



**South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 17, 2017**

**The Inn @ USC
11 a.m.**

MINUTES

Members Present (16):

Ken Wingate, Chair (by telephone)
Julie Hussey, Vice Chair
Senator Gerald Malloy (by telephone)
Susan Alford
Mary Lynne Diggs
Alexia Newman
Rick Noble (by telephone)
Sue Williams
Tim Holt
Tracy Lamb (by telephone)
Walt Fleming (by telephone)
Judith Aughtry (by telephone)
Jennifer McConnell
Amy Williams
Roger Pryor
Dr. Beverly Buscemi

Members Absent (7):

Senator Greg Hembree
Representative Rita Allison
Representative Jerry Govan
Superintendent Molly Spearman
Christian Soura
Evelyn Patterson
Catherine Heigel

Others Present:

Julia-Ellen Davis
Dr. Dan Wuori
Mark Barnes
Debbie Robertson
Ginger Ryall
Russell Brown
Dorothy Priester

Jim Riddle
Jon Artz
Leigh Bolick
Tricia Sheldon
Betty Gardiner
Cassie Barber
Carletta Isreal
Dr. Arthur Brewton

Call to Order/Quorum Call

Ms. Julie Hussey welcomed trustees and called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. Mr. Wingate, who joined the meeting by telephone, greeted the Board. After a motion by Ms. Lamb and a second by Ms. McConnell, **the agenda was unanimously approved**. Ms. Hussey directed Trustees to the draft minutes of January 20, 2017. Ms. Williams noted that she and Mr. Noble should be reflected as absent. Upon a motion by Ms. Aughtry and a second by Ms. McConnell, **the minutes of January 20, 2017 were approved as amended**.

Ms. Hussey directed the Board to the consent agenda, which included two items for approval: 1) the IRS Form 990 for FY2016 (recommended for approval by the Finance and Administration Committee), and 2) the FY18 Partnership Accountability Standards (recommended for approval by the Program and Grants Committee). **The Board unanimously approved the consent agenda**.

Mr. Wingate noted that the First Steps reauthorization bill, H.3591, had passed the House and is now before the Senate. He informed trustees that that Governor McMaster has appointed Senator Greg Hembree of Horry County to the Board. Sen. Hembree, who chairs the Senate's K-12 Education Subcommittee, will replace former Senator Mike Fair, who left office in January. Mr. Wingate expressed his appreciation for Senator Hembree's willingness to serve and noted that he will be an outstanding addition to the Board.

Mr. Wingate then **introduced the following motion**, which was seconded by Mr. Holt.

MOTION: To appoint a search committee for the position of Executive Director, to be hired as of July 1, 2017, or as soon thereafter as possible.

A. Members of Committee:

The following individuals shall serve on the committee:

- *Julie Hussey, Chair*
- *Rep. Jerry Govan*
- *Dr. Beverly Buscemi*
- *Sue Williams*
- *Tim Holt*
- *Mary Lynne Diggs*
- *Walter Fleming*
- *Darnell McPherson (ED, Darlington County First Steps)*

B. Initial Tasks of the Committee: The committee will be asked to (a) appropriately advertise the job opening, both within and outside the State of South Carolina, (b) develop a list of desired criteria for qualifications and experience, (c) establish a deadline for the receipt of

applications, (d) select qualified candidates to interview, and (e) set an appropriate timeline for completing such tasks. The committee will be asked to report regularly to the Board of Trustees on its progress, and may seek input from the Board chair, relevant State agencies such as D.E.W. and the State Department of Education, and any other sources it deems appropriate, though not with the expectation of hiring an executive search committee.

C. Final Goal of the Committee: The committee will be asked to present its top three (3) candidates to the full Board of Trustees for final interviews and selection.

After discussion, **the Board approved the motion unanimously.**

Ms. Hussey recognized Dr. Arthur Brewton, who attended the meeting on behalf of the SC Head Start Association at the request of trustee Evelyn Patterson, who serves as the group's President.

Ms. Hussey then recognized Ms. Leigh Bolick, the state's recently-retired child care administrator. Ms. Bolick, along with Senators Mike Fair and Wes Hayes, was recognized at the 2016 Chairmen's Summit as a Champion for SC's Children, but was unable to attend due to a conflict. Ms. Hussey and Ms. Alford both spoke about the improvements made to child care under Ms. Bolick's leadership. Ms. Bolick thanked the Board for this special recognition.

