



Meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council
June 16, 2022, immediately following the SC First Steps Board Meeting
Via Zoom

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 April 21, 2022
Attachment: April 21, 2022 Minutes

- III. First Five SC (www.first5sc.org) (Georgia Mjartan)
Attachment: First Five SC

- IV. Presentations and Updates from ECAC Members
 - a. Evidence-Based Home Visiting (Robert Kerr, Director, Department of Health and Human Services)
 - b. Update on Federal Stimulus Funding/Child Care Activities (Mike Leach, Director, SC Department of Social Services Update)

- V. Reports
 - a. Report from the Interagency Collaboration Committee (David Mathis)
Attachment: Interagency Collaboration Committee Meeting Recap
 - b. ECAC Report on Activities, (Georgia Mjartan)
Attachment: Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council

- VI. Adjourn (David Morley)
Motion: To adjourn the meeting of the Early Childhood Advisory Council



Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting

April 21, 2022, immediately following the SCFS Board of Trustees Meeting
SC First Steps
Draft Minutes

Members Present (15):

Dave Morley, Chair	Jesica Mackey
Dr. Shelley Canright, Vice Chair	David Mathis
Rep. Paula Calhoon	Jennifer McConnell
Mary Lynne Diggs	Roger Pryor
Rep. Jerry Govan	Dr. Edward Simmer
John Hayes	Sue Williams
Tim Holt	Amy Williams
Mike Leach	

Members Absent (8):

Jacque Curtin
Michelle Fry
Sen. Greg Hembree
Robert Kerr
Sen. Gerald Malloy
Janie Neeley
Alexia Newman
Nicole Wynkoop

Attendees (13)

Georgia Mjartan	Lexi Jones	Kathy Fitzgerald
Avian Jones	Justina Siuba	Lis Guimaraes
Jon Artz	Chelsea Richard	Beth Moore
Derek Cromwell	Karen Oliver	
Tom Lacas	Rachal Hatton	

Mr. Morley called the ECAC meeting to order at 3:53 p.m.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Hayes provided the motion. Dr. Mathis provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes. Dr. Canright provided the motion. Rep. Calhoon provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the recommended revisions to the Data Governance Charter for the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) developed by the Early Learning Extension Data Governance Work Group. Dr. Canright provided the motion, Dr. Simmer seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Leach provided an update on the federal stimulus funding and child care activities. South Carolina has received four supplemental federal child care grants related to COVID-19, totaling \$954,645,289. As of 4/19/22, we have spent or obligated more than \$400 million and our staff continue to work very hard to make sure we are meeting as many of the needs as we can and fulfilling our responsibility as stewards of public funds by being thoughtful and deliberate about implementing the items in the spending plan. At this point we believe we are on track to spend the funds within the timeframes outlined in the federal rules. 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". As of 4/19/22, 1,660 child care providers have submitted a Stabilization Grant application (82% of potentially eligible). 1,567 applications



have been approved, totaling \$191,590,323 for the 12-month grant period. DSS is getting ready to launch a second round of Child Care Stabilization Grants in mid-May. As with the original round, we will be communicating with providers as early as possible and offering virtual town halls and “office hours” to assist them in taking advantage of this funding opportunity. 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 4/19/22, 26,595 children have been approved for SC Child Care COVID-300 Vouchers and placed in a slot. Approximately \$317 million has been allocated for these vouchers.

Dr. Mathis reported on the Interagency Collaboration Committee and shared that the SC Birth through Five plan is being worked on and milestones are being set through the committee to include the approval of data sharing.

Ms. Hatton shared an update from the Palmetto Pre-K Transitions Workgroup. They will be providing transitions toolkits for parents and creating focus groups with educators. Ms. Mjartan shared First5 SC had over 12,000 visitors in the first six weeks since the website launched.

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

The meeting was adjourned by Mr. Morley at 4:23 p.m.



