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Local Partnership Orientation Training

Module 2: Local Partnership Structure & Functions

Facilitator Note: It is recommended that this training be delivered immediately following the Orientation Module - What is SC First Steps?

Estimated time needed to complete this training – 30 minutes

Training Modules for SC First Steps Local Partnership Orientation

- Module 1: Orientation - What is SC First Steps?
- **Module 2: Local Partnership Structure & Functions**
- Module 3: Local Partnership Systems & Accountability
- Your SC First Steps Partnership

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Explain:

This is the second module of the three part training series for all new local partnership staff and local board members. In the orientation you learned about the basic structure of the SC First Steps State Board of Trustees and the state office, now you will learn the basic structure and function of the local partnerships and boards.

This training series is designed to introduce participants to their new role as SC First Steps local partnership staff and board members. Additional resources and supports will be referenced in this training and are available on the SC First Steps website at www.scfirststeps.com under the tab for “Local Partnerships” and “Local Partnership Resources.”

Agenda

- What are local partnerships?
- What are the functions of local partnerships?
  - Executive Director Responsibilities
- What is the purpose of the local board?
  - Composition
  - Board Chairperson
  - Board Officers
- Local Partnership Board Members
  - Board Member Responsibilities
  - Legal Duties

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Facilitator Note: Briefly review agenda.

Facilitator Note: It is recommended to deliver the presentation either a) without taking questions during the presentation, but allowing significant time for questions after the presentation, or b) by stopping to take questions at strategic times during the presentation, and also allowing questions at the end of the presentation.

Intended Outcomes

- Participants will have a basic understanding of:
  - The structure and function of local partnerships
  - The purpose of local partnership boards
  - The roles and responsibilities of the executive director, board members, and board officers
  - The composition, expectations, and legal duties of local partnership boards

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Facilitator Note: Briefly review intended outcomes.

Partnership Specific – Items to Review

- County By-Laws
- Board job description
- Committee descriptions
- Executive Director job description
- Board officer position descriptions
- Annual Reports
- Meeting minutes
- Contractual requirements
- Financial statements
- Evaluation reports
- Strategic Plan –mission, vision, goals
- Descriptions of services
- Other guiding documents

Facilitator Note: This is a suggested list of partnership-specific items that should be provided to the new board member or local staff person at the orientation and may be helpful to reference during this training. You may choose to add or remove items in order to tailor to the particular local partnership that is the audience of the training.

What are Local Partnerships?

- **Local SC First Steps partnerships** are a network of county-level nonprofit organizations supported by state funding from SC First Steps that is leveraged by other public and private dollars to advance school readiness in their communities.
- As a refresher, **each of South Carolina's 46 counties are served by a local partnership**, whose local board of directors and staff are in place to meet the unmet needs in their communities to help local young children and their families.

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What do Local Partnerships do?

Section 59-152-70 (A) Coordinate a collaborative effort at the county or multicounty level which will bring the community together to identify the area needs **related to the goals of SC First Steps to School Readiness**; develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs; develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan; and integrate service delivery where possible.

- 6 Program Strategy Areas:
  1. Healthy Start
  2. Family Strengthening
  3. Early Intervention
  4. Quality Child Care
  5. Early Education
  6. School Transition

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Explain:

This is the purpose of the local partnerships according to the SC First Steps legislation. Remember, we reviewed these six program strategy areas in the Orientation training so we will not spend time reviewing them now.

What do Local Partnerships do?

NEW: Core Functions

Section 59-152-70 (A) Effective July 1, 2016, each partnership's comprehensive plan shall include the following core functions:

- service as a **local portal** connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
- service as a **community convener** around the needs of preschool children and their families; and
- **support of state-level school readiness priorities** as determined by the State Board.

