



South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness  
Board of Trustees  
June 18, 2015

MINUTES

**Members Present (16):**

Ken Wingate, Chair  
Julie Hussey, Vice Chair  
Lisa Van Riper, Secretary  
Rep. Rita Allison  
Rick Noble  
Julia-Ellen Davis  
Mary Lynn Diggs  
Roger Pryor  
Reece Yandle  
Superintendent Molly Spearman  
Alexia Newman  
Sue Williams  
Christian Soura  
Judith Aughtry  
Walter Fleming  
Evelyn Patterson

**Members Absent (8):**

Senator Mike Fair  
Senator Gerald Malloy  
Representative Jerry Govan  
Dr. Beverly Buscemi  
Susan Alford  
Katherine Heigel  
Tracy Lamb  
Jennifer McConnell

**Others Present:**

Susan DeVenny  
Dr. Dan Wuori  
Mark Barnes  
Debbie Robertson  
Amber Gillum  
David Goodell  
Rosemary Wilson  
Dr. Joe Saunders  
Pierce McNair  
Barbara Black  
Mary Anne Mathews  
Bunnie Ward  
Kate McGrath

Dr. Bill Brown  
Penny Danielson  
Kimberly Jordan  
Jim Riddle  
Christie Duke  
Kristie Musick  
Charles Appleby  
Jennifer Dobson  
LaMyra Sanders  
Dorothy Priester  
Martha Strickland  
Ginger Ryall  
Christine Willis  
Betty Gardiner

Mr. Wingate called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm and reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being held in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Wingate asked the Board to pause to observe a moment of silence in memory of those killed in the shootings at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC.

Mr. Wingate noted the presence of a quorum and called for the adoption of the consent agenda, containing the following items:

- Meeting minutes of January 15, 2015
- Meeting minutes of February 18, 2015
- Meeting minutes of March 19, 2015
- Meeting minutes of May 29, 2015
- Finance and Administration Committee Recommendation (FY16 Budget)
- Program and Grants Committee Recommendation (FY16 Partnership Grant Renewals)

**The consent agenda was adopted unanimously.**

Chairman's Report:

Mr. Wingate called Board members' attention to the Principles of Engagement document reviewed previously and moved for its final adoption.

**The Board unanimously adopted the Principles of Engagement.** Mr. Wingate asked that printed copies be provided for signature at the August 20 Board meeting.

Mr. Wingate referenced the ongoing summer site visit process, during which each First Steps partnership will be visited by a delegation of state Board and office staff. A number of Trustees discussed their positive experiences having visited local communities. Several preliminary themes seemed to be emerging from these visits, including a need for assistance in communication/marketing and additional training in use of the finance and data systems. Mr. Wingate reported having met with 15 Executive Directors in the prior month and encouraged Trustees to participate in as many remaining visits as possible.

Mr. Wingate noted that he will be working with the Governor, House and Senate to ensure that trustee terms are current and that this may lead to upcoming transitions as vacant seats are filled and new Trustees are appointed.

**Finance and Administration Committee:**

Ms. Aughtry noted that the committee's recommended budget had been previously distributed and was adopted as part of the consent agenda. She called on Mr. Barnes to provide a brief update on the state budget as related to First Steps. Mr. Barnes reported that the General Assembly was yet to complete its final FY16 budget and has passed a continuing resolution to ensure the ongoing operation of state government in the absence of passage by July 1. Mr. Barnes reported that both the House and Senate budget plans included increased funding for local partnerships and BabyNet.

**Program and Grants Committee:**

Ms. Davis reviewed the legislative charge to develop and adopt a parent-friendly description of school readiness and described the committee's process of developing its recommended draft - which included a wide array of state, local and national stakeholders, including a survey of SC kindergarten teachers. Ms. Davis reviewed the committee's recommendation, which includes:

- 1) A description of essential readiness skills, phrased in family friendly "I can" statements,
- 2) Connections between school readiness and the Profile of the Ready Graduate, and
- 3) Descriptions of ready schools, caregivers and communities.

Superintendent Spearman praised the committee for its efforts to connect readiness to the Profile of the Ready Graduate and described its importance within the Department of Education's own planning. Ms. Diggs reminded the Board of Head Start's federal school readiness description.

