



Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 18, 2025, 2:00PM

636 Rosewood Drive and Virtual (via Zoom)

Trustees Present (14): Rep. Terry Alexander, Frances Anderson, Tony Cantone, Jacque Curtin, Mary Lynne Diggs, Dr. James Durant, John Hayes, Sen. Greg Hembree, Jack McBride, Roger Pryor, Dr. Edward Simmer, Wes Wooten, Sue Williams, Dr. Amy Williams (Vice Chair)

Trustees Absent (9): Dr. Robert Bank, Sen. Jason Elliott, Rep. Shannon Erickson, Constance Holloway, Jesica Mackey, Eunice Medina, Dave Morley (Chairman), Janie Neeley, Mary Anne Scott

Others Present (33): Austin Reed, Beth Moore, Betty Washington, Bradley Harris, Candi Lalonde, Cheryl Scales, Crystal Campbell, David Lisk, Delores Rock, Dorothy Priester, Emily Prillaman, Gina Beebe, Haymee Guiliani, Iris Ballen-Morant, Jabari Bodrick, Jenny May, Jessica Fluker, Jon Artz, Karen Oliver, Kate Roach, Katrina Valliere, Kenna Hoover, Kerry Cordan, Kim Chariker, Kim Trudell, Kristen Martocchio, LaMyra Sanders-Dukes, Laura Baker, Lexi Jones, Marietta Melton Burch, Rachal Hatton-Moore, Samantha Ingram, Sarah Eargle

Meeting was called to order with a quorum present at 2:06 p.m. by Dr. Amy Williams.

A motion was made to accept the meeting agenda by Mr. Wes Wooten, seconded by Ms. Frances Anderson. All voted in favor.

A motion was made to adopt the consent agenda by Mr. Wooten, seconded by Ms. Anderson. All voted in favor.

Vice Chair Dr. Williams welcomed Frances Anderson and Dr. James DuRant to the Board of Trustees.

Vice Chair Dr. Williams gave a brief update from the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee addressed the following: a review and approval of a capital requests from Richland County First Steps, Local Partnership Executive Director compensation requests, and proposals from First Steps Local Partnerships for Innovation Investment Expansion awards.

An overview of Innovation Investments was shared. Ms. Vandervliet thanked the General Assembly for allowing the approach that has resulted in an 11% increase in reach in high-intensity and evidence-based services.

Mr. Wooten, chairman of the Program and Grants Committee, shared an update. Interim Chief of Partnerships, Kerry Cordan, Ph.D., shared program catalog changes resulting from a review process to align with current research.

Vice Chair Dr. Williams gave an update from the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee. She gave an overview about CLASS Observation Pilot to strengthen the First Steps 4K model.

Chief of Finance David O'Kelly shared that the annual financial statement audit is underway for FY 24-25 and the 26-27 Budget Request was submitted to the SC Executive Budget Office. As of August 31, the agency has spent 17 percent of its \$75 million budget, making it on pace.

There was a request to approve a capital request of \$125,000 for kitchen renovation as submitted from the Lancaster County First Steps Board of Directors. Dr. Williams asked for a motion. A motion was made by Mr. Wooten, seconded by Ms. Anderson. All voted in favor.

Senator Hembree gave an update, sharing that for FY 26-27 there are opportunities to expand services and programs with full support from the Governor and General Assembly.

Chief of Engagement Beth Moore gave updates on proposed revisions to the SC Profile of the Ready Kindergartner. The document is distributed directly to local partnerships, through the Department of Education, during the Ready for Kindergarten campaign, and online. Dr. Williams called for a motion to approve the proposed revisions as submitted in fulfillment of S.C. Code Ann. § 59-152-32. A motion was made by Mr. Wooten, seconded by Ms. Anderson. All voted in favor.

Ann Vandervliet, agency director, gave the "Agency Director Update." The update included the "Every Day Builds the Way" campaign to reduce chronic absenteeism in First Steps 4K. She shared that the agency will be building relationships with the state at Early Advantage: Foundations for South Carolina's Economic Vitality with Tom Barkin, President and Chief Executive Office of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. She shared organizational updates, and recognized Iris Ballen-Morant who was selected as the Home Visiting Community Leader of the Year.

Dr. Williams asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wooten made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees, seconded by Ms. Anderson. All voted in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.