Ms. Hussey called on Ms. Davis to share news that SC First Steps has received a second Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant, totaling \$16.2 million over 4 ½ years. The grant will serve 11 SC counties (Anderson, Allendale, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Fairfield, Georgetown, Lexington, McCormick, Orangeburg, York). The grant will add 162 children to First Steps' current EHS enrollment of 254, bringing total EHS funding to approximately \$34 million and total enrollment to 416.

Finance and Administration Committee

Ms. Aughtry noted that the Finance and Administration Committee met on Tuesday, March 14, 2017 to receive a presentation of the **IRS Form 990 (adopted as part of the consent agenda)**. She brought forward the committee's recommendations regarding **County Partnership planning allocations for FY18**, noting that the state's smallest partnerships are held constant at the \$200K base and that other partnerships were subject to small variations due to updates to the formula demographic data which drives the formula. **The Board unanimously voted to approve the committee's recommendation.** Ms. Aughtry reminded the Board that the partnerships actual FY18 allocations will be subject to available funding following adoption of the state budget.

Ms. Aughtry noted that the committee will be seating a work group to bring funding formula updates and recommendations forward prior to the FY19 planning process. She reviewed the monthly financial update, which was provided for information.

Program and Grants Committee

Ms. McConnell noted that the committee met on Monday, March 13. The committee's recommendations re: the **FY18 Partnership Accountability Standards were adopted as part of the consent agenda.**

Ms. McConnell reviewed a staff request to pursue AdvancED Accreditation of the First Steps 4K program and introduced Martha Strickland, State 4K Director to address the Board. Ms. Strickland explained that AdvancED has recently launched a systems-level early childhood accreditation, that would entail a review of First Steps state-level policies, professional development, etc. The accreditation will not entail visits to – or the accreditation of – individual 4K service providers.

Ms. Diggs expressed concern about whether the proposed process would conflict with the state's ABC child care rating system, or the National Association for the Education of Young Children's accreditation of two-year institutes of higher learning. Dr. Wuori responded that staff view the AdvancED process as a complement to these structures, neither of which is applicable to the First Steps 4K program at the systems level. Dr. Buscemi noted that pursuing AdvancED Accreditation alongside the state's public school districts would lend additional credibility to First Steps' program. Ms. Hussey made a **motion to approve the staff request, along with the development of a crosswalk document depicting the components and audiences of each of these systems (ABC Quality, NAEYC accreditation of state technical colleges and AdvancED accreditation.) After a second by Ms. McConnell, the Board passed the motion, with Ms. Diggs abstaining.**

Ms. McConnell, Ms. Hussey and Mr. Pryor updated the Board about the committee's ongoing work to develop an implementation framework for the evidence-based program requirement established by Section 59-152-25. The Board reviewed and discussed sections of First Steps' enabling legislation, with a focus on the requirement to define "evidence-based," the potential distinction between programs, services and administrative/overhead costs – all addressed in statute – and a potential implementation timeline. Dorothy Priester (Cherokee County First Steps) and Jim Riddle (Lexington County First Steps) both addressed the Board about the potential implementation challenges faced by each of their partnerships.

The committee will meet with members of the Executive Directors' Leadership Council over the coming weeks, with the goal of bringing a comprehensive set of recommendations before the Board in June 2017.

Strategic Planning and Evaluation

Ms. Newman noted that the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee met on Monday, March 13 to review staff updates on the Vision 2020 action steps. She called the Board's attention to the written updates included in their packets and thanked the staff and partnerships for all of their efforts to advance the strategic plan's actions.

Early Head Start Governance Council

Mr. Pryor noted that the EHS Governance Council had not met over the preceding month, but that the membership was excited to receive news of the new grant award.

Director's Report

Ms. Davis recapped the highlights of the Early Head Start award and directed trustees to her written report, sharing several highlights.

Mr. Wingate noted that an executive session had been previously placed on the agenda, but was now unnecessary. **There being no further business, the Board adjourned at 1:05pm.**