

South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees  
August 18, 2017  
The Inn at USC  
**MINUTES**

**Members Present (19):**

Ken Wingate, Chairman  
Julie Hussey, Vice-Chair  
Sen. Greg Hembree  
Sen. Gerald Malloy  
Rep. Rita Allison  
Rep. Jerry Govan  
Tim Holt  
Mary-Lynne Diggs  
Sue Williams  
Judith Aughtry  
Dr. Beverly Buscemi  
Alexia Newman  
David Wilson  
Jennifer McConnell  
Roger Pryor  
Rick Noble  
Susan Alford  
Walter Fleming  
Tracy Lamb

**Members Absent (4):**

Superintendent Molly Spearman  
Amy Williams  
Deirdre Singleton  
Evelyn Patterson

**Others Present:**

Julia-Ellen Davis  
Dr. Dan Wuori  
Mark Barnes  
Debbie Robertson  
Pierce McNair  
Sally Cauthen  
Darnell McPherson  
Martha Strickland  
Rebecca Brown

**Quorum Call/Chairman's Report:**

Mr. Wingate called the meeting to order at 11:15am, declaring a quorum present. He welcomed trustees and visitors.

**Upon a motion from Ms. Aughtry and a second by Rep. Govan, the minutes of the June 16, 2017 meeting were approved.**

Mr. Wingate noted that the Board's Executive Committee and Early Head Start Governance Council had met jointly on Monday, July 31 for the purpose of reviewing and approving both minor changes to the scoring of the agency's Early Head Start eligibility tool and the submission of a waiver request (non-federal share) to the Office of Head Start. **The day's consent agenda includes ratification of these actions by the full board. Coming from committee the motion did not require a second and was passed unanimously by the Board.**

Mr. Wingate gave his Chairman's Report, beginning by welcoming Mr. David Wilson, Acting Director for the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control, to the Board. Mr. Wilson introduced himself to the Board, noting that he has been employed by DHEC for more than 30 years in a variety of capacities.

Mr. Wingate noted that the Chairmen's Summit on Early Childhood will be held on Friday, December 8, 2017 from 10-4 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. Dr. Walter Gilliam of Yale University will deliver the opening keynote. Mr. Wingate advised the Board that the Annual Meeting will be held at 3pm the day prior, Thursday, December 7 at The Inn at USC.

A special meeting is being called in September for the purpose of interviewing state director candidates.

#### **Legislative Committee**

Rep. Allison reported that it has been a busy summer for members of the General Assembly, with work completed on the opioid crisis, legislative oversight hearings and tax committees. She invited the group to a September 19 meeting designed to highlight effective community-based early childhood practices.

Sen. Hembree noted that the First Steps reauthorization bill is in the Senate where he expects a final vote early in the 2018 session.

#### **Finance and Administration Committee:**

Ms. Aughtry called Trustees attention to a pair of financial reports in the board packet: one summarizing year-end totals for FY17 and the other a year-to-date summary for FY18 (as of July 31, 2017). Ms. Aughtry called on Mr. Barnes to provide a brief overview.

Mr. Aughtry called Trustees' attention to the letter from Greene, Finney & Horton, noting that the agency's annual audit will be conducted over the coming weeks.

#### **Program and Grants:**

Ms. McConnell reminded Trustees that debate on a recommendation related to the Board's definition of "evidence-based" was adjourned at the request of Rep. Govan at the June meeting to allow for additional review and discussion in the interim. She reported that Rep. Govan's questions had been answered and that the Board was ready to proceed with a vote on language developed by the committee in collaboration with the Executive Director Leadership Council.

The proposed language reads as follows:

*At a minimum, an evidence-based program should have the following 5 components:*

- 1. RESEARCH STUDY: Findings of program effectiveness should be demonstrated through at least one well-conducted research study using random assignment or quasi-experimental design that has been published in a peer-reviewed journal for that particular program. The Board may also consider externally conducted research subjected to third-party peer review by SC First Steps.*
- 2. META-ANALYTIC STUDIES: Alternately, there may be findings of significant impact on school-readiness related outcomes from meta-analytic studies (where the results of multiple single studies are combined quantitatively and published in the peer-reviewed literature).*
- 3. IMPLEMENTATION: The staff delivering an evidence-based program at the local level must be specifically trained and qualified to implement the program, and staff must monitor program delivery to ensure fidelity to the program model.*
- 4. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Staff delivering the program must also have support of supervisors or consultants with opportunity for continual professional development activities.*
- 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Finally, as no one program or service can meet all needs that a child and family may face, local providers must have the ability to make linkages to other community services, as needed and as appropriate, during the time of program delivery.*

The motion from committee did not require a second. After a brief discussion, **the Board unanimously adopted the language as proposed.**

**Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee:**

Ms. Newman reported that the evaluation of Parents as Teachers is mostly complete. Evaluators have been invited to present their findings to the Board during the October meeting.

**Early Head Start Governance Council:**

Mr. Pryor noted that the EHS Governance Council met jointly with the Board's Executive Committee on Monday, July 31 and that the committees' collective actions were ratified as part of the day's Consent Agenda.

Mr. Pryor shared that First Steps has received the results of its February 2017 Early Head Start monitoring visit, with the agency receiving positive feedback in all areas assessed.

He called on Ms. Rebecca Brown to provide a short Early Head Start implementation update. Ms. Brown shared that:

- The program provided a 3 day pre-service training for all center staff in early July
- Teachers have been trained in Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold
- 16 EHS staff and partners received ERSEA certification with H.G. Jones & Associates
- SCFS received 23 applications from childcare centers for expansion opportunity.
- Data for end of 2016-2017 School Year: 409 children on waiting list; 36.6% of children receiving a SC Voucher; 10.6% of children have an IFSP or an IEP; 8 children referred for

mental health services; 18.5% of children and families qualified due to public assistance, homelessness or foster care status

**Interim Director's Report:**

Ms. Davis called the Board's attention to her written director's report and introduced a Martha Strickland for an update on the First Steps 4K program.

Ms. Strickland reviewed the August 4K Leadership Academy and Teacher Academy, both held in Columbia in early August. She reviewed new legislative flexibility related to 4K program delivery models, which will enable providers to select either A) a standard program year (6.5 hours x 180 days) during 2017-2018, B) an extended day calendar (8.5 hours x 180 days), C) an extended program year (6.5 hours x 220 days), or D) a standard year + 8 weeks of summer programming at 8.5 hours daily).

Dr. Wuori provided a brief overview of *SC Sprouts!*, a preschool STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) initiative emerging from the First Steps 4K program, to include collaboration with SC ETV, EdVenture Children's Museum, SC's Coalition for Mathematics and Science and Spectrum Cable.

Ms. Robertson provided a brief overview of the recent work of the Equity and Diversity Work Group, which has recently completed a set of "Race Matters" webinars in collaboration with the Children's Trust, the Alliance for a Healthier SC, the SC Hospital Association, and others. Ms. Diggs noted that similar convenings are underway via SC Thrive and Commission for Minority Affairs and requested that information on both be provided to the Board.

At approximately 12:50 pm, the Board entered Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. The Board exited Executive Session at 2:30 pm and took no action. **There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 2:30pm.**