

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

**December 14, 2006**

**MINUTES**

Voting Directors Present: Mr. Lewis Smoak, Vice Chair  
Mr. Henry Parr, Jr.  
Representative Shirley Hinson  
Ms. Lisa Van Riper  
Ms. Linda O'Quinn  
Dr. Floyd Creech  
Dr. Francis Rushton  
Mr. Lee Cory  
Ms. Judith Aughtry  
Ms. Marileen Chapman  
Rev. Reece Yandle  
Ms. Sabine Lang

Voting Directors Absent: Senator Mike Fair  
Senator John Matthews  
Representative Bessie Moody-Lawrence  
Ms. Katherine Davis  
Dr. Thaddeus Bell  
Ms. Kristin Hook  
Supt. Inez Tenenebaum

Non-Voting Directors Present: Ms. Cindy Sweigart (designee for Earl  
Hunter, SC DHEC)  
Ms. Leigh Bolick (designee for Kim  
Aydlette, SC DSS)  
Ms. Susan Jones (designee for Elizabeth  
Mabry, SC DOT)  
Dr. Curtis Rogers, Interim Dir., SC State Library  
Ms. Lane Jeselneck, designee for Dr. Gail Morrison, SC  
Commission on Higher Education

Non-Voting Directors Absent: Mr. Robert Kerr, Director, SC DHHS  
Mr. Lee Catoe, Director, SC DAODAS  
Mr. Jim Griffith, Transportation Assn. of S.C.  
Dr. Barry Russell, Pres., SC Technical College System  
Dr. Paul Krohne, Dir., SC School Board Association  
Mr. David Potter, SC Education Oversight Commission  
Mr. Tim Ervolina, Pres/CEO United Way Association of  
SC, Inc.  
Dr. Nancy Freeman, Regulatory Advisory Committee

Others: Ms. Charmeka Bosket, Representative for Governor Mark  
Sanford  
Ms. Mary Payson, Office of Research and Statistics  
Ms. Susan DeVenny, Director, SC First Steps  
Mr. Dan Wuori, SC First Steps  
Mr. Rodney Jenkins, SC First Steps  
Mr. Leon Love, SC First Steps

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Lewis Smoak, Vice Chair, asked Nikki West to conduct a roll-call in order to ascertain what board members were participating on the conference call. Mr. Smoak then called the meeting to order, thanked everyone for participating and welcomed Dr. Floyd Creech and Dr. Francis Rushton, new appointees of Senator Glenn McConnell. Mr. Smoak informed the board that Senator McConnell had also re-appointed Ms. Kristin Hook to the board.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon a motion by Ms. Marileen Chapman and a second to the motion by Lisa Van Riper, the minutes of the September 21, 2006 meeting were approved as written.

### **Strategic Planning and Administration Committee**

Mr. Lee Cory, Chair advised that the Strategic Planning and Administration Committee did not have a report this month.

### **Program/Grants Committee**

Ms. Judith Aughtry reporting for the Program/Grants Committee reported that she did not have a report this month.

### **Evaluation & Accountability Committee**

Ms. Lisa Van Riper, Chair, reported that the First Steps had completed collection of its first quarter program data, and thanked the SC Office of Research and Statistics and First Steps staff for their outstanding collaboration in recent months. She advised the Board that both will be reviewing this data continuously.

### **Governor's Summit Ad Hoc Committee**

Ms. Lisa Van Riper, Chair, updated the board on the agenda for the Governor's Summit on Early Childhood to be held on Monday, January 8, 2007.

Ms. Van Riper informed the board that the ad-hoc committee had asked the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant partners to join with them to create a report card for South Carolina using recent recommendations from the National Governor's Association (NGA) as a template. She informed the board that the report card would be presented at the Governor's Summit and urged members to attend.

Ms. Van Riper reported that the Governor's Office applied for a grant from the NGA for the purpose of conducting a summit that could be used as a basis for discussion and to explore directions for improvement. She informed the board that South Carolina was awarded the NGA grant and the Governor's Office asked SC First Steps board to oversee the implementation.

Ms. Van Riper advised that the Report Card developed takes categories from the NGA template targeted and reviews South Carolina's efforts in comparison to these national recommendations.

Ms. Van Riper asked Mr. Dan Wuori to present the report to the board as a basis for discussion and dialogue. Ms. Leigh Bolick advised that she was part of the ECCS and had worked on this with Mr. Wuori and wanted to state that she appreciate how easy

Mr. Wuori had been to work with. Ms. Bolick stated that the document is best described as being authored by members of the ECCS leadership team, as all members have not had time to review the document in full.

Mr. Wuori reported that the “Ready State” Report Card is presented in five sections: Ready State, Ready Schools, Ready Communities, Ready Families and Ready Children. Within the document there is a page for each of these sections featuring a brief overview of the category and bullet points stating what South Carolina is doing well and opportunities for growth and/or improvement. Mr. Wuori gave a brief overview and asked board members to take time to review this document.

Ms. Cindy Sweigart advised that the document should be seen as a snapshot in time and a useful starting point for both First Steps and the ECCS Committee.

Mr. Smoak asked if this document needed to be revisited at the January board meeting in an effort to begin putting action to the opportunities for growth identified – noting that the SC First Steps board is it does have virtually all players represented. Ms. Van Riper advised that if we want to take the report and do more with it we could take part of the January board meeting and begin to break down each category. She suggested that the Board consider the recommendations over several board meetings and then pass out suggestions for the appropriate people to begin working on.

