



## Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting

August 15, 2024, immediately following the SCFS Board of Trustees Meeting  
SC First Steps  
Minutes

### **Council Members Present (16):**

Mary Lynne Diggs  
Rep. Shannon Erickson  
Dr. Matthew Ferguson  
John Hayes  
Sen. Greg Hembree  
Mike Leach  
David Lisk  
Dave Morley, Chairman  
Janie Neeley

Dorothy Priester  
Roger Pryor  
Mary Anne Scott  
Dr. Edward Simmer  
Wes Wooten  
Dr. Amy Williams, Vice Chair  
Sue Williams

### **Council Members Absent (9):**

Rep. Terry Alexander  
Dr. Robert Bank  
Jacque Curtin  
Constance Holloway  
Robert Kerr  
Jessica Mackey  
Sen. Gerald Malloy  
Jack McBride  
Dr. Brenda Williams

### **Attendees (75)**

Mark Barnes  
Avian Jones  
Alissa Durham  
Alonzo Johnson  
Amanda Bailey  
Amber Gillum  
Amy Breault  
Anita Ellison Porter  
Anna Layton  
April Cromer  
Arthur Brewton  
Barbara Casper  
Berry Kelly  
Betty Washington  
BJ Norris Long  
Brian Butler  
Chelsea Adamson  
Chelsea Richard  
Cheryl Scales  
Cindy Galloway  
Cindy Hurst  
Cindy Riley  
Crystal Williams  
Darlyene Gillie  
David Lisk  
David O'Kelly

Dorian Young  
Elaine Gentry  
Elizabeth Dudek  
Emma Matzko  
Felicia O'Neal  
Francis Rushton  
Gina Beebe  
Harriett Clarke  
Jaiden Branch  
Janice Kilburn  
Jeanette Samuel  
John Browne  
Jon Artz  
Joy Mazur  
Julie Greer  
Kaitlyn Richards  
Karen Oliver  
Kate Roach  
Kathy Fitzgerald  
Kenna Hoover  
Kerry Cordan  
Kristen Martocchio  
Kristine Jenkins  
LaKesha Meredith  
Lamikka Samuel  
LaMyra Sanders-Dukes

Lexi Jones  
Lis Guimaraes  
Maebelle Williams  
Martha Strickland  
Melissa Griffin  
Mildred Daniels  
Patricia McRoy  
Pauletta Plowden  
Pauline Whiting  
Rachel Amrhein  
Renee Williams  
Rudilly Dubose  
Sabrenna Long  
Salisa McTeer  
Sarah Eargle  
Shannon Allen  
Shayla Pettigrew  
Sheila Cornwell  
Stacy Greenwalt  
Tiffany Outlaw  
Tyshica McConner  
Veronica Reynolds  
Victoria Belin



The meeting was called to order at 2:48 p.m.

Mr. Lisk provided the motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Wooten, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Lisk provided a motion to approve the June 20, 2024 minutes. Dr. Simmer asked that we verify a motion that he made in the minutes. With that amendment, the motion was seconded by Mr. Wooten, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Richard provided context about the early childhood integrated data system policy statements and the Data Use Policy. Dr. Simmer made a motion to approve the Data Use Policy, seconded by Mr. Wooten. Mr. Morley entered discussion about departmental use and timeliness of approvals. Dr. Richard shared the roles and responsibilities in the SC ECIDS Data Governance Manual that addresses the timeliness of approvals. Mr. Morley amended the motion to approve the Data Use Policy and to include the modifications to the SC ECIDS Data Governance Manual. The motion was approved by Dr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Lisk. There was more discussion raised by Mr. Lisk and Mr. Leach. The motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Ferguson provided an update on the rollout of SC LETRS. He shared that 9,000 K-3 teachers are enrolled and 42 professionals from 16 education prep programs are participating in SC LETRS.

Mr. Leach shared that DSS introduced the launch of Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood Plus (MCCYN-Plus) where the Department of Defense will provide fee assistance to military and DoD civilian families in SC and to ABC Quality providers with a rating of B or higher. He shared that DSS has provided additional operating grants to providers. As of July 26, 2024, DSS has approved more than \$115 million in expansion grants and 1,807 providers have received those grants. DSS has provided \$12.7 million dollars in one time wage supplements to over 9,500 child care professionals through the SC Boost program.

Dr. Simmer shared the split of DHEC to Department of Public Health and the Department of Environmental Services is complete. He shared that there are 2 major divisions within the Department of Public Health. The Health Promotion and Services division focuses on community health and well-being by working to prevent and address disease as early as possible and providing access to quality care through the health departments. The Health Care Quality division focuses on patient safety and ensuring health care facilities across the state provide high quality care. DPH is focusing on increasing their community outreach and engagement efforts. With expanded funding from the legislators DPH will also be working with facilities on ways to improve and will be posting facility inspections online. In May, for the first time since COVID, DPH was able to serve over 100,000 families through the WIC program that month. He shared their success with First5SC where they received over 500 applications.

Ms. Williams shared the success of the SCParents.org website launch. There is now a Parent Advisory Council section within the website where parents can talk with other parents. They are also recruiting volunteers for blog posts. She shared information on their upcoming conference in Greenville and that Children's Trust will now partner to complete the Youth Risk Behavior



Surveillance Survey for the stated. Ms. Williams shared that all 7 home visiting models are now available on the First5SC portal.

Ms. Gillum shared that another round of grant applications for PDG were submitted at the end of July. If awarded, South Carolina would receive \$8 million for 3 years. Only 10 states in the county will be awarded this grant and states would be made aware by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Barnes reported on the activities of the ECAC. He provided an update on Palmetto PreK analytics and First Five SC analytics. He pointed out that 62% of applicants accessed First5SC after normal work hours. He reminded everyone about the Summit on Early Childhood on December 5<sup>th</sup> and thanked all Summit sponsors. He shared that there is a video that will be released at the Summit about the Two-Gen approach to family services. He also shared information about the success of the Palmetto Jamboree and the 4K Academy.

Ms. Diggs shared that the national priorities for Head Start collaboration offices have been merged. As of August 14<sup>th</sup> they noted that whereas Head Start collaborates with state systems, they are to align early care and education services supporting children and families prenatally, and to age 5. She also shared that they have been assigned to work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision making and improve child and family outcomes. She stated that Head Start is to support the expansion of access of high quality workforce and career development by working with professional development systems, including workforce registries and career pathways with an emphasis on institutions of higher learning to promote the expansion of career opportunities.

Mr. Lisk made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Dr. Simmer, and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.