



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

October 20, 2022, immediately following the SC First Steps Board Meeting

SC First Steps

636 Rosewood Drive Columbia, SC 29201

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83722694987?pwd=dDhVLzIMYkRPMHlPYktkb0NwbFgzUT09>

### **AGENDA**

I. Call to Order and Approve Agenda (David Morley)

**Motion:** To adopt the agenda as submitted.

II. Meeting Minutes (David Morley)

**Motion:** To approve ECAC Minutes of August 18, 2022

**Attachment:** August 18, 2022 Minutes

III. ECAC Family Voice Council (Rachal Hatton-Moore)

**Attachment:** A Year of Family Voice: 2022 Report

<https://earlychildhoodsc.org/media/1gnje3qm/year-of-family-voice-2022.pdf>

(also included in ECAC materials)

IV. First Five SC ([www.first5sc.org](http://www.first5sc.org)) Update: (Tom Lacas, 37 Gears)

**Attachment:** First Five SC October Report

V. Presentations and Updates from ECAC Members

VI. Reports

a. Report from the Interagency Collaboration Committee (David Mathis)

**Attachment:** Interagency Collaboration Committee Report

b. ECAC Report on Activities, (Georgia Mjartan)

**Attachments:** Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council

VII. Adjourn (David Morley)

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council



## Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting

August 18, 2022, immediately following the SCFS Board of Trustees Meeting  
SC First Steps  
*Draft Minutes*

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

Dave Morley, Chair  
Dr. Shelley Canright, Vice Chair  
Rep. Paula Calhoon  
Jacque Curtin  
Sen. Greg Hembree  
Tim Holt  
Robert Kerr  
Michael Leach

Jesica Mackey  
Dr. David Mathis  
Jennifer McConnell  
Alexia Newman  
Roger Pryor  
Dr. Edward Simmer  
Sue Williams  
Dr. Amy Williams

### **Members Absent (7):**

Mary Lynne Diggs  
Dr. Michelle Fry  
Rep. Jerry Govan  
John Hayes  
Sen. Gerald Malloy  
Janie Neeley  
Nicole Wynkoop

### **Attendees (77)**

Georgia Mjartan  
Avian Jones  
Laura Baker  
Beth Moore  
Alexis Pipkins  
Allison Gee  
Amanda Bailey  
Amanda Mitchell  
Amy Engle  
Anastasia Spann  
Arthur Brewton  
Ashela Hatcher  
Bettye Bostick  
Betty Washington  
Beverly Booker  
Bill Simpson  
Bryan Burroughs  
Carletta Isreal  
Chastine Dickey-Jackson  
Chelsea Richard  
Cheryl Scales  
Cindy Galloway  
Crystal Campbell  
Danni Bloom  
Dedra Butler  
Denise Savidge  
Derek Cromwell  
Derek Lewis

Dorian Young  
Duchette Hylton  
Felicia Battle  
Jamal Middleton  
Jennifer Williams  
Jenny May  
Janice Kilburn  
Jon Artz  
Joy Mazur  
Justina Siuba  
Kaitlyn Richards  
Karren Oliver  
Kate Roach  
Kathy Fitzgerald  
Kenna Hoover  
Kerri Schnake  
Kerry Cordan  
Kim Trudell  
Kristen Martocchio  
Kristine Jenkins  
LaMyra Sanders  
Lexi Jones  
Lis Guimaraes  
Marcia Bacon  
Mark Barnes  
Maria James  
Martha Strickland  
Mary Dozier

Morgan Maxwell  
Olandor Lewis  
Paulette Plowden  
Rachal Hatton-Moore  
Robin Jackson  
Rogers Pender  
Sally Cauthen  
Samantha Ingram  
Santasha Highley  
Sharon Bruton  
Shayla Pettigrew  
Shealy Riebold  
Shelia Cornwell  
SheKiah Reese  
Spencer Scott  
Stacy Greenwalt  
Syntrell Thompson  
Tiffany Outlaw  
Travis Wharton  
Tricia Gordon  
Valencia Johnson



Mr. Morley called the ECAC meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. 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 June 16, 2022 minutes. Dr. Canright provided the motion. Sen. Hembree provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Siuba provided an update on the onboarding process of the SC Early Childhood Integrated Data Systems. Ms. McConnell provided the motion to approve the recommended SC Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) onboarding process as developed by the Early Learning Extension and Palmetto Drive to Five Data Governance Work Groups. Dr. Canright provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Mjartan provided an update on the usage of the First Five SC website since its launch.