Mr. Smoak asked that the Board do so, in order to give members an opportunity to review and understand the recommendations and collaborations involved.

Mr. Smoak thanked Ms. Van Riper for her hard work in getting the Governor’s Summit together. Ms. Van Riper thanked everyone who had worked on the report card and stated it was a pleasure to see the collaborative efforts between all involved.

Ms. Dan Wuori directed the board’s attention to the Governor’s Summit invitation and the biography of keynote speaker, Mr. Dan Pedersen included in the board packets.

### **Director’s Report**

Ms. DeVenny reported that the National Governor’s Association’s (NGA) work in South Carolina is strong at this time and the Governor’s Summit is one of two grants provided to South Carolina by the NGA with emphasis on early childhood. She informed the board that the summit grant is one of only seven in the nation. The second grant, intended to extend the state’s readiness measurement and hold community level summits, is one of only three in the nation. South Carolina is the only state to have received both grants.

Ms. DeVenny reported that NGA has also added South Carolina to the early childhood policy leadership fellows group, giving staff an opportunity to work with national researchers as ECCS and the board move forward.

Ms. DeVenny encouraged everyone to attend the Governor’s Summit on January 8, 2007, to be held at the Blatt Building, 1105 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC and to make an effort to attend the January 18, 2007, SC First Steps to School Readiness board meeting. She informed the board that the demographic updates provided by

ORS and a draft of the partnership allocations would be made available at the January board meeting.

Ms. DeVenny reported to the board that the state Office of SC First Steps has received a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request and are acting upon it at this time. She reported that the FOIA is asking for records involving vendor payments, travel, and communications. Ms. DeVenny reminded the board that anything they communicate via email with the state office of SC First Steps is subject to FOIA.

Ms. DeVenny asked Mr. Wuori to give a brief update of the 4K Expansion pilot program and informed the board that this information would be presented to lawmakers and the Senate Early Childhood Committee.

Mr. Wuori directed the board's attention to the one-page First Steps Private 4K Expansion Update sheet in their board packets. He reported that 70 providers in 20 counties have been approved. Mr. Wuori reported that the money would be awarded to approved providers based on their ability to enroll eligible children. Mr. Wuori reported that the deadline for additional approval has ended because of the requirement that they serve 180 days per school year. Mr. Wuori reported that at this time there are 32 active providers in 17 counties and that the number of active centers and verified students will increase as enrollments are verified. Mr. Wuori reported that projected allocations to 4K providers based upon existing counts show 32 providers receiving \$10,000 for materials and equipment (\$320,000) and 270 students at \$3,262 per student (\$880,000), total \$1,200,740, at this time.

Representative Hinson asked if SC First Steps was going to be able to use the money allocated by the General Assembly for 4K Expansion. Mr. Wuori reported it is unlikely based on the number of students enrolled to date. Mr. Wuori reminded the board that within the proviso there was a provision that identified unspent funds would roll-over for the following fiscal year for service for 0-3 year-olds in the trial and plaintiff districts. Mr. Wuori advised, how much of the original funding would roll-over is not known at this time.

Mr. Smoak suggested that the committee should receive a report on this by the March board meeting.

Mr. Wuori called the Board's attention to the Centers of Excellence application materials. SC First Steps is preparing to receive applications from the county partnerships for the Centers of Excellence expansion on January 22, 2007. He explained that an informational meeting for bidding counties had been held.

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Rodney Jenkins, Chief Financial Officer, directed the board's attention to the Budget Summary and Monthly Financial Statement FY 06-07 as of November 30, 2006, included in their board packets. Mr. Jenkins reported that several items exceed the budgeted amounts and explained that this was the result of having only received the supplemental funding allocated for 4K and Centers of Excellence during the previous week. Mr. Jenkins reported that the funds are in our accounts at this time and that the budget will be reconciled to correct this.

He directed the board's attention to the \$7,858,576 for SC Child Development Education Pilot Program and \$2,000,000 for Centers of Excellence and explained that monies from these two programs would be transferred into the line item which exceeded expenditures on the coming month's Budget Summary Financial Statement.

Mr. Jenkins reported that SC First Steps remains within overall state budget and concluded his report.

Mr. Smoak thanked Mr. Jenkins and reminded the board of the Governor's Summit on January 8, 2007 and our next BOT meeting scheduled for January 18, 2007. Mr. Smoak reported that the board will be scheduling meetings every other month for 2007 and stressed the importance of attendance to ensure a quorum in all cases. He asked board members to comment upon whether they felt conference calls are an effective way to conduct board meetings. Mr. Cory expressed his dislike of the format and his concern that conference calls may prevent meaningful dialogue.

Rev. Reece Yandle commented it was difficult to follow the agenda, as some board members weren't able to access all the materials from the electronic board packet.

Ms. Sabine Lang commented that conducting board meetings via conference call was acceptable on occasion but agreed with Mr. Cory that they would not be her preferred method of meeting. Ms. Lang suggested that it would be good to receive summaries of documents in order to better understand the complex information often presented to the BOT, and that this would contribute to more meaningful discussion.

Mr. Smoak asked that anyone who was unable to access the board packet information to contact Ms. Nikki West to get this information.

There being no other business, Mr. Cory moved that the meeting be adjourned. Rev. Yandle seconded and the meeting was adjourned.