment Coordinator
Peg Macek, Member of the Iowa Empowerment Board
Becky Burgart, Former member of Iowa Empowerment Board
Cindy Duhrkopf, Empowerment Coordinator for Audubon, Carroll, Guthrie and Greene
Michael Bergan, Coordinator of the Howard, Allamakee, Winneshiek and Clayton area and former member of the Iowa Empowerment Board
Maggie Tinsman, Community member and former state legislator
Senator Nancy Boettger
Jenny Hodges, Department of Public Health

This workgroup will be developing recommendations that support the overall objectives of the Lean process for Community Empowerment regarding state structure items. From the original summary document:

“The state structure of Community Empowerment (and the greater Early Childhood system) will be reorganized in an effort to increase efficiency. The goal is to create one Early Childhood organization with one unified message that is easily recognized throughout the state. This early childhood system can result in streamlining and aligning existing councils, boards and commissions thus eliminating the need for the continued creation of new councils, commissions, and boards. The primary change will be the blending of Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) and Community Empowerment. The need for a fulltime legislative liaison for Early Childhood was also discussed.

The structure of the state Technical Assistance team will be examined. A few of the overriding concepts that the team wishes to preserve are:

- Representation across the various state departments,
- “Housing” the Early Childhood team in an agency where we can maintain a neutral home. The establishment of area specialists such as Family Support, Preschool settings, Governance, Fiscal, etc.

Work will initially focus on specifics for an early childhood coordination office, recommendations for a combined leadership group and developing a communications plan with stakeholders regarding this work.

Early Childhood Coordination Office:

Based on the recommendation of the Lean Team, the workgroup is developing an assessment instrument to assist with recommendations for regarding the location of this office. Workgroup members are approving the criteria to be used in the assessment. For this assessment, the current plan for the agencies to be considered includes the state agencies involved with Community Empowerment, but other thoughts are also being considered. Feedback will be requested from various groups of Early Childhood Iowa State and Community Empowerment. This will allow input to be received by both state agency and non-government partners. The workgroup has also discussed other options to 'house' this office such as within the Governor's Office.

The workgroup is also developing charter information to support this Office. This will include a mission, purpose statement, and initial thoughts of roles and responsibilities of this office.

The main goal for this recommendation is have a structure that supports the current staff for Community Empowerment and the Early Childhood Iowa efforts into a blended office.

Early Childhood Leadership Group

The workgroup will be making recommendations regarding the combining of the Iowa Empowerment Board with the Early Childhood Iowa State Agency Liaison Team. Through this process, the workgroup has developed a crosswalk. The crosswalk includes membership clarification, legislated responsibilities and purpose statements of the Iowa Empowerment Board, Early Childhood Iowa State Agency Liaison Team and Early Childhood Iowa Council. As this information is reviewed, the group will develop recommendations for the new board, including membership, purpose, roles and responsibilities.

Communications Plan

Currently, the workgroup plans to update and receive input from the Iowa Empowerment Board at both their September and November meetings, the Early Childhood Iowa Council at its September and November meetings and the State Agency Liaison Team meeting in September. Information will be presented at the Regional Meetings being planned in September.

Local Structure Workgroup - Update

Invited members of this workgroup include: Shanell Wagler, Deb Schrader, Nancy Kraus, Robin Madison, Gretchen Hageman, Ginger Shaw, Tami Foley, Annette Koster, John Calhoun, Darshini Jayawardena, Sheila Hansen, Michelle Stover-Wright, Ro Foege, Representative Jodi Tymeson, Gregg Cummings, Laurie Nash and Deb Scrowther

The first meeting of the workgroup was held on August 24, 2009. Those participating were: Shanell Wagler, Deb Schrader, Nancy Kraus, Robin Madison, Gretchen Hageman, Ginger Shaw, Darshini Jayawardena, Annette Koster, Tami Foley and Deb Scrowther.

The first task of this workgroup was to develop a document to be shared at the regional meetings to be held in September outlining the rationale for recommendations to redesign the local Community Empowerment Areas. The document will include potential cost savings and efficiencies of decreasing the number of local boards, as well as the criteria to be used in determining the new area boundaries.

Cost Savings/Efficiencies

A survey was sent to Coordinators asking them to respond to questions around salary, fiscal agent and employer of record costs. The turnaround time was quick, but based on 39 respondents, the results were reviewed by the workgroup. It was also determined that the Office of Empowerment would go through FY08 Empowerment annual reports and record the funding amounts reported to support liability insurance, fiscal agent and coordination services. The Legislative Services Agency will work with this information and the Office of Empowerment to put together an estimate of potential cost savings/efficiencies. The Office of Empowerment will provide an estimate of cost savings at the state level. When looking at efficiencies, anecdotal stories will be sought to describe the efficiencies of sharing contracted services among CEAs from the programs' perspectives.

Criteria for Reorganization

Next, the workgroup discussed the criteria for local reorganization. In addition to the criteria that had been recommended from the original Lean Design event, participants also considered other ideas that had been presented through public input. After carefully considering each item, it was decided to stick with the original criteria from the Lean event, with a few slight changes.

The overarching goal which was developed at the Lean Design event will be added to the criteria - Maximum number of CEA boards: 30 to 38 Community Empowerment Areas.

The following criteria will be presented at the regional meetings:

- Local CEA can not be more than four counties
- Single county areas have to be greater than 5,000 children ages 0-5
- Existing multi-county areas can choose to redefine (previously the criteria did not give the existing multi-county CEA the opportunity to change)
- All CEA have to have contiguous county borders

**Empowerment Lean Design Team
Marketing Work Group Update**

Community Empowerment Marketing Plan	
July - August	<p>Contacted the following options for in-kind marketing assistance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Drake University – Public Relations 2) Drake University – Marketing and Promotions 3) University of Iowa – Marketing 4) University of Iowa - Entrepreneur Center 5) University of Northern Iowa – School of Journalism/Advertising and Marketing 6) McLellan Marketing Group 7) Pappajohn Entrepreneur Center
September - October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Convene meetings with interested programs to coordinate next steps for the Empowerment Marketing Plan 2) Select in-kind marketing program 3) Begin first steps for coordinating a marketing plan 4) Assist with marketing messages for other work groups
First Years First	
June - August	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Distributed RFP and reviewed applications
September - October	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Selection of grantees and contract oversight 3) Finalizing First Years First Web site 4) Develop Community Toolkit on effective strategies to building public/private partnerships