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

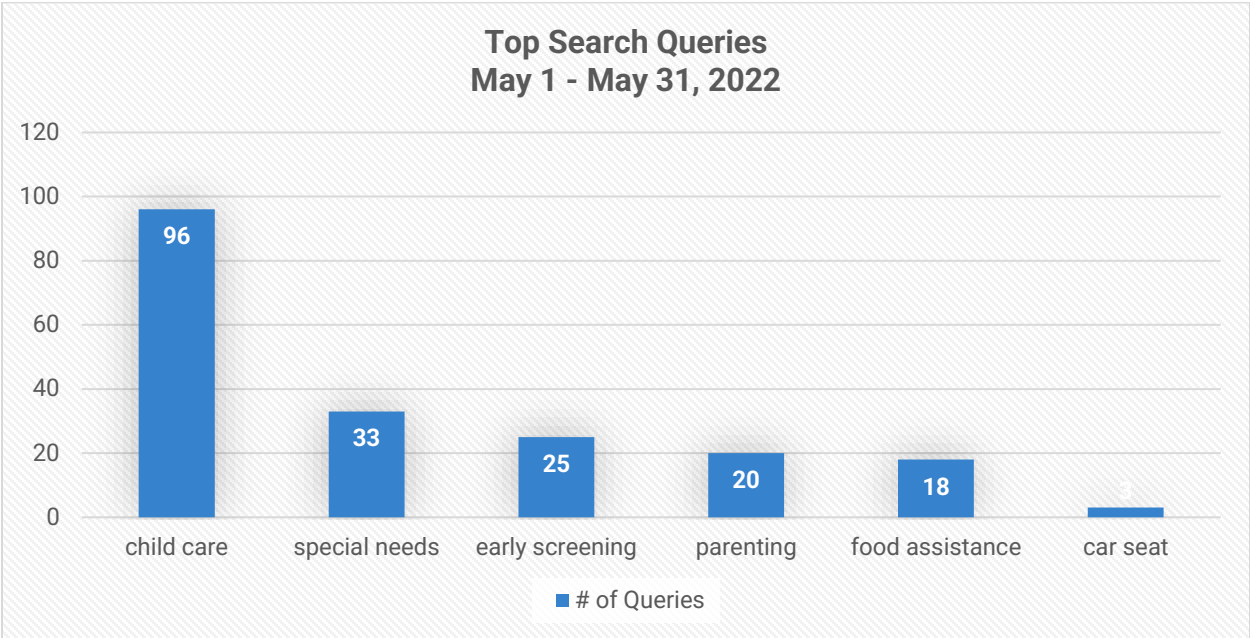
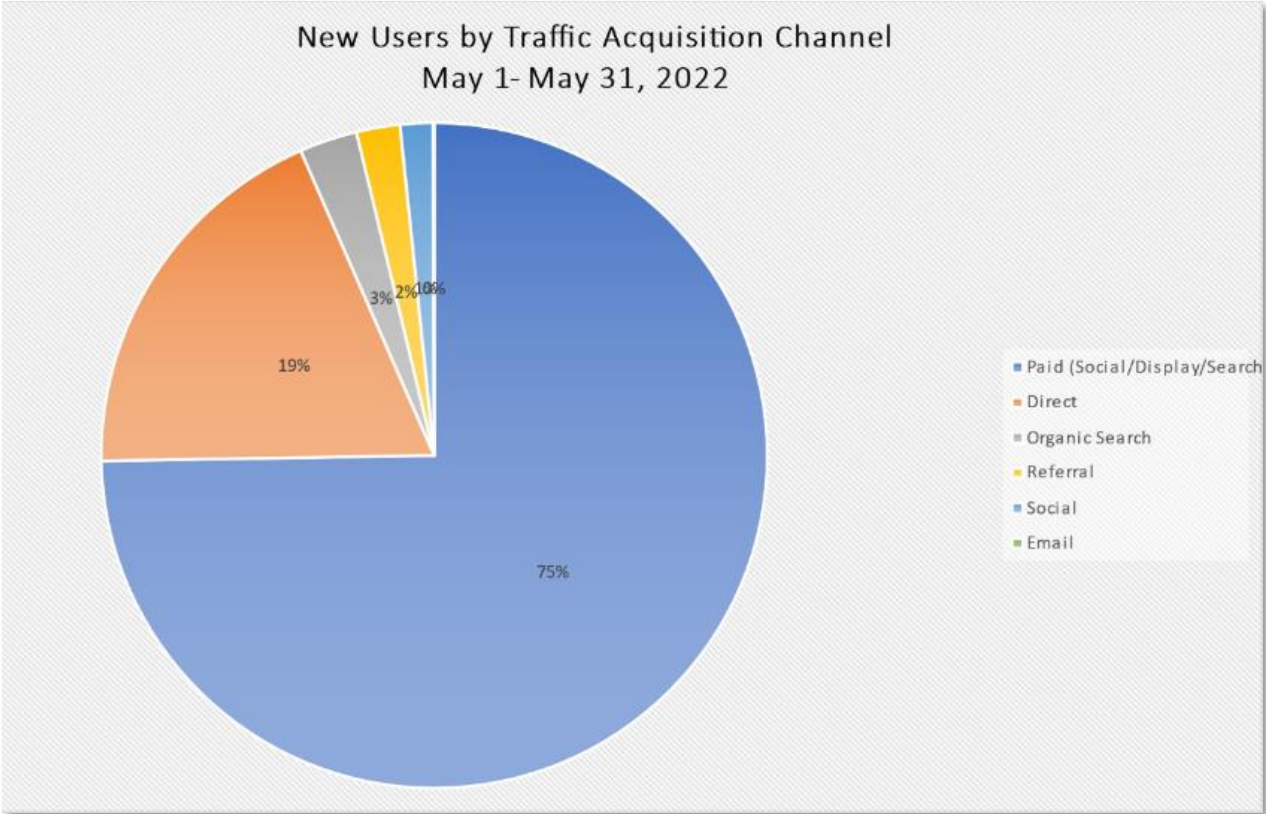
1. Officially launched February 17, 2022. A login system for programs to collect information for eligible families/leads was launched March 30, 2022.
2. Common application development is underway.
3. Georgia Mjartan and Rachal Hatton-Moore presented at the Smart Start conference about First Five SC on May 19, 2022.
4. First Five SC will be featured on an upcoming podcast from PDG in July.
 - a. Several states and municipalities have requested information about developing and implementing a First Five program: Texas; Missouri; Georgia (DECAL); Michigan

