



South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees

March 19, 2015, 2pm
Parks, Recreation, Tourism Conference Room
Statehouse Grounds

Meeting Minutes

Members Present (22):

Ken Wingate, Chair
Superintendent Molly Spearman
Representative Rita Allison
Senator Mike Fair
Julie Hussey, Vice-Chair
Lisa Van Riper, Secretary
Judith Aughtry
Julia-Ellen Davis
Walter Fleming
Reece Yandle
Susan Alford
Evelyn Patterson
Rick Noble
Mary Lynn Diggs
Sue Williams
Alexia Newman
Tim Holt
Roger Pryor
Christian Soura (by teleconference)
Tracy Lamb (by teleconference)
Beverly Buscemi (by teleconference)
Jennifer McConnell (by teleconference)

Members Absent (2):

Senator Joel Lourie – Excused
Representative Jerry Govan – Excused

Others Present:

Rep. Gary Clary – SC House Legislative Oversight Committee
Rep. Joe Jefferson – SC House Legislative Oversight Committee
Ryan Brown- SC Department of Education
Dave Wilson – McAlister Communications
Leslie Anderson – Leslie Anderson Consulting
Bunnie Ward – SC Education Oversight Committee
Dana Yow – SC Education Oversight Committee
Jim Riddle - Lexington County First Steps

Patti Wilkes - Fairfield County First Steps
Mark Barnes – SC First Steps
Dorothy Priester - Cherokee County First Steps
Sally Cauthen - Senate Education
Martha Strickland - SC First Steps
Anthony Broughton - SC First Steps
LaDrica Christian - SC First Steps
Marley Via – SC First Steps
Kristine Jenkins - SC First Steps
Cassandra Johnson - SC First Steps
Barbara Black - SC First Steps
Debbie Robertson - SC First Steps
Rodney Jenkins – Richland County First Steps
Joy Mazur - SC First Steps
Rosemary Wilson – SC Department of Health and Environmental Control
Penny Danielson – SC Department of Education
Kristie Musick - SC First Steps BabyNet
Megan Branham – Children’s Trust
Whitney Tucker - Children’s Trust
Lisa Dial - Senator Fair’s Office
Pierce McNair – House Education Committee
Betty Gardiner – SC First Steps
Mellanie Jinnette – SC Department of Education
Callison Richardson – United Way of the Midlands
Linda Leonard – SC First Steps
Mary Anne Mathews - SC First Steps
Cindy Bagwell – NC Department of Public Instruction

Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Wingate welcomed the Board and called the meeting to order at 2pm. He noted the presence of a quorum and reminded those gathered that the meeting was being held in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act.

Mr. Wingate welcomed Rep. Gary Clary and Rep. Joe Jefferson, both members of the South Carolina House Legislative Oversight Subcommittee currently reviewing SC First Steps. He welcomed Susan Alford, the new director of the SC Department of Social Services and Superintendent Molly Spearman.

Mr. Wingate provided a brief chairman’s report, noting that Act 287 has downsized and restructured the Board. He thanked board members for their participation in an important collaborative process. He introduced the Draft Principles of Engagement Document provided with the Board materials. Mr. Wingate reviewed the Board’s strategic planning mandate, noting that the Board’s new strategic plan will be a major focus for the coming year.

He reviewed the Board’s decision to begin use of a consent agenda, noting that it is a tool for efficiency but not an effort to “fast forward” through major discussion items. He encouraged members to “pull out” items that they wish to discuss.

He reviewed the agenda and laid out expectations related to the time allocated to each.

Superintendent Spearman Presentation

Mr. Wingate introduced Superintendent Molly Spearman to provide remarks to the board. Supt. Spearman introduced herself and thanked the Board members for their longstanding commitment to early childhood education. She shared the Profile of the Ready Graduate, noting that it was a set of goals related to college, career, and citizen readiness that all SC stakeholders should be working toward. The Department will be setting targets for college and career readiness and measuring progress toward them. She expressed her appreciation for the work of First Steps and pledged a strong collaboration between the organizations.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Presentation: Dr. Cindy Bagwell

Ms. DeVenny noted that NC leads the 10-state Kindergarten Entry Assessment collaborative, of which SC is a collaborating state. Ms. DeVenny noted that the Program and Grants Committee had reviewed a presentation about the NC work, and determined it to be useful for the board to preview as they continue their work on the assessment of school readiness.