Mr. Leach provided the following update on the federal stimulus funding and child care activities.

- On July 7, 2022, DSS launched a new funding opportunity for child care providers. This one-time Technology Grant is separate from the SC Building Blocks Stabilization Grant and may be used to purchase equipment or services needed to help support child care business operations and classroom functionality. The deadline to apply for the Technology Grant is August 31, 2022. Additional information and the grant application are available on the DSS Child Care website.
- As of 8/16/22, DSS has approved \$44,490,000 in Technology Grants to approximately 1,250 child care providers.
- On December 7, 2021, DSS launched the initial round of Child Care Stabilization Grants to qualified child care providers. In South Carolina, these stabilizations grants are called "SC Building Blocks". Under the American Rescue Plan, the state was appropriated \$436,582,621 in Child Care Stabilization Funds. 90% of these funds (\$392,924,359) must be spent on grants to qualified child care providers.
- As of 8/16/22, 1,837 child care providers have applied for Round 1 of the SC Building Blocks Grant (91% of potentially eligible). 1,793 applications have been approved, totaling \$212,525,939 for the 12-month grant period.
- On June 1, 2022, DSS launched a second round of SC Building Blocks grants. As of 8/16/22, 1,582 child care providers have applied for Round 2. 1,577 applications have been approved, totaling \$203,300,000.
- Between Round 1 and Round 2, DSS has approved \$414,825,939 in Stabilization Grants to child care providers.
- On October 16, 2020, DSS began offering child care assistance (vouchers) for working parents. In order to qualify, parent income must be at or below 300% FPL, and be working at least 15 hours a week or in school or training program. This category of child care is being provided for up to 52 weeks from the point of approval. Child care providers must be enrolled in ABC Quality to receive vouchers for eligible children.



- As of 8/16/22, 34,631 children have been approved for SC Child Care COVID-300 Vouchers and placed in a slot. Approximately \$419 million has been allocated for these vouchers.

Dr. Mathis reported on the Interagency Collaboration Committee and shared the milestones that have been accomplished with the work of the SC Birth through Five Plan.

Ms. Williams shared that in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Trust has launched [www.scparents.org](http://www.scparents.org) to help parents locate resources in their communities.

Ms. Mjartan provided a report on the activities of the ECAC.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sen. Hembree provided the motion. Dr. Mathis seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Morley at 4:00 p.m.



South Carolina  
**Early Childhood**  
Advisory Council

## Family Voice Council



# A Year of Family Voice

## 2022 Report

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    Family Voice Council Members

        - 2021-2022 Inaugural Term

        - 2022-2023 Term (as of August 31, 2022)



Pictured: Family Voice Council Member Nadya Brown (Richland County, S.C.)

Pictured on the cover: Family Voice Council Member Samirah Sawyer (Lexington County, S.C.) and family with Gov. Henry McMaster to launch the First Five SC parent web portal.

## Background

The South Carolina Family Voice Council (FVC) was born of a commitment from the public early childhood system to partner with families and listen, center, and co-create the future of programming and policies that impact families in our state. The SC Family Voice Council is supported through funding from the Preschool Development Grant, Birth-Five.

The SC Family Voice Council began meeting in August 2021 with eight founding members. The remaining parents were onboarded through June 2022, for a total of 20 members. Members of the SC Family Voice Council are featured on the Early Childhood Advisory Council webpage and listed in Appendix A. They represent all regions of the state and have a wide range of experiences, family composition, parent and child ages, incomes, professional backgrounds, and viewpoints. They are true representatives of the array of family experiences in South Carolina.

