

**South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Senate Conference Room, SC Statehouse**  
**April 10, 2014**  
**Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Lewis Smoak  
Judith Aughtry  
Lisa Van Riper (by telephone)  
Reece Yandle (by telephone)  
Jennifer McConnell  
Julia Ellen Davis  
Julie Hussey  
Rep. Jerry Govan  
Rep. Rita Allison  
Linda O'Quinn  
Rick Noble

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Rosemary Wilson  
Mary Lynn Diggs  
Hewlan Blivens  
Jennifer Buster  
Tim Ervolina  
Anne Marie Dwyer  
Sarah Crawford

**Staff and Others Present:**

Susan DeVenny  
Betty Gardiner  
Leesa Benngio  
Debbie Robertson  
Mary Anne Mathews  
Linda Leonard  
Dan Wuori  
Dave Wilson  
Desiree Watson  
Russell Brown

Mr. Smoak welcomed the Board and noted the presence of a quorum and asked new Trustees Jennifer McConnell and Hewlan Belvins of the State Library to introduce themselves.

The Board unanimously approved the December 2013 minutes.

Ms. DeVenny gave an overview of the SC Read In, held earlier in the day. Over 1,600 children and adults attended the statehouse event. Governor Haley issued a proclamation marking the Week of the Young Child. As a part of the day, First Steps trustees were also invited to view a new documentary, "When the Bough Breaks," produced by the Education Oversight Committee and directed by Bud Ferrillo. Mr. Ferrillo, who also produced "The Corridor of Shame," directed the viewing. Copies will be made available at a later date.

Mr. Smoak call on Ms. Davis to present a report from the Program and Grants Committee. On behalf of her committee, Ms. Davis reviewed the proposed FY14 Program and Accountability Standards, reviewed by the committee twice during March and April. The Board unanimously approved the standards document as recommended by committee.

Mr. Smoak called on Ms. Van Riper for a report from the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee. Ms. Van Riper noted that the committee had met with representatives of the board's external contractor (Compass Evaluation) on March 21, 2014 to review a proposed evaluation plan. Ms. Van Riper noted that, per recommendations of the Legislative Audit Council (and as included in H.3428), the 2014 evaluation will focus on the legislative goals of the First Steps initiative. This audit will and be supplemented by additional external reviews of each prevalent program investment. Ms. Van Riper noted this section of the bill. Dr. Wuori called the Board's attention to their Board packets for an excerpt from Compass' presentation to the committee. Ms. Van Riper detailed the schedule of the external evaluation as pursuant to the FY14 general appropriations bill.

Mr. Smoak called on Ms. Aughtry for a report from the Finance and Administration Committee. Ms. Aughtry reported that the committee met on Thursday, March 27, 2014. On behalf of the committee, Ms. Aughtry reviewed two action items for the board's consideration. Ms. Aughtry reviewed draft FY15 Partnership allocations. Mr. Noble noted that the proposed allocations include one-time funding like FY14, which may not be sustainable into FY16. Ms. DeVenny reported that staff plan technical assistance on this point to ensure partnerships are planning ahead. Representative Allison suggested that state allocations might be supplemented by private fundraising. Rep. Govan agreed that this funding could create an issue in future years, but noted that this is similar to the funding challenge faced by the General Assembly each year. The Board unanimously approved the committee recommendation, with Mr. Noble abstaining as related to Richland County First Steps.

Ms. Aughtry reviewed waiver requests from partnerships exceeding the 8% administrative overhead cap and/or failing to achieve the required 15% match. Ms. Aughtry noted that given the small size of local partnership budgets that the 8% cap presents an ongoing challenge. Ms. Aughtry noted that the LAC recommendation for an external review of partnership administrative costs had been incorporated in the bill (H3428). Mr. Brown reviewed the list of partnerships requesting waivers and a summary of their rationale, then responded to trustee questions.

Upon a motion from Mr. Govan and a second by Ms. O'Quinn, the partnership administrative waivers were approved unanimously.

Ms. Hussey made a motion that match waivers be granted this year, but asked for a report in future years to note whether partnerships accepted technical assistance in this area. The motion was seconded by Ms. Davis and the Board adopted the match waivers unanimously.

Ms. DeVenny began her director's report, noting Mr. Smoak's Week of the Young Child op-ed, which appeared in Columbia newspaper The State. Ms. DeVenny briefly reviewed the content of "When the Bough Breaks." Several Trustees commented on the positive nature of the film, which highlighted several First Steps programs, including Nurse Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, and Early Steps to School Success.

Ms. DeVenny asked Ms. Hussey to introduce Dave Wilson and Desiree Watson of McAllister Communications. Mr. Wilson described McAllister's recent work to assist with communications training for partnerships, launch social media accounts, and overhaul of the scfirststeps.org website.

Ms. DeVenny provided the Board with a brief legislative update, noting that Read to Succeed passed the Senate with an amendment that would expand 4K statewide using the CDEPP model. The First Steps bill has passed out of the full House and is currently before the Senate Education Committee. Ms. DeVenny asked Ms. Kristie Musick for a brief BabyNet update. Ms. Musick noted the BRIDGES data system has launched, providing the state with the opportunity for first-ever full electronic education records for students who are served by Part C. BRIDGES will also enable enhanced tracking of system costs.

Ms. DeVenny asked Dr. Wuori to provide a brief update on the state's expanded four-year-old kindergarten program. Dr. Wuori reviewed the First Steps 4k impact for the year, noting an increase in both student and provider enrollment by 120% during FY14.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.