Ms. DeVenny introduced Dr. Cindy Bagwell of the NC Department of Public Instruction, who joined by telephone. Before Dr. Bagwell's remarks, the Board viewed several minutes of a video about NC's new formative assessment process. Dr. Bagwell gave a report about NC's pilot work to develop both a kindergarten entry assessment and a formative assessment process designed to support students and teachers through the third grade. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment is completed during the first 60 days of school, after which time students transition into an ongoing K-3 formative assessment process.

After Dr. Bagwell's presentation, Julia-Ellen Davis led the Board through conversation related to their opinions and desires related to a school readiness assessment for SC children. The notes below were taken during the ensuing discussion.

- ***Ms. Davis asked: What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for students?***
 - Want the child to be able to succeed: provide feedback, affirmation, direction
 - Time for one-on-one time with teacher, relationship building. A comfortable time for students.
 - Want to convey information with sensitivity, positivity
 - If we aren't doing this for students, then who are we doing it for?
 - Provide motivation and a hunger for learning
 - Provide snapshot of strengths and weaknesses (to teacher for instructional planning)
 - A measure of student growth

- ***Ms. Davis asked: What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for parents?***
 - What should they expect of their child? Information to inform against objective range.
 - Results provided to compare against milestones
 - Help develop a relationship of trust
 - Bridge of communication...two way conversation between parents and teachers
 - Parent friendly in its delivery, help parents to understand. Uses accessible language.
 - Letting parents know what their children need - insight as to what they can do to support their child's areas of weakness

- Sensitivity to range of normal (don't let parenting be competitive)
- Establishing communication and relationships
- ***Ms. Davis asked: What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for teachers?***
 - Snapshot of where the child is at that moment. In context that it is just for that moment.
 - Flexibility.
 - Opportunity to document progression in all areas.
 - Encourage risk-taking in children, help work on their weaknesses.
 - Assessment process needs to be sensitive to teacher overload.
 - Should not be punitive to teachers.
 - Tool that isn't influenced by student behavior. Some unable to focus, sit down and "be assessed."
 - Help inform/drive instruction.
 - The only thing we assess is content knowledge...Needs to measure characteristics and skills like integrity and perseverance. Approaches to learning.
 - Give teachers flexibility to reinforce important attributes like caring, integrity.
- ***Ms. Davis asked: What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for policymakers?***
 - Data that allows them to make important decisions as they are setting policy.
 - Help them understand the goals by age group and how do children measure up?
 - Confidence that assessments are accurate.
- ***Ms. Davis asked: What do we want a school readiness assessment to provide for doctors and others who support students?***
 - Is there a way to use assessment broadly to inform other key stakeholders?
 - Is there a way to gather information from stakeholders such as pediatricians?

Ms. Davis thanked the Board for their input, and noted that she would work to collect additional feedback from those who were unable to be present, and would provide an update at the next board meeting.

Committee Reports

1. Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee (Chair, Lisa VanRiper)

Ms. Van Riper reported that the Compass Evaluation is complete and now prepared for transmission to the Board and General Assembly. Mr. Wingate reminded those gathered that the report is an external process, that the Board and staff are not connected to its completion or release. He requested that First Steps convey a sense of urgency to the evaluators and external panel regarding release.

Mr. Wingate introduced Leslie Anderson for an update on the strategic planning process. Ms. Anderson reviewed the values, assumptions, timeline and key phases of the proposed strategic planning process. The plan will be designed to gather ample feedback from stakeholder groups statewide and to develop interagency recommendations designed to advance the state's entire early childhood system. Mr. Wingate notified the Board that he will be calling for a May strategic planning work session and asked trustees to prioritize their participation.