At the foundational meeting in August 2021, members identified key principles and values for the group: parents are a child's strongest champion; families supporting other families is fundamental in building flourishing communities. Members recognize the SC Family Voice Council as a way not only to amplify and center the lived experiences of parents, but also a way for each member to share personal interests, skills, and passions for the betterment of our state.

As parent leaders, FVC members wanted to learn about early childhood services so they could help promote parent awareness and use of available resources in their regions. At each monthly meeting a different state agency or publicly funded program or initiative presented to the members. The presentation was an opportunity for members to learn more about the programs that were of interest to them, and for members to offer feedback about possible areas of enhancement when applicable.

Many agencies, programs, and initiatives presented to the SC Family Voice Council on a range of topics:

- South Carolina First Steps
  - Ideas for Parent Incentives for Focus Group Participation
- Early Childhood Advisory Council:
  - Input into For Our Future: SC's Birth through Five Plan,
  - Development of First5SC.org,
  - Early Childhood Integrated Data System communications plan,
  - Data interpretation for the SC Parents' Needs Assessment and helping develop direction for the questions for parent interviews in the next phase of the needs assessment.
- SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
  - WIC
  - SNAP-Ed
- SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs

- Early Intervention
- SC Department of Education
  - Family Supports from the Early Learning and Literacy, and Learning Engagement Coaches
- Additional organizations were invited by the SC Family Voice Council to make presentations
  - Help Me Grow
  - Kindred Hearts
  - SC Infant Mental Health Association
  - Unite Us

FVC also engaged in leadership and skill building professional development opportunities. Members attended leadership trainings with Family Connection of SC, Clemson Youth Institute, and the 2021 Summit on Early Childhood.

## Parent Feedback Themes

Throughout every aspect of parent feedback, a resounding theme emerged. Parents desire respect for their role as their child's first and earliest teacher and champion, and as experts on their own lives and experiences. One member stated, "parents are intelligent, even if they have different educational levels, skillsets and knowledge bases than child-serving professionals."

Throughout the year FVS feedback was solicited. Below, feedback has been summarized into three primary categories: barriers to finding resources and participating in programs, information sharing and outreach, and mental health and special needs supports.

### Barriers to Finding Resources and Participating in Programs

- Because transportation and knowing about available services are barriers, on-site screenings should be more available at child care centers and schools, and more partnerships with pediatric practices and child services are desired.
- Using common language between programs is preferred, as it is frustrating and confusing when different programs use different terminology and are not clear. Information from agencies should be clear in all communications, not just the eligibility forms and application. Parents should be aware of how their information is being used during the process, and it is helpful to show them what else they may be eligible for early in any enrollment process.
- There have been long wait times for visits in the past, as well as misinformation around program eligibility requirements, and parents thought they were ineligible for programs that they were in fact able to participate in.
- COVID-19 is still an ongoing hardship for many families due to risk, and members like when programs create contactless and virtual options for families.
- Parents feel they must advocate for their child, and another member indicated that sometimes public program staff are ill-equipped to assist families who are experiencing emergency situations and need assistance. For parents with older children, they experienced difficulties when their child

was aging out of early childhood system and found less supports available, or they were difficult to find and transition into. They found that frequently programs of interest have eligibility criteria for age that don't match child's/family's needs, whether their child was too young or older. There are also situations where the barriers in eligibility information and being eligible for needed programs are imposed by federal regulations that are not flexible for states to manage based on constituent needs.

- Parents are also concerned because program availability is inconsistent across the state, particularly in rural areas. Relationships between different entities that serve families are inconsistent, and this makes it difficult to find information through "no wrong door" approaches.
- Older parents recognize that education has changed tremendously, and they may need to know how to use and access technology. Some families do not have internet access or are not reliant on technology for primary communications with schools.
- A parent with multiple children feels that one application should be able to link to multiple children in a household. Many forms require parents fill one out for every child even though the household information is the same, and one household may have several children.

