

South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System

Data Governance Charter

SC ECIDS Data Governance Charter

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Definitions

- Agency - organization that houses a program
- Program - early childhood program serving children birth through five
- Member - individuals from the participating program and ancillary support in the Data Governance Work Group
- ECAC - South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council as codified in SC Code § 63-11-1725
- ECIDS - South Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System Framework
- Initiatives - funded projects with discrete deliverables
- DGWG - Data Governance Work Group

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SC ECIDS Data Governance Charter

I. Purpose

The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) acknowledges that data is a critical asset as it supports evidence-based decision-making and drives informed action. The ECAC is committed to implementing inter-agency data governance structure and processes to support the South Carolina (SC) Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) and its linkage to future longitudinal data systems. Participating programs in the SC ECIDS seek to develop a common understanding of early childhood data that is collected across South Carolina and will work to resolve data issues to achieve higher data quality.

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.

The Data Governance Charter operationalizes the DGWG by authorizing the DGWD to establish data governance procedures, processes, and standards and affirms member's commitment to the SC ECIDS.

A. Program Responsibilities

Participating programs will adopt, communicate, and enforce the established data governance policies, procedures, processes, and standards at all levels of their program as data is an inter and intra-agency asset. Participating programs need to assign members to participate in the Data Governance Work Group.

1. Accountability to the ECAC

A participating program is accountable to the ECAC for the following:

- i. maintaining an agreement with the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office for data sharing and integration into the SC Integrated Data System
- ii. attending regular project meetings, including annual on-site meetings and monthly meetings by member(s) designated by individual programs as their representatives
- iii. collecting and sharing data elements as agreed upon by the programs via the Data Governance Work Group
- iv. timely review of research requests
- v. requiring relevant staff be trained in data quality and system use and hosting trainings for staff and other stakeholders when necessary
- vi. providing accurate technical documentation

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2. How to Participate

To participate, programs are required to:

1. Sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the ECAC to confirm agreement and adherence to the ECIDS Data Governance Charter and selecting members from the program to participate in the DGWG. This MOA is a 5-year agreement that can be amended and terminated.
2. Execute an agreement with the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to contribute agreed upon data.

B. Relevant State Legislation

The ECAC established a Data Governance Work Group on April 15, 2021 with responsibility and specific duties as described in the following Charter to accomplish the legislative goals codified in SC State Code (§63-11-1725), particularly goals:

- “(4) develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the State;”
- “(8) develop and publish, using available demographic data, an indicators-based measure of school readiness at the state and community level.”

Access to early childhood data helps inform decisions related to early childhood education as outlined in the Education Accountability Act, SC State Code (§59-18-1950), effective June 10, 2017:

- “(A) The General Assembly recognizes the importance of having a state longitudinal data system to inform policy and fiscal decisions related to early childhood education, public education, postsecondary preparedness and success, and workforce development.
- (B)(1) The Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, working with the Office of First Steps to School Readiness, the South Carolina Department of Education, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, the Department of Social Services, the South Carolina Technical College System, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Employment and Workforce, and other state agencies or institutions of higher education, shall develop, implement, and maintain a universal identification system that includes, at a minimum, the following information for measuring the continuous improvement of the state public education system and the college and career readiness and success of its graduates:...”

- “(2) All information disseminated will conform to state and federal privacy laws.”

II. Scope

On August 19, 2021, the ECAC adopted the below key questions to be answered by the ECIDS. These questions will be revisited quarterly by the DGWG to ensure continued alignment with the ECIDS mission. The participating programs will agree upon standard data elements (child, family, classroom, and workforce levels) to answer the adopted key questions. The questions will be tailored based on the goals of each initiative.

A. Definitions for the SC ECIDS Key Questions

- Young children is defined as children under age six in South Carolina.
- Early childhood programs is defined broadly, beyond state and federally funded programs.
- Counts seek to identify an unduplicated number.

B. Key Questions for the SC ECIDS

1. What early childhood programs, statewide, are available for eligible young children?
2. How many young children are there?
3. How many young children are eligible for early childhood programs?
4. How many young children are enrolled in early childhood programs?
5. Are those enrolled in early childhood programs on track to succeed?
6. What is the return on investment for early childhood programs?

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III. Data Ownership

Programs retain ownership of their data and will ultimately decide the rules for the use of and access to their data.

IV. Current Initiatives

Initiatives of the ECIDS have discrete deliverables, one agency as the technical lead, and a clear funding source. All initiatives that include early childhood data should follow the ECIDS framework as outlined in the Data Governance Charter.

A. SC Early Learning Extension (ELE)

The ELE will be able to answer key questions about children while they were enrolled in early childhood care and education programs and link those experiences with K-12 outcomes. The technical lead on the ELE is the South Carolina Department of Education.

This is funded by the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program, Grant Number R372A200048, from the U.S. Department of Education through February 2024.

B. Enhanced SC Profile

An enhanced SC Profile will be built for early childhood data, including new data inputs into the SC Integrated Data System and leverage existing data inputs for evidence-based decision-making. The technical lead on this initiative is the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office.

This is funded by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0080-01-00, from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through April 2023.

V. Data Governance Roles & Responsibilities

A. Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)

The ECAC serves as the governing body and venue for collective decision making of the ECIDS Data Governance. A Data Governance Coordinator will be housed at the ECAC to facilitate the Data Governance Work Group for early childhood program data contributions to the ECIDS, including any initiatives and the SC Integrated Data System.

