



## **Meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council**

June 17, 2021, immediately following the SC First Steps Board Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92196505922?pwd=WnA4MFlYZWJXWmFJU21xK2YzWndFdz09>

### **AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order and Approve Agenda (David Morley)  
**Motion:** To adopt the agenda as submitted.
  
- II. Approve April 15, 2021 Minutes (David Morley)  
**Attachments:** April 15, 2021 Minutes  
**Motion:** To approve the minutes of the April 15, 2021 Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting.
  
- III. **Motion** (David Morley)  
**Motion:** to adopt the purpose, mission, vision, and goals for the South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System.  
**Attachment:** South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System Motion
  
- IV. First 5 South Carolina  
Tom Lacas and Jessica Garret, 37 Gears
  
- V. Report from the Interagency Collaboration Committee (Dr. David Mathis)  
**Attachments:** Interagency Collaboration Committee Report & Recap
  
- VI. ECAC Report on Activities (Georgia Mjartan)  
**Attachments:** Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council
  
- VII. Adjourn  
**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council



## Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting

April 15, 2021, immediately following the SCFS Board of Trustees Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92434118920?pwd=VzAwYUFWblhMMjFIWlBITG5YWWZZQT09>

### *Draft Minutes*

#### **Members Present (17):**

Dave Morley, Chair	Walter Fleming
Sen. Gerald Malloy	Tim Holt
Sen. Greg Hembree	Roger Pryor
Dr. David Mathis	Jennifer McConnell
Mary Lynne Diggs	Jesica Mackey
Sue Williams	John Hayes
Michael Leach	Janie Neeley
Dr. Edward Simmer	Dr. Amy Williams
Rep. Jerry Govan	

#### **Members Absent (5):**

Rep. Rita Allison  
Constance Holloway  
Robert Kerr  
Alexia Newman  
Dr. Shelley Canright

#### **Others Present (69)**

Georgia Mjartan	Jessica Garrett	Rogers Pender
Aimee Rovane	Justina Siuba	Sally Cauthen
Anna Workman	Karen Oliver	Sarah Crawford
Berry Kelly	Kate Roach	Sharon Bruton
Beth Moore	Kaytlen Caldwell	Shayla Pettigrew
Betty Gardiner	Kim Chariker	Sheila Cornwell
Betty Washington	Kristin Zeaser Sydow	SheKiah Reese
Bill Potapchuk	Kristine Jenkins	Sheryl Stewart
Blaine VanDyke	Laura Baker	Stephanie Cook
Brenda McRae	Lavinia Tejada	Suzanne McGougan
Candi Lalonde	Leslie Williams	Tierra Thomas
Carletta Isreal	Linnie Miller	Tiffany Outlaw
Chelsea Richard	Lis Guiamares	Tom Lacas
Cheryl Scales-Chavis	Marc Drews	Tonya Mack
Cindy Ellis	Marcia Bacon	Tricia Richardson
Cindy Galloway	Mark Barnes	Valencia Johnson
Cindy Riley	Martha Strickland	Tonya Misuraca
Debbie Robertson	Meredith Dickens	Samantha Ingram
Dione Brabham	Misty Pearson	Tamara Pack
Dorian Young	Nancy Zioboro	Christine Zamboki
Gina Beebe	Pierce McNair	Crystal Campbell
Iris Morant	Rachal Hatton-Moore	Kerri Schnake
Jennifer Williams	Rebecca Antill	Crystal Culbreath



Mr. Morley called the ECAC meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Holt provided the motion. Ms. McConnell provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley requested a motion to approve the February 18, 2021 minutes. Sen. Hembree provided the motion. Dr. Mathis provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Williams provided the motion. Rep. Govan provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Melanie Barton from the Office of the Governor provided insight on the Governor's requests on early childhood outcomes and investments through measurable results.

Mr. Bill Potapchuk of Community Building Institute provided an update on the progress on the South Carolina Birth Through Five Plan.

Ms. Mjartan announced that 37 Gears was selected as the vendor to develop the First 5 SC portal. Tom Lacas and Jessica Garret of 37 Gears provided their plans for the creation of the First 5 SC portal.

Mr. Leach gave an update on the Childcare Development Fund State Plan and provided timelines and funding information for the plan.

Dr. Mathis reported on the Interagency Collaboration Committee and the three focus areas for ESSR funds.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Mathis provided the motion. Ms. McConnell provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Morley at 4:22 p.m.



## **MOTION**

To adopt the following purpose, mission, vision, and goals for the South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System.

South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System

### **Purpose**

To develop recommendations to the South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council for data governance and to operationalize the South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System.

### **Mission**

Establish and maintain a comprehensive infrastructure for integrated, accurate, and actionable data to support children, families, and communities in South Carolina.