"It used to take forever to wait at offices in-person, I love the online meetings and services." "As a parent you have to fill it [applications] out several times, and it takes a lot of time."

## Information Sharing and Outreach

- Data use between early childhood agencies could be used to show student achievement as a way to show success of the early childhood system's efforts, as long as the information is not biased and only measuring data points that are in the favor of programs and schools. Data sharing with parents should also be personal and relevant to community needs to truly reflect the impact of programs on people in their community.
- The information should be well-represented. All information should also be available in Spanish.
- Parents desire data about how their children might compare to the larger group of children through percentiles that coincide with developmental expectations. For example, when they apply for kindergarten, parents are asked what early care and education was like for their child, and data about this would help parents answer that question. The preferred method of data sharing is for the information be sent between schools to assist in aligning the data easily to benefit families, save time, and ensure the information is correct between early education and the K-12 system.
- One parent also noted that standards change frequently, and it is often unclear what their child needs to be able to do to meet those learning standards and be prepared.
- Parents are concerned that systems can be so data focused that parents get disconnected and shuffled between entities—knowing information and data can help focus on what children need to learn, since parents have diverse backgrounds and may understand the information differently.

"Finding support can be difficult."

## Mental Health and Special Needs Supports

- It can be difficult transitioning out of the birth-five system and into the special education system. Often parents felt as if they had to know someone to help navigate systems or learn about available resources.
- Mental health awareness is important for parents of the very young, and resources should be offered, especially due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Parents Mental health awareness is important for parents of the very young, and resources should be offered, especially due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Parents often have to wait a long time between being told their child has a special need and finding assistance, getting screenings, and receiving a diagnosis. Parents expressed interest in a universal developmental screening approach for children, and faced challenges in having their child's plans adhered to.

"If we truly believe that children and families are valuable, then there should be no price tag on ensuring investments for great outcomes." "Support can be difficult."

## How Programs Used Parent Feedback

An important part of partnership with families is responding to feedback and sharing how their input was used to make continuous improvements at the presenting agencies. To date, FVC feedback has been used to change how incentives are offered to parents for surveys and focus groups, and their recommendations and suggestions for outreach opportunities have been used by several of the presenting agencies to reach more families about their programs and services. Presenters have also followed up with SC Family Voice Members' individual requests for information and answers to specific questions about topics in their community. In areas where general issues were raised related to kindergarten transition or information needs of families, information was shared with other professionals throughout the early childhood system where relevant to their work. Input from the SC Family Voice Council was also instrumental to the development of First Five SC and outreach for First Five SC. For example, the eligibility screener now includes the "complete for another child" option, to minimize the number of times parents need to repeat entry of household circumstances.

Feedback from the members also included a desire for continued outreach to past presenters to see if their feedback resulted in not only immediate project changes, but any longer-term change in operations or procedures. They requested that in addition to following up with presenters immediately after monthly meetings, that there be a 3 or 6 month follow-up with presenters and a report back to members, which will be implemented in the 2022-2023 service term.



Pictured: Family Voice Council Member Khadija Kershaw (Florence, S.C.)

## Recommendations and Opportunities

Many parents expressed that using online services makes them feel empowered and provides them information when they need it. Prior to the pandemic, members indicated "it used to take forever to wait at offices in-person; I love the online meetings and services." Another member said that they were a Medicaid participant, which automatically qualified for some other services. Implementing presumptive eligibility for other programs is convenient for families.

The categories below include what FVC feels are the best opportunities to reach families with information.