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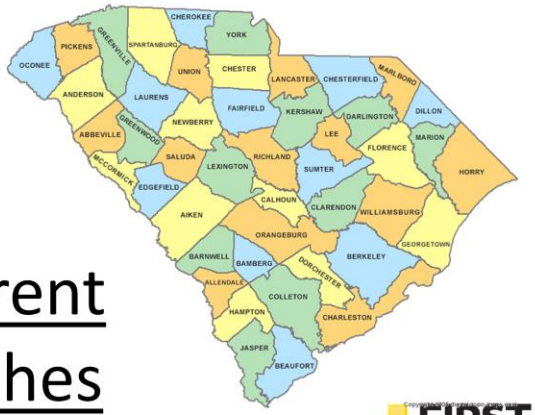
Explain:

These new core functions were added following SC First Steps' Reauthorization in 2014 to codify core SC First Steps services in each community.

What do Local Partnerships do?

One Purpose: School Readiness



46 Different Approaches

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Explain:

Each local partnerships has the flexibility to choose their programing based on the assessed needs of their community. In order words, not every SC First Steps partnership will be implementing all five of the “program strategy areas” you learned about. Although SC First Steps looks different from county to county across the state, all partnerships work ensure that children and families in their community enter school ready to learn and succeed!

What is the role of the Executive Director?

FS local partnership Executive Director responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Managing the daily operations of local FS office and supervising staff
- Developing an annual budget
- Seeking additional financial support for partnership through grant writing and fund raising
- Serving as liaison between the state office of SC First Steps, local partnership board, and contracted vendors
- Developing required reports and assessments
- Working closely with related organizations within the county

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Explain:

This list is an example of some of the responsibilities of the SC First Steps local partnership Executive Director. This list is not exhaustive, but rather gives an overview of the key functions for someone serving in this role.

What are the functions of the Local Board?

- SC First Steps Partnership Boards were established to oversee and coordinate local implementation of the SC First Steps initiative.
- From Section 12 59-152-70 of the legislation, the Boards' duties and powers include, but are not limited to:
  - **Adopting bylaws** as established by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees
  - Coordinating county or multi-county collaboration efforts to bring the community together to **identify local needs related to the goals of SC First Steps**; develop and implement a plan to meet those needs
  - **Coordinating and overseeing** the implementation of a **comprehensive strategic plan**

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Explain:

This information was summarized from Section 12. 59-152-70 of the SC First Steps enabling legislation.

What are the functions of the Local Board?

- Some of the Board's key duties and powers include, but are not limited to (continued):
  - Updating a **local needs assessment** every three years;
  - Implementing **fiscal policies and procedures** as required by the FS office;
  - **Submitting annual reports** of implementation and progress toward strategic goals;
  - Keeping **accurate records** of board meetings, attendance, programs, and activities.

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Local Partnership Board Composition

Section 59-152-60 (C) In accordance with the bylaws established by the board of trustees, each local partnership board shall maintain a total minimum membership of twelve and a maximum membership of thirty elected, appointed, and designated individuals. Elected and appointed members shall comprise a voting majority of the board.

Elected: No more than four from any of the following categories may be elected to sit on a SC First Steps Partnership Board:

- prekindergarten through primary educator;
- family education, training, and support provider;
- childcare or early childhood development/education provider;
- healthcare provider;
- local government;
- nonprofit organization that provides services to families and children;
- faith community;
- business community;
- philanthropic community; and
- parents of preschool children.

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Local Partnership Board Composition

- **Appointed:** To assure that all areas of the county or multicounty region are adequately represented and reflect the diversity of the coverage area, each county legislative delegation may appoint up to four members to a local partnership board. Of these members, two are appointed by the Senate members and two by the House of Representative members of the delegation from persons with resources, skills, or knowledge that have specific interests in improving the readiness of young children for school.
- **Designated:** Each of the following entities located within a particular SC First Steps Partnership coverage area shall designate one member to serve as a member of the local SC First Steps Partnership Board:
  - county department of social services;
  - county department of health and environmental control;
  - Head Start or early Head Start;
  - county library; and
  - each of the school districts in the county.