### **Vision**

We will be successful when all children reach their highest potential.

### **Goals**

1. Create standard definitions and reports for evidence-based decision making.
2. Achieve equity by supporting stakeholders in identifying and resolving disparities.
3. Inform policies and practices to support children, families, and communities.
4. Connect early childhood data into longitudinal data systems.
5. Understand the impacts of investment from Birth through Workforce.
6. Improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians.



To: Early Childhood Advisory Council

From: Dr. David Mathis, Chair, Interagency Collaboration Committee

Date: June 10, 2021

**RE: Report from the Interagency Collaboration Committee**

The Interagency Collaboration Committee (ICC) held its regular bimonthly meeting on May 4, 2021. Four guests attended the meeting. Peggy Ball and Chad Dorn presented an overview and update of the Preschool Development Grant (PDG). Bill Potapchuk, Community Building Institute, and Mary Beth Salomone Testa, MBT Solutions, solicited specific feedback for the Birth through Five Plan. They asked for feedback regarding the mental health needs of young children and their families.

Key staff involved with the early childhood needs assessment, state data collection and management, PDG activities, and Birth through Five Plan are meeting regularly to coordinate work and activities. An unduplicated count of children engaged with early childhood programs was identified as a project of interest. During the most recent meeting of this collaborative group, staff from Research, Evaluation, and Measurement Center (REM) reported that this spring, *Early Childhood Education Journal* accepted an article about the findings of the 2019 Early Childhood Needs assessment, "[Identifying the Needs of Prekindergarten Children: A Focus on Health, Wellbeing, and Family Environment.](#)"

The ICC receives a regular update from the SC Early Learning Extension of the of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. A Data Governance Work Group is meeting twice a month to establish a set of key questions, and then determine what data is being collected to help answer those questions. Recommendations will be presented to the South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The Work Group is collecting feedback from various stakeholders and end-users to ensure that key questions match stakeholders' interests and needs.

The ICC will not meet in July. This meeting will be rescheduled for August 3, and the ICC will review and discuss progress to date on the Birth through Five Plan.



**Interagency Collaboration Committee  
Meeting Recap  
May 4, 2021**

Present: Georgia Mjartan, SC First Steps/ECAC; Eric Bellamy, Children’s Trust; Solandra Bowman, SC Educational Television; Jennifer Buster, Department of Health and Human Services; Mary Lynne Diggs, Head Start Collaboration Office; Louise Johnson, Department of Mental Health; Rusty Monhollon, Commission on Higher Education Joyce Kimrey, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs;

Absent: David Mathis, Department of Education, Chair; Leesa Aiken, State Library; Amber Gillum, Department of Social Services; Brannon Traxler, Department of Health and Environmental Control;

Guests: Peggy Ball and Chad Dorn, Propulsion Squared  
Michele Bowers, SC Department of Social Services  
Bill Potapchuk, Community Building Institute and Mary Beth Salomone Testa, MBT Solutions  
Toma Lacas and Jessica Garrett, 37 Gears

Staff: Karen Oliver, Laura Baker, Justina Siuba, SC First Steps/ECAC

Call to Order and Welcome

Georgia Mjartan convened the meeting.

Preschool Development Grant

Peggy Ball and Chad Dorn presented an overview of the Preschool Development Grant. The showcased the collaboration among early childhood providers.

**ICC members will be asked to**

- Help distribute a survey which will be used to update the PDG Needs Assessment
- Provide information for the Annual Performance Progress Report relating to numbers of children and families served, as well as expenditures made on behalf of those children and families

Building South Carolina’s Birth through Five Plan

Bill Potapchuk, Community Building Institute, and Mary Beth Salomone Testa, MBT Solutions, solicited specific feedback regarding the mental health needs of young children and their families. Increased access to care in rural areas, home visiting that includes mental health supports, increasing the number of mental health providers, and enhanced training for professionals to address mental health issues in schools and child care centers were listed and discussed by ICC participants.

First 5 SC

Tom Lacas and Jessica Garrett, 37 Gears, provided an overview of First Five SC. Through a single online portal, families and their advocates can find information about child care, health, early intervention, nutrition, and parenting support programs in their area. First Five SC engages parents and caregivers as active partners in making South Carolina’s early childhood system work for young children and families. By streamlining the search and application process, First Five SC helps families better understand their options and choose the programs and services that best meet their needs.

**ICC members will be asked to**

Meet with 37 Gears for in-depth conversations about the site.