### Preferred Outreach Materials and Methods

- Parents like materials that include graphics, pictures, symbols, and illustrations that are clear, straight forward, and succinct.
- Parents relate well and appreciate testimonies from other parents.
- A small snapshot of the web address/QR codes could be provided that is small enough to stick in pockets—business card sized or smaller, as many parents don't have time to read brochures.
- QR codes could be posted at bus stops and inside busses.
- Parents love to receive information through Tik Tok, short videos and reels on Instagram and YouTube.
- Parents spend a lot of time in cars taking children to appointments and activities, and radio continues to be a prime way they receive information.

## **Outreach Materials In Community Locations**

- Support literacy through libraries in low-income housing and apartment complexes as well as through mobile health services
- Provide information at grocery stores. Share brochures and information that excites children, provides parent education, and offers nutrition education. Families regularly go to grocery stores and pharmacies.
- Little libraries at parks and zoos
- Keep in mind the historical importance of black churches and ensure pastors are kept informed about service availability. Send press kits of program information to local and state level congregational associations.
- Continue to provide information at back to school bashes and family festivals and events.

## **Targeting Outreach to Professional Groups**

- Provide community supports information to police departments
- Large health systems communications departments
- Collaborate with community health workers and librarians for prenatal education as well as early childhood education
- Military family support organizations, Veterans Affairs, and military bases
- Information to fatherhood initiatives
- Ministerial Alliances
- Chambers of commerce
- Women's shelters and family shelters
- Technical colleges
- Information on all nutrition programs could be provided at schools, and possibly explore pilots for joint enrollment during eligibility screening for Free and Reduced Lunch, and through early care and learning centers and public school 4K. This could be included in enrollment and registration packets.
- Updated information should be provided to school social workers, social work academic programs, colleges of education for student teachers, resource teachers and guidance counselors.

## **Future Plans**

The SC Family Voice Council welcomes new members when seats become available at the end of service terms, and invites public system leaders to present and have meaningful discussions with members at our monthly meetings.

The ongoing goal of the members is for continued impact, and their hope is for the state's early childhood system to continually increase ways for families to be heard and their voices to help shape

the direction of improvements for all of South Carolina's children. Over the 2022-2023 service term, FVC members are interested in supporting work around newborn screenings, maternal health, autism spectrum disorders and special needs services, and nutrition.

For more information about the SC Family Voice Council, please contact Rachal Hatton-Moore, Two-Generation Coordinator, [rhatton@scfirststeps.org](mailto:rhatton@scfirststeps.org), who is support staff for the SC Family Voice Council members.

## Appendix

A special thanks to the SC Family Voice Council Members for their contributions of content and review of the document prior to publication, and to Iris Ballen-Morant for her service to the SC Family Voice Council as the Early Childhood Advisory Council AmeriCorps Outreach Member 2021-2022.

### Family Voice Council Members

#### 2021-2022 Inaugural Term

Ibukun Adedokun	Christina Hooker
Ashley Berendzen	Khadija Kershaw
Nadya Brown	Joseph T. McCullough
Tiara Coleman	Jessica O. Morton
Rosa Linda Contreras	Lindsey Phillips
Deneshia Craig	Samirah Sawyer
Ferlecia Cuthbertson	Markeisha Spencer
Corina Esaw	Angelique Stewart
Jennifer Grant	Tre' Tailor
Niesha Hallums	Richard Williams, Jr.

#### 2022-2023 Term (Members as of August 31, 2022)

Ibukun Adedokun	Niesha Hallums
Ashley Berendzen	Christina Hooker
Nadya Brown	Khadija Kershaw
Samantha Carpenter	Jessica O. Morton
Rosa Linda Contreras	Lindsey Phillips
Deneshia Craig	Samirah Sawyer
Ferlecia Cuthbertson	Markeisha Spencer
Corina Esaw	Tre' Tailor
Jennifer Grant	Richard Williams, Jr.



[EarlyChildhoodSC.org](http://EarlyChildhoodSC.org)



First Five SC (<https://first5sc.org>)

1. Officially launched February 17, 2022. A login system for programs to collect information for eligible families/leads was launched March 30, 2022.
2. Common application development is underway, with demo available at October 20, 2022 meeting. Stakeholder meetings will be held October 25-27, 2022, and testing will be in November 2022.
3. First Five SC had a booth at the fair to provide information about public early childhood programs, and collect stories from families about their experiences.