The process will begin with an electronic stakeholder survey in the coming weeks. This will be followed by a series of regional stakeholder meetings loosely constructed around the Education and Economic Development Act's Regional Education Centers.

2. Program and Grants Committee (Chair, Julia-Ellen Davis)

Ms. Davis reviewed a new strategy request from Colleton County, which requests using \$35,000 in unspent carry forward to begin a childcare scholarship strategy. **After review, Ms. Davis made a motion to approve the strategy, with a second by Mr. Flemming. The strategy request was approved unanimously.**

3. Finance and Administration Committee (Chair, Judith Aughtry)

Ms. Aughtry led the Board through two options related to FY16 partnership planning allocations:

- Option A would hold the partnerships at their existing FY15 levels, while
- Option B would entail an update of the formula's demographic data, which would result in fluctuations to 30 partnerships (those above the \$138,000 minimum).

Mr. Noble noted his conflict of interest as a local partnership director.

Walter Fleming made a motion to adopt Option A, which would keep partnerships at their FY15 levels. Ms. Van Riper seconded the motion. The Board adopted the motion, with Ms. Aughtry voting against the motion and Mr. Noble and Ms. Diggs abstaining.

Mr. Noble distributed a document he prepared depicting fluctuations to partnerships' budgets under Options A and B. Mr. Wingate asked that Mr. Noble's document be included as an attachment to the minutes (attached.)

Mr. Mark Barnes reviewed the monthly finance report.

Mr. Noble requested that IRS Form 990 be removed from the consent agenda. He called trustees' attention to the fact that he is listed as an interested party as the Director of Richland County First Steps and noted that the amount listed as an allocation to RCFS is not his salary, nor the exact amount of the partnership's allocation.

The Board unanimously adopted the draft IRS Form 990 as presented.

Ms. Davis requested that the Program and Grants committee's action items (FY16 partnership standards and new strategy requests) be pulled from the consent agenda for action. The Board unanimously adopted both items.

Upon a motion by Mr. Noble, the remainder of the consent agenda was tabled. The Board voted to adopt this motion. Items requiring Board approval in order to become part of the official record of the meeting will be discussed at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Chairman's Closing Remarks

Mr. Wingate asked the board to expect a specially-called work session on the strategic plan, and asked trustees to be prepared for a few extended sessions during the next few months to enable full discussion on the board's strategic plan.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm.

