

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
A SOUTH CAROLINA NONPROFIT CORPORATION**

**June 25, 2008**

**MINUTES**

- Voting Directors Present: Ms. Lisa Van Riper, Acting Chair  
Ms. Judith Aughtry, Acting Chair  
Ms. Sabine Lang  
Mr. Henry Parr, Jr.  
Dr. Floyd Creech  
Ms. Kristin Hook  
Ms. Nicky Wallace  
Rev. Reece Yandle  
Ms. Linda O'Quinn  
Dr. Francis Rushton
- Voting Directors Absent: Mr. Lewis Smoak, Vice-Chair, excused  
Representative Jimmy Neal  
Senator Michael Fair  
Superintendent Jim Rex  
Mr. Henry Parr, Jr.  
Dr. Floyd Creech, excused  
Governor Mark Sanford  
Senator John Matthews  
Dr. Thaddeus Bell  
Ms. Katherine Davis  
Ms. Marileen Chapman  
Ms. Julia-Ellen Davis
- Non-Voting Directors Present: Ms. Susan Jones (designee, SC DOT)  
Ms. Jennifer Buster (designee for Mr. Stan Butkus, SC DDSN)  
Ms. Kathleen Hayes, Director, SC DSS  
Dr. David Goble, Director, SC State Library  
Ms. Lane Jeselnik (designee for Dr. Garrison Walters, SC  
Commission on Higher Education)  
Ms. Cindy Sweigart (designee for Mr. C. Earl Hunter,  
Director, SC DHEC)
- Non- Voting Directors Absent: Ms. Angela Flowers (designee, for Ms. John McGill, SC DMH)  
Ms. Emma Forkner, Director, SC DHHS  
Mr. Lee Catoe, Director, DAODAS  
Mr. Jim Griffith, Director, Transportation Assn. of SC  
Dr. Paul Krohne, President, SC School Board Association  
Mr. David Potter, SC Education Oversight Committee  
Mr. Tim Ervolina, President/CEO, United Way of SC  
Dr. Nancy Freeman, Regulatory Advisory Committee

Mr. Bobby Bowers, Director, SC B&CB/ORS  
Ms. Stephanie Frazier (designee for Mr. Barry Russell,  
President, SC Tech College System)

Others Present:

Ms. Susan DeVenny, SC First Steps  
Mr. Dan Wuori, SC First Steps  
Mr. Rodney Jenkins, SC First Steps  
Mr. Russell Brown, SC First Steps  
Ms. Debbie Robertson, SC First Steps  
Ms. Kim Aydlette, SC First Steps  
Ms. Samantha Ingram, SC First Steps  
Ms. Mary Anne Matthews, SC First Steps  
Ms. Grace Stewart, SC First Steps  
Ms. Betty Gardiner, SC First Steps  
Mr. Reginald Flenory, SC First Steps  
Ms. Susan Graham, SC First Steps  
Ms. Tamala Toney, SC First Steps  
Ms. Rogers Hewitt, SC First Steps  
Ms. Beverly Mills, SC First Steps  
Mr. Rick Noble, Richland County First Steps  
Ms. Cheryl Caldwell, Fairfield County First Steps  
Mr. Spencer Scott, Florence County First Steps  
Ms. Karen Odom, Chesterfield County First Steps  
Ms. Centuria Watson, Chester County First Steps  
Ms. Dorothy Priester, Cherokee County First Steps  
Ms. Karen Ponder, Former CEO of Smart Start NC  
Ms. Kim Browning, High Scope Research Foundation  
Ms. Mary Lynn Diggs, Head Start

**Call to Order**

Ms. Lisa Van Riper called the meeting to order. Ms. Van Riper then recognized Ms. Karen Ponder, Ms. Kim Browning and Ms. Libby Cable as consultants during the planning phase of the First Steps strategic plan, VISION 2013. Ms. Van Riper also recognized County Partnership Executive Directors who were in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes**

Upon a motion by Ms. Judith Aughtry and a second, the minutes of the April 17, 2008 meeting were approved as written.

**Finance and Administration Committee**

Ms. Judith Aughtry made a motion to the board to approve the committee's recommendation to approve the FY09 Budget.

Ms. Susan DeVenny briefed the board on the FY09 Budget. Ms. DeVenny stated that First Steps lost about \$9M in carry-forward and non-recurring funding, therefore, cutting the overall First Steps state funds by 28%. She added that these cuts were for specific programs, and that the staff were working to minimize impact on the county partnerships. Ms. DeVenny stated that the mid-year cut (discussed at the April board meeting) had been absorbed at the state office level.

Ms. Susan DeVenny directed the board to the Appropriation History document and the Projected Annual Appropriation and Use document.