#### Portal Analytics

February 1, 2022 – September 30, 2022

Unique Visitors—53,046

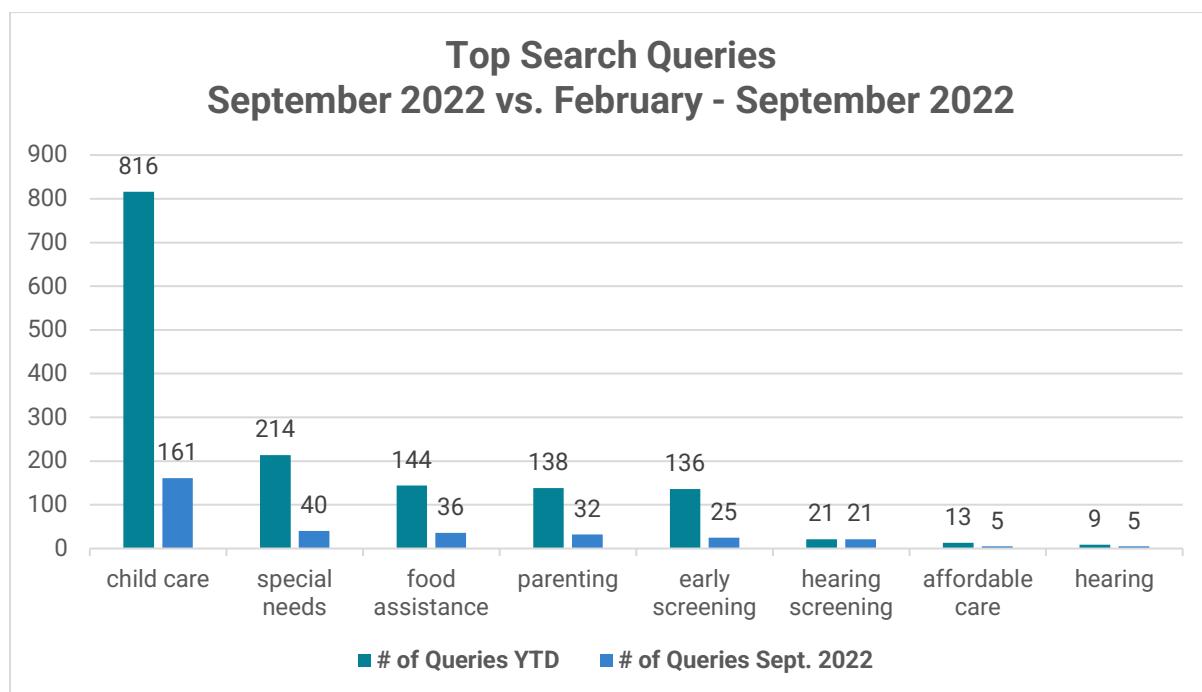
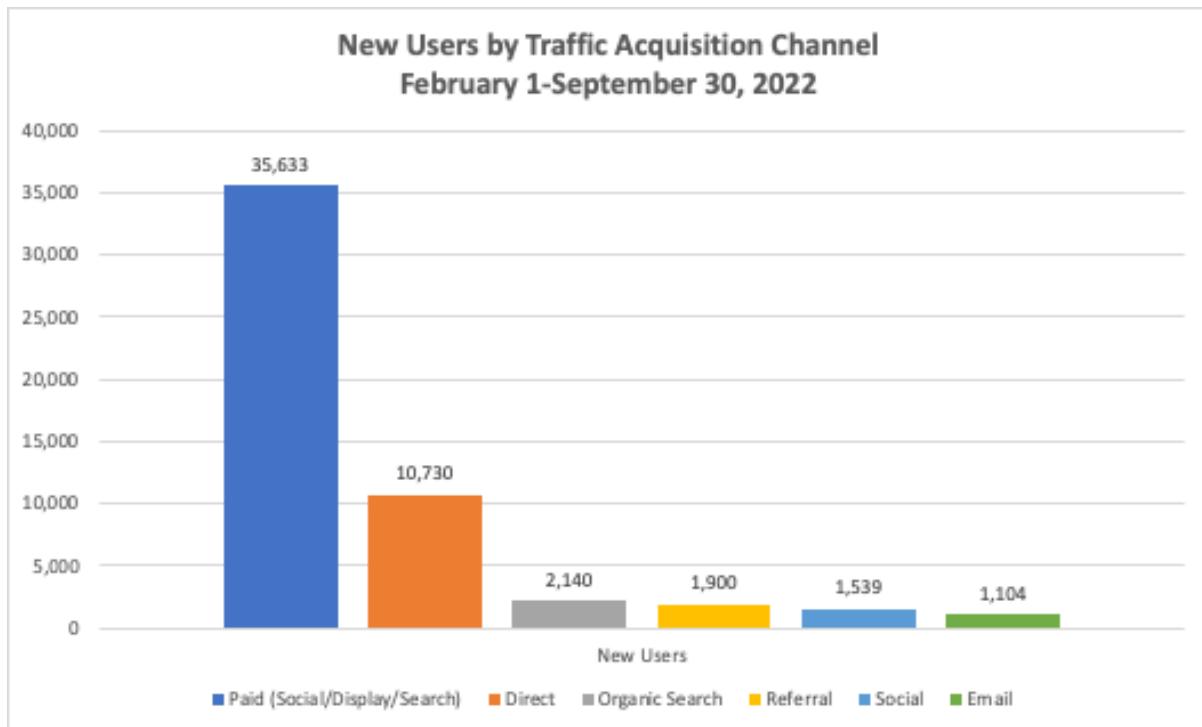
Unique Leads—\*4,787