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Local Board Chair Responsibilities

Board Chair Election

- Elected annually – term (one year) not to exceed 4 consecutive years
- Elected by majority vote
- Chosen carefully to avoid Conflict of Interest

General Board Chair Responsibilities

- Approval of Executive Director timesheets, leave request
- Signatory on key documents
- Be informed/participate in SC First Steps meetings, webinar, etc.
- Check email and other communications from SC First Steps

For more information on Board Chair responsibilities and Board officer positions, please reference you ***County By-Laws.***

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Local Board Composition – Board Officers

- The local partnership board will hold annual elections for partnership board officers including the chair, vice chair, and secretary.
- Officer terms are for one year.
- Board chair and vice chair terms cannot exceed 4 years (4 consecutive, one year terms).

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Local Board Member Responsibilities

("Governance and Operations" is found on Section 1, Page 5 of the FY 17 ***Partnership Accountability Standards****)*

Local partnership board members shall:

- Abide by the attendance policy in the partnership by-laws
- Participate in ongoing board development
- Abide by the term limitations outlined in the legislation (not to exceed 8 years)
- Regularly attend meetings
- Hold annual elections for board officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary)
- Adopt, annually review, and abide by the Conflict of Interest policy
- Abide by all applicable federal and state laws regarding discrimination and workplace policies

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Local Partnership Board Term Lengths & Attendance

- Members serve 4-year terms, not to exceed 8 consecutive years (this was previously 2-year terms, maximum 6 years)
- Members who miss more than three consecutive meetings without excuse or members who resign must be replaced from the same categories as their predecessor.

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Legal Duties of Board Members

- **Duty of Care**
  - "The duty of care requires that first, a director [board member] be informed; and second, a director [board member] discharge his [or her] duties in good faith, with the care that an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would reasonably believe appropriate under similar circumstances." *ABA Guidebook for Directors of Nonprofit Corporations*
- **Duty of Loyalty**
  - This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.
  - Conflict of Interest
- **Duty of Obedience**
  - Faithfulness to the organization's mission; "remains obedient to its central purposes"
  - Following all laws and regulations that apply to nonprofits

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Explain:

Duty of care: The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member and is commonly expressed as the duty of "care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances." This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he or she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.

Duty of Loyalty: More information on Conflict of Interest is available in upcoming slides.

Duty of obedience: The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization's mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public's trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization's mission.

Legal Duties

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Policies and procedures for conducting board meetings

- Documentation, maintenance and disclosure of records (minutes, annual reports, budgets, renewal plans, etc.)
  - Meeting minutes should include who attended, excused/unexcused absences, quorum yes/no, approval of prior meeting minutes, action items and vote outcomes, all abstentions
  - Records available for public review (upon request)

- Public notification at least 24 hours in advance of all board meetings (including committee meetings)
  - Meeting date, location, agenda
  - Compliance with American Disability Act (noted on meeting notices and agendas)

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Explain:

South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) makes records and meetings of public bodies open and available to citizens and their representatives in the press.

Legal Duties

Conflict of Interest (COI)

Defined as situation in which a person or organization is involved in multiple interests, financial interest, or otherwise, one of which could possibly corrupt the motivation of the individual or organization.

The local board must adopt and annually review a COI Policy (in accordance with SCFS grant agreement).

- Acknowledge COI or perception of COI during meetings
- Abstain from voting if issue is COI
- Document COI and abstentions in minutes
- Avoid payments to board members

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Legal Duties

How can Conflict of Interest be prevented?

1. Board members and staff in decision-making roles should make known their connections with groups doing business with the organization.
2. Board members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting transactions between the organization and the other group.
3. Staff members who have an actual or potential conflict should not be substantively involved in decision-making affecting such transactions.

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Explain:

The next training session is Module #3: Local Partnership Systems and Accountability. In this module, new partnership staff will learn general information on the current systems that are in place to ensure local partnerships run smoothly and effectively.