Ms. Susan DeVenny informed the board that they would be voting today on the entire state budget to include the following categories of allocation: County Partnerships (\$17.5M), Supplemental Appropriations – 4K (\$3.2M), State Office Projected Expenses (\$2,389,000), Statewide Projects Expenses (\$8,594,000) and County Partnership Central Operation Accounts (\$973,000).

Ms. Lisa Van Riper asked the board if there were any questions. Hearing no questions, Ms. Van Riper entertained a motion to approve the FY09 Budget. The budget was passed unanimously.

Ms. Judith Aughtry then directed the board to the FY09 County Partnership Contracts and Ms. Susan DeVenny briefed the board. Ms. DeVenny stated that this contract was essentially the same contract as last year with the exception new program strategies.

#### **Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee**

Ms. Lisa Van Riper briefed the board on the history and emergence of the 2009 First Steps Strategic Plan, VISION 2013. Ms. Van Riper provided an overview of the VISION 2013 plan via powerpoint.

Ms. Lisa Van Riper then asked acting chair, Ms. Judith Aughtry to entertain a motion that the board approve the VISION 2013 strategic plan process and delegate the process for oversight to the Strategic Planning and Evaluation committee.

Dr. Francis Rushton suggested that the strategic plan should have a child/family focus. Ms. Susan DeVenny stated that the goals of VISION 2013 were very broad but ensured the strategic plan would include a child/family focus and called on Debbie Robertson to brief the board on the community input process.

Ms. Debbie Robertson then briefed the board on the upcoming plans for the statewide Regional Summits. Ms. DeVenny called on Ms. Cindy Sweigart to remark about the added value of blending the VISION 2013 and ECCS processes.

All approved the motion to move forward with the strategic planning process.

#### **Program and Grants Committee**

Dr. Francis Rushton briefed the board on the FY09 Renewal Plan Review document, on behalf of committee chair, Dr. Floyd Creech. Dr. Rushton commended the SCFS and the county partnerships for their work in the FY09 Renewal process. Dr. Rushton also commented on the fact that the review document was one of the best things he has seen come out of state government.

Dr. Rushton stated to the board that this year's review document was designed to show each county, strategy by strategy. Dr. Rushton then updated the board on the specific "tiers" of conditional approvals, stating that technical assistance in FY09 is strategy-based and in concert with the county self-assessment process introduced earlier in the year.

The FY09 renewals were accepted as presented.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. Susan DeVenny recognized Ms. Betty Gardiner and other members of the SCFS Program staff for their working in compiling information from the FY09 County Partnership Renewals. Ms. DeVenny thanked Ms. Kathleen Hayes for the use of the DSS building for today's meeting.

Ms. Susan DeVenny introduced Mr. Reginald Flenory, the Early Reading First Coordinator and Ms. Grace Stewart, the Nurse-Family Partnership Coordinator.

Ms. Susan DeVenny informed the board of a competitive grant in which First Steps is partnering with the Save the Children organization. Ms. DeVenny said Save the Children has provided South Carolina with resources to expand the Early Steps to Success program in which First Steps provided a funding match.

Ms. Susan DeVenny briefed the board on the National Governor's Association Early Childhood Retreat in Denver, CO. Ms. Susan DeVenny recognized Ms. Mary Lynne Diggs, Head Start Collaboration Officer, who also attended the retreat representing SC with Ms DeVenny, along with Representative Shannon Erickson. Ms. DeVenny also briefed the board on the Build/ Smart Start Community national quality and improvement systems meeting in St. Paul, MN Members of First Steps and DSS were hosted by Smart Start, joining 17 other states for this important national summit to examine the need for child care quality across the states. Ms. DeVenny said she is very excited about the focus on data in the early childhood arena.

Ms. Susan DeVenny reminded the board about the upcoming meeting in Aiken County, and thanked the Strategic Planning and Evaluation committee on their work with VISION 2013.

Mr. Rodney Jenkins briefed the board on the current First Steps budget. Mr. Jenkins stated that the SCFS office is finalizing their audit and did not project any problems. Mr. Jenkins commended the County Partnerships and the SCFS staff. Mr. Jenkins stated that the year-to-date budget is within expenditures.

In response to a question about CDEPP (4k funding for FY09), Mr. Jenkins directed the board to the Supplemental Funding line item. Mr. Jenkins said that First Steps would return \$5.2M to the legislature in unspent funds for FY08 and receive \$3.6M of that money next year for CDEPP, to cover projected expenditures for the year.

### **Executive Session**

Ms. Lisa Van Riper entertained a motion to go into Executive Session. Upon a motion by Dr. Francis Rushton, and a second by Mr. Reece Yandle, the board moved into Executive Session.

Upon a motion by Ms. Judith Aughtry and a second by Ms. Nikki Wallace, the board moved out of Executive Session.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.