Pageviews—132,354

Month	# unique visitors	# unique families that completed the eligibility screener	# families eligible for at least 1 program (leads)
Feb	7,098	695	562
Mar	5,718	743	627
Apr	3,386	255	215
May	5,904	371	309
June	4,939	479	398
July	8,301	714	609
August	8,739	916	763
September	8,961	961	704
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,046</b>	<b>5134</b>	<b>3180</b>

\*Monthly # of unique leads and # of families eligible are reflective of all entries during the measured monthly period.

Total YTD # of unique leads and # of families eligible removes duplicate entries and therefore will be less than the sum of monthly totals.





## **Interagency Collaboration Committee Update**

The ICC did not meet in September. Instead, it elected to meet in workgroups, centered around updating the Birth through Five Plan. Work groups meet in October. The ICC will use its November meeting to prepare the Birth through Five Plan update for ECAC's review in December.

ICC and working groups are compiling information to prepare a Birth through Five plan status report for ECAC. The report will include three components:

- 1) Key accomplishments related to specific Birth through Five Plan objectives  
These accomplishments are captured through agency reports, interviews, and work groups. The accomplishments section of the report may serve as a compendium of work completed by the range of agencies, programs and providers that have a stake in young children and their families.
- 2) Recent "Wins," those accomplishments that deserve additional recognition because they reflect on progress for the early childhood system as a whole.
- 3) Milestones to Monitor, shorter term indicators that demonstrate progress toward achieving Birth through Five Plan goals and measures.

Wins and Milestones will be developed through a consensus process of the ICC and presented to ECAC for its consideration and approval.

The Birth through Five Plan Status Report is important for two reasons. First, individual agencies complete a variety of reports for a range of audiences (legislative reports, grant reports, etc.), but this might be the first time a group has jointly created a compendium of achievements that document progress toward achieving outcomes for young children and their families. Further, the report will be presented in a way that is useful and accessible to a range of stakeholders: parents, community leaders, and policy makers.

