



Mike Braun, Governor
State of Indiana

Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services

First Steps

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First Steps Interagency Coordinating Council Meeting Agenda

August 20, 2025

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. EDT

Attending ICC Members:

Cory Best (ICC Chair), Deanna Woodruff (ICC Vice Chair), Jason Berty, Laura Burkew, Mariann Frigo, Alexandra Hall, Charie Jones, Kristi Linson, Jennifer Owens, Erica Deathe, Jessica Minor, Courtney Willis, Alyssa Christy, Robyn Duffy, Dr. Megan Purcell, Stacey Williams, Representative Edward Clere

Attending First Steps State Staff:

Christina Commons, Danielle Ruffino, Marie-Therese Smith, Constance Young, Amy Torres, Robyn Morton, Jamie Le Sesne Spears, Rachel Turner

Welcome and Introductions

Cory Best, ICC Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. All ICC members were asked to briefly introduce themselves, both in person and virtually.

Approval of May 2025 Minutes

A request was made to amend the May meeting minutes to state that the motion to approve the minutes was "passed" rather than "carried."

Cory Best asked for a motion to approve the May meeting minutes as amended. Mariann Frigo made a motion to accept the meeting minutes as written. Jennifer Owens seconded the motion, and a vote was taken, with all members approving the motion. The motion passed.

First Steps Update

Christina Commons provided the quarterly First Steps Update. In FY25, the program served children equitably across the state, with Marion County having the highest numbers. Services are coordinated through nine regional offices, 250 service coordinators, 43 provider agencies, and 1,800 individual providers.

Over 14,000 children and families have active service plans, with 6,300 children transitioning to local schools and 3,200 meeting service goals before age three. The program continues to expand, serving more infants than ever, and recently received a federal grant award with increased funding.



The federal monitoring report indicated the need for some technical assistance, but all prior findings from FY24 monitoring are now closed. Overall, the program shows strong growth and improved outcomes.

Committees Updates

The ICC discussed feedback from the recent strategy session, noting that the process is still incomplete despite a significant investment of time. Members expressed a desire for a larger, all-group working session instead of smaller committees to move the work forward. To improve future meetings, the group requested that pre-read materials be sent out by the Monday prior to the meeting.

The ICC also emphasized the need for tangible next steps to align strategic initiatives. As a follow-up, Megan Hershey will distribute the action steps provided by consultant Dr. Renae Azziz to the group.

2025 Legislative Session Update

Representative Clere provided the following legislative updates to the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC):

- a. **Congressional Map Special Session:** The potential for a special session to redraw the congressional map was discussed.
- b. **November Regular Session:** The upcoming regular legislative session in November was highlighted.
- c. **Medicaid:** The importance of Medicaid was emphasized, along with the challenges it faces at both the state and federal levels.
- d. **Reconciliation Bill:** The reconciliation bill and its impact on Medicaid was mentioned, stressing the need for communication with legislators.
- e. **Legislator Engagement:** Rep. Clere encouraged the ICC to meet with legislators, educate them on their work, and invite them on a site visit to help them better understand the impact of the ICC's efforts.

ICC Highlight and Partner Collaboration

Robyn Duffy provided an overview of the Head Start program, emphasizing its overlap with the First Steps program and opportunities for collaboration.

Public Comment

Cory Best opened the floor for council members. No comments were made. He then opened the floor for public comment and no one from the public had comments.

Adjournment

Cory Best requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. The motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

Next Meeting

November 5, 2025

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. EDT

Location: Easterseals Crossroads 4740 Kingsway Drive Indianapolis, IN 46205 Conf. Room 5th Floor

2026 meeting dates will be confirmed in October 2025.

Minutes were respectfully submitted by Megan Hershey, Transform Consulting Group