## SC Early Learning Extension

Justina Siuba, Data Governance Coordinator, provided an update of the SC Early Learning Extension (SCELE), of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. The work of the SCELE is to improve outcomes for young children and their families through an aligned system for data-informed decisions and policies. Siuba presented a draft set of questions of interest that the SCELE should be able to answer. Questions included

- What are the characteristics and where are the vulnerable and underserved children and families?
  - Including a specific focus on rural areas in SC, minority communities, undocumented families
- Who and where are the children being served and those awaiting services? (unduplicated counts and waitlists)
- Are South Carolina's children, starting at birth, on track to succeed?
  - Are they ready for kindergarten/demonstrate readiness in multiple domains?

ICC members are encouraged to contact Siuba with questions or feedback and additional questions.

## Cross-sector Collaboration and Updates

The Commission on Higher Education is putting in place a plan to increase equity in higher education and reduce gaps in achievement and learning.

Head Start will be presenting a Census report to the Education Oversight Committee at the Statehouse. The report is done twice a year (December and June) and will now include numbers on foster and homeless children.

ETV has launched Donkey Hodie, an educational show with puppets. SCETV is assisting with data casting for educational content to rural areas.

The Department of Mental Health working to expand its access to services into rural areas.

Children's Trust of SC recently held a webinar announcing the [SC Home Visiting Needs Assessment Update 2020](#). The organization will be moving to more outreach and creating a network of home visiting programs.

The Department of Disabilities and Special Needs reported that SC was one of the few states that served more children during the pandemic. The department is working more in rural areas.

The Department of Health and Human Services has a new director who is still learning about the agencies many services. BabyNet also saw growth in numbers.

The Department of Social Services (SC DSS) is continuing to approve vouchers as part of COVID relief. Child care centers will soon be able to apply for a fourth round of provider grants. SC DSS will host a public hearing June 7 as part of its preparation of the State Plan for the Child Care Development Block Grant.

SC First Steps was joined by DSS Director Mike Leach to present to the Early Childhood Study Committee on interagency collaboration and its responsiveness. The two agencies will be launch First Steps 4K + Siblings. The program will provide siblings of First Steps 4K students a scholarship to attend child care or after school care for 52 weeks.

The ECAC will host an in-person Summit on Early Childhood on December 2. A number of featured speakers have been secured.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

1300 Sumter Street • Concord Bldg., Suite 100 • Columbia, South Carolina 29201  
Phone 803-734-0479 • Fax 803-734-1431 • Web site [www.scfirststeps.org](http://www.scfirststeps.org)



## Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council June 17, 2021

### Early Childhood Strategic Plan

1. Meetings and interviews with 37 policy makers, agency heads, ECAC members, and experts in young children and their families
  - a. 7 state agencies
  - b. 8 regional or state organizations represented
2. Work session for ICC and ECAC in August
3. Draft plan to be presented ECAC at August 19 meeting

### Integrated Early Childhood Data

1. Established ECAC as the governing body for Early Childhood System Data Governance, including staffing these efforts
2. Activated and engaged Data Governance Work Group (meet 2x/month)
3. Drafted initial set of potential key questions
4. Receiving technical assistance from Child Trends – Early Childhood Data Collaborative, SLDS State Support Team, and other states with established Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems

### First Five SC

1. Vendor procured: 37 Gears
2. First Five SC team met with five programs: SNAP and TANF (DSS); WIC (DHEC); BabyNet (DHHS); Early Intervention (DDSN)
3. Three meetings are scheduled: Children's Services (DMH); Maternal Child Health Block Grant programs (Children's Trust and DHEC)
4. To be scheduled: Child care (DSS); Medicaid (HHS)

### www. PalmettoPrek.org

1. 49,469 unique website visitors to date (February 1, 2020 – June 8, 2021)
2. 8815 leads (children ages 3 or 4)
3. 6995 children

### Family Voice Council

1. 9 applications received; 4 families selected (other applicants ineligible)
2. Plan to recruit 6 more families so as to stagger terms
3. Up to 20 members shall be recruited through the end of 2021

### 2021 Summit on Early Childhood

1. Thursday, December 2, in-person, Columbia Convention Center
  - a. Theme: *From the Start: Prenatal to Three*
2. 9 Sponsors secured; 5 sponsors represent ECAC/ICC members (Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Trust, Department of Social Services, Department of Education, SCETV)
3. Featured Speakers include: Dr. Dipesh Navsaria <http://www.navsaria.com/home/> and Dr. Iheoma Iruka, <https://fpg.unc.edu/people/iheoma-u-iruka>



## Grants

1. Alliance for Early Success Grant
  - a. Grant renewed for 2021-2022
  - b. Grant increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000
2. Preschool Development Grant
  - a. Year 1 Annual Report submitted end of April
  - b. Plans for Year 2 include working on a fiscal map of the early childhood landscape
    - i. Map will include PDG funded programs and other programs that contribute to well-being of young children and their families
  - c. Staff involved with needs assessment, evaluation, data collection and strategic planning are now meeting regularly with ECAC strategic planning facilitators to coordinate work and activities