Montana Early Childhood Account Board Minutes

September 17, 2026
10 a.m.
Zoom

WELCOME

- Call to Order
  - Meeting was called to order at by chair Lisa Malmquist at 10:00 a.m.
- Roll Call
  - DPHHS staff member Kathy Rich took roll.
  - Members present:
    - Caitlin Jensen
    - Louisa Libertelli-Dunn
    - Tory Malek
    - Lisa Malmquist
    - Tracy Moseman
    - Jewell Sullivan
    - Kathy Deserly (present, but abstained from voting due to technical issues)
  - Department Staff
    - Kathy Rich
    - Austin Waldbillig
    - Amber Tipton
    - Nicole Quirino
    - Tanner Dempsey
    - Sally Tilleman
- Meeting norms
  - Chair Lisa Malmquist reviewed the norms for board members set in their bylaws
- Review and approve prior meeting minutes
- Board member Tracy Moseman made a motion to amend the September 4, 2026 meeting minutes to add clarity and detail to the placeholder for opposing counsel. Zoom reports for September 4 shows a guest "AH" at haladay@gmail.com, the same address that appears as "Andres Haladay" on the April 16 report.
  - Lisa Libertelli Dunn seconded the motion
  - Unanimously approved by the Board.
  - Motion passed.
- Review and approve Minute notes from September 11, 2026, board meeting.
  - Caitlin Jensen made a motion to approve minutes.

- Tory Malek seconded the motion.
- Unanimously approved by the Board.
- Motion passed.

FINANCIAL FRAME AND CONTEXT

- Expenditures to date
- Nicole Quirino joined the meeting to share the current cost allocation spreadsheet for expenditures including personal and operating costs. The board reviewed the current allocated costs and no members had comments.

GRANT PROJECT UPDATE

- Updated Timeline
  - Austin Waldbillig provided an updated timeline for grant rollout and implementation. The timeline presented at the August 27, 2026 meeting projected September 25, 2026 for the grant application to go live. Due to preparation of additional communication out to the field, the targeted open date is September 28, 2026.
- Technical Assistance
  - An information session is scheduled for Monday, September 21 at 6:00 PM for all potential applicants to review grant requirements, the application platform, and answer provider questions. The webinar will be recorded and made available for all.
- Outreach
  - An email notification was sent out to all providers on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, informing them of the upcoming grant application. A copy of the notification was also sent to the following partners:
    - SPARK Montana
    - Zero to Five
    - Montana Head Start Association
    - Montana Head Start Collaboration Director
    - Child Care Resources
    - Family Connections
    - Central Montana Child Care Alliance
    - Montana Advocates for Children
    - Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies
    - Early Childhood Project
    - Raise Montana
    - Montana AEYC

    - Board Member Tracy Moseman asked if the Montana After School Alliance was included in the list and directed Austin Waldbillig to send the notification if they weren't included in the initial email.
- Consideration of amending grant application window. Austin proposed extension of the application open period and opened to board discussion on all areas that he Presented.
    - Tracy Moseman moved to amend application timeline
    - Tory Second
    - Board Discussion
        - Board Member Tracy Moseman asked for rationale behind the extension. Austin Waldbillig noted that it was partly due to public comment but also ensuring that there would be enough time for providers to register their UEI and complete their application.
        - The board discussed the value of public comment on extending the open application period and proposed a week extension. The current timeframe is set for a three-week period; this would move to a four-week period for application submissions. Discussion also considered operational and technical issues in allowing an extended open period.
- Vote
    - Tracy Moseman made a motion to amend application timeline with a new closing date of October 26, 2026
        - Torey Malek seconded this motion.
        - Unanimously approved by the Board.
        - Motion passed
    - Public Comment
        - One member of the public made comment.
    - Affirmation of Vote
        - Austin Waldbillig reminded board that votes need to happen after public comment.
        - Lisa Malmquist validated the previous vote for the timeline adjustment prior to public comment by requesting the board to vote on the timeline adjustment for the record one more time.
        - Unanimously approved by the Board.
        - Motion passed

EVALUATION

Tanner Dempsey, ECFSD staff and MECA Evaluator, joined the meeting to provide an overview of the grant evaluation framework including the data reporting and collection forms and evaluation plans.

- Infant and Toddler Expansion collection form was shared; the forms have overlapping information for each grant and will combine so any duplicated

questions will only be answered once by providers. Reviewed question types and stylist form utilizing drop down selections.

- Tanner reviewed categories and what detail would be required and listed it within the information boxes for providers to know what expenses qualify.
- Tanner shared the Flexible Workforce collection form. Updating prior changes, the board has discussed for consistency.
    - Board Discussion
        - Board suggested adding question to the application and then follow up in the data collection form about What is the biggest workforce challenge or barrier? And in data collection Has anything else emerged since application?
        - Use drop down fields where possible to ensure consistent, aggregable data. Allow providers to upload an Excel tracking/template that can serve as their invoice and include supporting receipts/documentation.
        - Collect total hours of training per center/group (not per employee) for the training-related grant; drop the separate “number of trainings” field to reduce variance.
        - For turnover/percent metrics, collect raw numbers from providers; the team (internal) will compute percentages to avoid calculation errors.

After the Board reviewed the Infant and Toddler Capacity Expansion Grant and the Flexible Workforce data collection forms, Board Chair Lisa Malmquist noted that the meeting time was about to end. She asked for a motion to table the discussion surrounding evaluation, to be resumed at the October meeting with the Early Learning Development Support and Training Grant data collection form. Board Chair Lisa Malmquist also stated that motions to table do not need public comment before voting.

- Board Member Tracy Moseman made a motion to table discussion until the October meeting.
- Tory Malek seconded the motion
- Unanimously approved by the Board
- Motion passed and conversation was tabled.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Public Comment
    - Two members of the public made comments.

ADJOURNMENT

- Vote to adjourn
    - Jewell Sullivan made the motion to adjourn.
    - Tory Malek seconded the motion.
    - Unanimously approved by the Board.

- Motion passes.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.