To support ECIDS data governance, the ECAC is responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction, for the SC ECIDS and ensuring alignment with the best interest of the early childhood system in South Carolina and the ECAC vision
- Reviewing and considering for adoption the recommendations prepared by the Data Governance Work Group regarding policies, procedures, processes, and standards when appropriate
- Voting on recommendations and policies developed by the Data Governance Work Group on topics like data sharing, data access, and reports
- Being a champion for their SC ECIDS within their agencies and promoting program participation

B. Data Governance Work Group (DGWG)

The DGWG will operationalize the ECIDS and develop and present recommendations to the ECAC for their consideration to support South Carolina's early childhood system in being aligned, coordinated, and family-centered. The DGWG promotes data quality, availability, data usage privacy, and security.

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To support ECIDS data governance, the DGWG is responsible for:

- Establishing procedures, processes, and standards for operationalizing the ECIDS, including but not limited to, effective data usage, sharing, access, security, and storage; future data integration; changes to standard reports; changes to data collection
- Selecting data elements to be included in the ECIDS
- Establishing standard definitions and reports
- Defining metadata and data quality standards
- Supporting data literacy and maximizing appropriate data use, including supporting data and research request processes

C. Data Governance Work Group Members

The DGWG can effectively fulfill its purpose only when members collaborate and act under a shared mission and supporting goals. Members who are selected to participate in meetings, discussions, and decisions serve on behalf of their agency/program.

To support ECIDS data governance, the members are responsible for:

- Meeting regularly to operationalize the ECIDS
- Ensuring that their agency leaders and organization are informed and brought into decision-making processes when appropriate
- Assigning an interim DGWG member if out for an extended period of time
- Being a champion for ECIDS within their agencies and programs

Data Governance Work Group Membership

It is the responsibility of programs to select the most appropriate members to serve on the DGWG. It is the member's responsibility to communicate all Data Governance policies, procedures, processes, and standards with their agency/program. The different types of program staff members on the DGWG are outlined below.

1. Early Childhood Program Experts

- Individual(s) from the participating program that have a rich understanding of the early childhood program and agency they are a part of, as well as the early childhood landscape in South Carolina.
- Research staff within or contracted partners of participating programs.
- Typical job titles include: program manager/director/coordinator.

2. Data Stewards

- Individual(s) from the participating program that develop and protect the information resources and ensure the integrity of the data.
- Typical job titles include: data analyst/research and planning administrator.

3. Technical Data Stewards/Technical Experts

- Individual(s) with expertise with the technical aspects of systems and models and ensure data security and governance and that Data Governance decisions are feasible from a technical perspective. Including:
 - Representatives from the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, SC Integrated Data System
 - Representatives from the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Research and Data Analysis and Chief Information Office

VI. Authority

The ECAC will serve as the governing body and venue for collective decision making of the ECIDS Data Governance. The ECAC has the authority to formally adopt high level strategic direction and policies for the ECIDS. The ECAC operates under the Freedom of Information Act guidelines as outlined in SC State Code §30-4-15.

The DGWG is not a formal committee of the ECAC and therefore does not take votes or spend public money. The DGWG is accountable to the ECAC and will escalate and report on data governance matters via appropriate channels. The Data Governance Work Group seeks consensus from participating members on decisions related to procedures, processes, and standards to operationalize the ECIDS and recommendations proposed to the ECAC.

It is the responsibility of the Data Governance Coordinator to facilitate and manage decisions and recommendations of the DGWG, to enable decision-making, and aid in issue resolution.

VII. Frequency and Nature of Meetings

To aid in the successful implementation of the Data Governance Work Group, the following outlines the mode and frequency of meetings:

- Bi-Monthly Meetings: The Data Governance Work Group will initially meet twice a month for an hour and a half and an ad-hoc basis, as required.
- Virtual Meetings: The Data Governance Work Group will meet virtually to ensure all members have an opportunity to participate.
- Periodic Review: Periodically, the Data Governance Work Group will review the frequency and duration of meetings based on current needs.

VIII. Foundational Documents

The following documents will serve as a standing reference to the operations and functions of the ECIDS and Data Governance to support the ECIDS. The documents will be available to participating entities and utilized to support on-boarding of new participating entities. The most current revisions are available at www.earlychildhoodsc.org/what-we-do/sc-early-childhood-integrated-data-system/.

Currently Available:

- Data Governance Charter – Defines the framework for the ECIDS and establishes the foundations by which it operates, including roles and responsibilities and escalation path
- ECIDS Overview Document – Defines the strategic direction for the ECIDS and is a resource for key stakeholders
- Data Governance Decision-Making Process and Procedure – Defines the procedure and process by which the Data Governance Work Group makes decisions and prepares recommendations
- ECIDS Communications Plan – Articulates the what, when, and how ECIDS information should be shared with stakeholders and defines brand identify and collateral

Forthcoming:

- Data Issues Index – Catalogs the issues and outcomes addressed by the Data Governance Work Group
- Data Governance Members List – Identifies participating programs and their members
- ECIDS Data Dictionary – Defines the official set of data elements that the ECIDS collects and reports broken down by initiative
- ECIDS Data Flow Diagram - Maps the flow of information for the ECIDS and its initiatives