**The Board unanimously adopted the readiness description, which will also be considered under Act 287 of 2014 by the SC Board of Education.**

Penny Danielson of the SC Department of Education provided a brief overview of the early literacy assessments proposed for use in 4K and 5K during 2015-2016. Assuming passage of Senate proviso language as part of the General Appropriations Act for FY16, 4K classrooms will have the choice of three potential assessment options (MyIGDIS, Pals Pre-K, and Teaching Strategies GOLD). 5K classrooms statewide will utilize the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA).

Ms. Davis reminded the Board of its legal obligation to develop a list of evidence-based programming for use by local partnerships. This will be a collaborative, multi-month process what may require formal legislative promulgation. Ms. Davis brought forward a recommendation from the committee that the preliminary list begin with recognition of 17 evidence-based home visitation models acknowledged by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HomVEE) clearinghouse. These models have been rigorously evaluated and are acknowledged nationally as meeting the highest standard of evidence. These models are:

- Child FIRST

- Early Head Start - Home Visiting
- Early Intervention Program for Adolescent Mothers
- Early Start (New Zealand)
- Family Check-Up
- Family Spirit
- Healthy Families America (HFA)
- Healthy Steps
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPIY)
- Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting Program (MESCH)
- Minding the Baby
- Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)
- Oklahoma Community-Based Family Resource and Support Program (PDF - 91 KB)
- Parents as Teachers (PAT)
- Play and Learning Strategies (PALS) Infant (PDF - 96 KB)
- SafeCare Augmented

**The Board unanimously adopted the committee's recommendation.**

Strategic Planning and Evaluation:

Ms. Van Riper updated the Board on the ongoing strategic planning process and introduced committee draft mission, vision and values statements to the Board. After a short discussion, Ms. Van Riper asked Trustees to pass along suggested revisions to Dr. Wuori for subsequent review by the Board.

Ms. Van Riper also reviewed the committee's proposed response to the 2015 Compass Evaluation, required by Act 287 of 2014. The report contained two overarching recommendations to the Board:

- 1. Review and refine [First Steps'] evaluation design to align with new evaluative and accountability requirements.*
- 2. Consider discussions and strategies for ongoing systems development.*

As pertains to reviewing and refining evaluation systems to align with new evaluative and accountability requirements the committee recommended a proposed evaluation timeline for both prevalent programs and the next systemic review required by statute. The proposed cycle, which begins immediately with the development of a research methodology for Parents as Teachers is as follows:

	<u>To Be Evaluated During:</u>
1. Parents as Teachers - \$3.97M	FY16-FY17
2. Child Care - \$4.43M	FY17-FY18
(Quality Enhancement - \$1.89M)	
(Training - \$1.39M)	
(Scholarships - \$1.15M)	
3. General System Review	FY19-FY20

Additionally, the committee noted that it anticipates a comprehensive review of First Steps' data systems and data requirements, stemming from the current strategic planning process.

As pertains to systems development, the Committee noted that this is the goal of the Board's current strategic planning process. A well-articulated process is underway that will comprehensively meet the intent of this recommendation, with a final report anticipated in December of 2015.

**After discussion, the Board unanimously adopted the committee recommendations as presented.**

Director's Report:

Ms. DeVenny noted her written Director's Report and thanked state and local staff for their hard work throughout the FY16 Partnership Grant Renewal Process. She provided a brief update on the Countdown to Kindergarten program and invited the Board to join staff on Friday, August 7 at EdVenture Children's Museum for the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Countdown to Kindergarten Celebration. Ms. DeVenny called on Jim Riddle of Lexington County First Steps to provide a brief update on his work to pilot a Countdown to Kindergarten program targeted at underserved Latino families.

New Business:

Mr. Noble requested that a portion of the August 20 Board meeting be dedicated to discussion of recent ED survey data.

Mr. Wingate recognized local partnership directors in attendance and asked each to reflect briefly on the site visit process and other recent meetings. Mr. Riddle expressed his thanks to Trustee Roger Pryor for attending the Lexington County site visit and reported his excitement with the process. Kimberly Jordan thanked Mr. Wingate for his participation in a recent regional meeting of executive directors. LaMyra Sanders of Orangeburg expressed her thanks to Ms. Davis and Ms. DeVenny for their site visit participation and Dorothy Priester provided a brief update on the "Talk to Me!" campaign, which continues to attract community partners in Cherokee County.

**Upon a motion by Rep. Allison and a second by Ms. Van Riper the Board went into Executive Session at 3:10 pm to discuss a personnel matter.**

The Board exited executive session at 3:29 pm. No action was taken.

**Upon a motion from Mr. Noble and a second by Mr. Pryor, the Board adjourned at 3:30 pm.**