SACRIFICE % BY DONOR CPS

	Allocation	Option 1	Sacrifice	Option 1 Sacrifice %	Option 2	Sacrifice	Option 2 Sacrifice %
Abbeville							
Aiken	\$ 405,754	\$ 379,278	\$ 26,476	6.53%	\$ 389,079	\$ 16,675	4.11%
Allendale							
Anderson	\$ 447,685	\$ 421,770	\$ 25,915	5.79%	\$ 429,287	\$ 18,398	4.11%
Bamberg							
Bamwell							
Beaufort	\$ 355,102	\$ 347,533	\$ 7,569	2.13%	\$ 340,509	\$ 14,593	4.11%
Berkeley	\$ 499,197	\$ 460,808	\$ 38,389	7.69%	\$ 478,682	\$ 20,515	4.11%
Calhoun							
Charleston	\$ 721,266	\$ 691,660	\$ 29,606	4.10%	\$ 691,624	\$ 29,642	4.11%
Cherokee	\$ 200,633	\$ 193,680	\$ 6,953	3.47%	\$ 192,388	\$ 8,245	4.11%
Chester	\$ 145,203	\$ 143,766	\$ 1,437	0.99%	\$ 139,236	\$ 5,967	4.11%
Chesterfield	\$ 173,312	\$ 164,844	\$ 8,468	4.89%	\$ 166,190	\$ 7,122	4.11%
Clarendon	\$ 140,809	\$ 138,000	\$ 2,809	1.99%			0.00%
Colleton	\$ 152,714	\$ 151,958	\$ 756	0.50%	\$ 146,438	\$ 6,276	4.11%
Darlington	\$ 227,441	\$ 215,197	\$ 12,244	5.38%	\$ 218,094	\$ 9,347	4.11%
Dillon	\$ 168,079	\$ 168,384	\$ (305)	-0.18%	\$ 161,172	\$ 6,907	4.11%
Dorchester	\$ 352,382	\$ 331,636	\$ 20,746	5.89%	\$ 337,901	\$ 14,481	4.11%
Edgefield							
Fairfield							
Florence	\$ 403,861	\$ 374,706	\$ 29,155	7.22%	\$ 387,264	\$ 16,597	4.11%
Georgetown	\$ 168,856	\$ 161,572	\$ 7,284	4.31%	\$ 161,917	\$ 6,939	4.11%
Greenville	\$ 1,037,653	\$ 996,431	\$ 41,222	3.97%	\$ 995,009	\$ 42,644	4.11%
Greenwood	\$ 222,154	\$ 207,998	\$ 14,156	6.37%	\$ 213,024	\$ 9,130	4.11%
Hampton							
Horry	\$ 591,951	\$ 568,076	\$ 23,875	4.03%	\$ 567,624	\$ 24,327	4.11%
Jasper							
Kershaw	\$ 191,953	\$ 184,273	\$ 7,680	4.00%	\$ 184,064	\$ 7,889	4.11%
Lancaster	\$ 221,736	\$ 217,269	\$ 4,467	2.01%	\$ 212,624	\$ 9,112	4.11%
Laurens	\$ 211,797	\$ 201,981	\$ 9,816	4.63%	\$ 203,093	\$ 8,704	4.11%
Lee							
Lexington	\$ 624,611	\$ 605,320	\$ 19,291	3.09%	\$ 598,942	\$ 25,669	4.11%
Marion	\$ 160,309	\$ 151,447	\$ 8,862	5.53%	\$ 153,721	\$ 6,588	4.11%
Marlboro	\$ 140,792	\$ 138,000	\$ 2,792	1.98%			0.00%
McCormick							
Newberry	\$ 143,350	\$ 138,000	\$ 5,350	3.73%			0.00%
Oconee	\$ 195,069	\$ 191,721	\$ 3,348	1.72%	\$ 187,052	\$ 8,017	4.11%
Orangeburg	\$ 296,799	\$ 298,541	\$ (1,742)	-0.59%	\$ 284,601	\$ 12,198	4.11%
Pickens	\$ 266,193	\$ 250,427	\$ 15,766	5.92%	\$ 255,253	\$ 10,940	4.11%
Richland	\$ 814,490	\$ 791,345	\$ 23,145	2.84%	\$ 781,017	\$ 33,473	4.11%
Saluda							
Spartanburg	\$ 685,538	\$ 657,246	\$ 28,292	4.13%	\$ 657,365	\$ 28,173	4.11%
Sumter	\$ 333,332	\$ 323,901	\$ 9,431	2.83%	\$ 319,633	\$ 13,699	4.11%
Union							
Williamsburg	\$ 142,946	\$ 145,529	\$ (2,583)	-1.81%			0.00%
York	\$ 515,653	\$ 486,966	\$ 28,687	5.56%	\$ 494,461	\$ 21,192	4.11%

Notes:

Formula Allocation only indicates 12 CPs requiring subsidies to meet the \$138,000 minimum level

Using Options 1

- 16 (highlighted yellow) CPs are currently at the minimum level of \$138,000 - FY 15 Allocation
- 3 (highlighted red) of the 16 CPs received additional funds per the FY 16 Formual Allocation - now losing from last yr
- Sacrifice percentages of change from Formual Allocations are not consistent throughout the CPs

Using Options 2

- 17 CPs are at the minimum level of \$138,000
- 1 CP lost \$7,529 from last year's allocation, which move them to the minimum level of \$138,000, even though their FY 16 Formual Allocation (\$142,946) is above the minimum level
- Sacrifice percentages of change from Formual Allocations are consistent throughout the CPs