

Arkansas Early Childhood Commission (AECC) Meeting

January 20, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Tyra Greenwood, Deborah (Debbie) Mays, Rep. Denise Garner, Dr. Jason Williams, Senator Jane English, Lorrie McClure, Dr. Shelli Henehan

Members Absent: Senator Greg Leding; Haley Sisson

I. Call to Order

Tyra Greenwood called the AECC Commissioner's Meeting to order on January 20, 2026 at 10:01 a.m. Tyra Greenwood read the AECC's mission statement.

II. **Approval of Minutes** - A motion was made to approve the October 21, 2025 meeting minutes. Motioned made by Dr. Henehan and seconded by Debbie Mays. The meeting minutes were approved.

III. **Old Business** – Approval of Appeal Review Panel Application. Motioned made by Debbie Mays and seconded by Senator English. The motion carried and the application was approved.

IV. New Business – OEC Updates

- a. ECE High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) list and supports for adoption are in place for providers
- b. All professional services such as training, coaching, and technical assistance from contracted vendors will be aligned with the vision for quality, with a distinct focus on child outcomes.
- c. The CLASS tool will be the main measure of and driver towards quality in all publicly-funded classrooms across the state for the QRIS
- d. Local leads will be full implementation partners for state efforts, with plans that align all local efforts to state priorities
- e. Updated licensing regulations will drive a clear focus on health and safety in all components of licensing work, including training, resources, and internal/external processes and systems
- f. A dedicated team will focus on coaching and technical assistance to support providers in meeting new requirements
- g. A separate team will focus exclusively on compliance, ensuring child health and safety remains the top priority
- h. Dedicating PDG funds to support training for all new licensing regulations to ensure a smooth transition for the field. Arkansas has been awarded nearly \$15 million from January to December 2026.
- i. Rates & Copayments remained the same since 11/01/25
- j. OEC continues to monitor spending on a regular basis

k. Current funding is tied to a Continuing Resolution (Expires 01/30/26)

l. "Defend the Spend" initiated (NEW)

m. CCDF Fund Balances as of January 2026:

FUNDING CATEGORY	FUND BALANCE
Dedicated Direct Services	\$27,719,767.34
Quality Services	\$ 1,082,839.87
Infant & Toddler Quality Services	\$ 844,110.94
Non-Direct Services	\$ 5,047,779.35
Administrative Services	\$ 1,688,779.10
TOTAL FUNDS	\$36,383,276.60

n. Increase opportunities for job-embedded coaching

o. Establish local lead organizations as a key partner in the distribution of improvement resources

p. If selected to deliver funded professional services, vendors must:

1. Coordinate closely with local leads to deliver professional services in alignment with their local plans to improve access to quality
2. Provide units only for subject areas for which they successfully achieve approval
3. Report monthly to ADE on units provided; collect feedback from participants, providers, and local leads; and adhere to all requirements
4. Participate in quarterly updates with ADE to understand and improve professional services

q. Arkansas observers have entered 1178 observations into the myTeachstone portal

r. 26 Local Leads Statewide - Priorities for 25-26:

1. Training observers and completing
2. One observation in all publicly funded classrooms
3. Unduplicated Child Count & Coordinated Funding Request

V. Announcements – None

VI. Public Comments – Provider Impact

- Karen Marshall
- Jody Abernathy

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on April 21, 2026, at 4 Capitol Mall, in the Auditorium.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.