Second, and perhaps most significant, the status report will represent the shared agreement, accountability, and responsibility of ICC to implement the Birth through Five Plan and achieve milestones approved by the ECAC.



## Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council For October 20, 2022

### **SC Early Childhood Integrated Data System**

Justina Siuba, Data Governance Coordinator, led ECAC work on the Early Learning Extension (ELE), funded by Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant (SLDS), and the Palmetto Drive to Five Data Dashboard, funded by Preschool Development Grant (PDG). Justina recently accepted a policy manager position at the South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health. Below, please find a summary of accomplishments and milestones to monitor that will chart progress in organizing an integrated system.

In the last 10 months, we've been able to identify our first indicator for the Palmetto Drive to Five Data Dashboard, onboard new partners, and identify the core elements from participating programs to work toward answering our SC ECIDS Key Questions. For the Palmetto Drive to Five Data Dashboard, there are still milestones on the horizon. These include preparing the dashboard for public presentation before the end of 2022, continuing work on a distinct, unduplicated count of children engaged in programs, and ensuring all necessary partnership agreements are mutually satisfactory and complete.

### **First Five SC**

1. See First Five Report in ECAC meeting packet.
2. First Five SC booth is busy at the S.C. State Fair sharing resources with families. Representatives from each agency of the ECAC are filling the 47 3-hour shifts. Stories from caregivers of young children are being collected to share on First5SC.org.

### **Palmetto Pre-K (portal address: [www.PalmettoPrek.org](http://www.PalmettoPrek.org))**

***February 1, 2020 – September 30, 2022***

Unique website visitors: 139,097

Total leads: 19,938

Eligible for at least one program: 16,327

Head Start eligible: 8,128

First Steps 4K eligible: 5,280

Public school eligible: 7,819

SC DSS voucher eligible: 2,820

### **Transitions**

1. The workgroup continues to meet to implement tactics that support transition activities:
  - a. Subgroups have been formed to create transitions toolkits for teachers, administrators, and home visitors. Drafts are planned for December 2022.
  - b. Focus group information will be used to support the work of Countdown to Kindergarten, transitions in general, and the development of the toolkits. First focus group piloted at Palmetto Pre-K Jamboree. A focus group was held at the SCAEYC conference on October 14. Additional focus groups are scheduled for October, November, and December.



### **Family Voice Council (FVC)**

1. "A Year of Family Voice" report is now published and offers feedback and recommendations from the SC Family Voice Council members during their first year of service. See materials in the ECAC packet for the full report.
2. 19 parents represent the Family Voice Council, and four applications are in process. Three members completed their service terms.
  - a. Recruitment continues for seats opening in Spring 2023.
3. The August 19 meeting was with Joyce Kimrey, Director of Early Intervention, SC Dept. of Disabilities and Special Needs about autism and related services. The September 16 meeting was a family feedback session with Jena Martin from Family Connection of SC for the US Department of Education report for SC. The October 21 will welcome Michelle Myer, Director of the Division of Children's Health and Perinatal Services, SC DHEC.

### **Grants**

1. Preschool Development Grant (PDG)
  - a. PDG supports the following activities for ECAC: Birth through Five Plan, First Five SC, Palmetto PreK, and Family Voice Council
    - i. Year 3 began April 30, 2022. The Year 2 annual report was submitted to Administration for Children and Families, ACF in July.
    - ii. This is the final year for the grant. States may request no-cost extensions as necessary.
  - b. Recently ACF released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a new planning grant. This planning grant could provide a path for another round of multi-year renewal funding
    - i. SC will apply for the NOFO. DSS agreed to serve as lead. DSS is the lead for the current PDG grant.
    - ii. SC is one of 24 eligible applicants for this grant. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the grant administrator, expects to make 10 awards ranging from \$400,000 to \$4,000,000.
2. Alliance for Early Success
  - a. The ECAC continues its relationship with Alliance for Early Success. An in-person conference is scheduled for November.