Portal Analytics

February 17, 2022 - May 31, 2022
 Unique Visitors—21,687

Pageviews—56,779

Month	# unique visitors	# unique families that completed the eligibility screener	# families eligible for at least 1 program (leads)
Feb	6,676	657	518
Mar	5,718	719	592
Apr	3,386	241	196
May	5,907	375	305
Total	21,687	1992	1611





**Interagency Collaboration Committee
Meeting Recap
May 3, 2022**

Present: Leesa Aiken, State Library; Eric Bellamy, Children’s Trust; Solandra Bowman, SC Educational Television; Jennifer Buster, Department of Health and Human Services; Amber Gillum, Department of Social Services; Louise Johnson, Department of Mental Health; Georgia Mjartan, SC First Steps/ECAC; Rusty Monhollon, Commission on Higher Education; Bill Simpson, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs; Brannon Traxler, Department of Health and Environmental Control

Absent: ICC Chair, David Mathis, Department of Education; Mary Lynne Diggs, Head Start Collaboration Office

Staff: Laura Baker, Karen Oliver, Justina Siuba
Guests: Jessica Garrett and Tom Lacas, 37 Gears

Call to Order and Welcome

Georgia Mjartan convened the meeting at 1:10 PM. Each ICC member introduced him or herself and identified the programs affecting young children and families for which they were responsible.

Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)

Justina Siuba, Data Governance Coordinator for ECAC, presented an update on work to date. Two data groups are meeting, the PDG Data and the Early Learning Extension of the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS). The groups have both distinct and intersecting interests. The first activities of these groups are to develop data sharing agreements and to determine core elements (data fields) so agencies, policy makers and other stakeholders can answer questions like, what is the unduplicated count of children receiving early childhood services or what percentage of children are enrolled in more than one service or program?

The ECAC approved the goal “South Carolina’s early childhood system is aligned, coordinated, and family-centered” in 2021. The ECIDS group works to achieve that goal and its reports are a standing item on the ICC agenda. Dr. Brannon Traxler requested that Siuba follow up with her to find ways to connect DHEC maternal child health data to the project.

Mjartan reported that the House Oversight Committee was in the process of reviewing the Department of Commerce. There was interest in connecting, early childhood, k-12, and other data with college and workforce information. An integrated data system that captures the range of programs and services afforded children and families is of interest to a range of stakeholders and policy leaders across the state.

First Five SC (www.first5sc.org)

Jessica Garrett and Tom Lacas, 37 Gears, provided an update about First Five SC. From its official launch, February 17, through the end of April, the site had 15,824 views, and the average time spent on the site was 1:19 minutes.

Promotion of First Five SC includes advertising and printed materials. Advertising included a digital homepage “takeover” of the Post and Courier newspaper on the day of the launch, ads on radio and digital platforms, posters at transit stops in Charleston, and billboards in Columbia, Charleston, and Myrtle Beach. ICC members were encouraged to request printed materials, like rack and palm cards, to distribute through their service sites.

ICC members were asked to post a link to First Five SC on their agency websites. Leesa Aiken offered to share the link through the county library system.

First Five SC was the subject of April 21 Carolina Classrooms episode on SCETV, <https://www.sctv.org/stories/2022/carolina-classrooms-first-five-sc>.

Garrett and Lacas reported progress on the timeline to complete a common application for parents interested in receiving services for more than one public program. They stressed that it is critical for ECAC partners to engage their IT and other staff in this project. 37 Gears identified several solutions for agencies if there are barriers to participation.

Birth through Five Plan Updates

Goal 1: South Carolina’s Children are healthy and safe

Traxler (DHEC), Bill Simpson (DDSN), Jennifer Buster (DHHS/Babynet), and Louise Johnson (DMH) agreed to meet in late June. Prior to the meeting, each representative will identify work and activities underway that addresses objectives and strategies in Goal 1. Consideration was given for engaging SC Hospital Association in this work.

Goal 2: South Carolina’s youngest children are actively supported by their families and communities

Eric Bellamy described work of the Home Visiting Coalition and suggested that some of the working groups, like the systems group, are strongly aligned with Goal 2. As information is cataloged, it will be shared with ICC and ECAC.

Karen Oliver will work with Leesa Aiken to coordinate a group engaged with Objective 2.4: SC communities provide children with healthy environments, enriching opportunities, and community resources like libraries, schools, outdoor learning environments, community centers and museums.

Progress on Goal 3: South Carolina’s children arrive at school ready to reach their highest potential was noted. Georgia Mjartan reported on the meeting of a group that included staff from DSS, Head Start, Department of Education and First Steps. The group prioritized strategies to discuss it further. More data is needed to understand where agencies can best collaborate. It was noted that it is critical to (spend time to) plan not only how to use the influx of resources, but what to do when those one-time resources are expended.

ICC Collaboration Opportunities and Updates

SC Two-generation Summit, May 12

Second round of child care stabilization grants will soon be released

BabyNet and First Steps saw increases in enrollment and services

Upcoming ICC Meetings

ICC will not meet in July. It will meet Tuesday, August 2, via Zoom.

Adjourn - The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM



Report on the Activities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council For June 16, 2022

Integrated Early Childhood Data

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. The ELE will connect with the existing state K-12 Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) to link early childhood care and education programs to K-12 outcomes.

Preschool Development Grant (PDG)

An activity of the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG) is to develop and implement an integrated data system for South Carolina, that will be housed and supported at RFA. The PDG Data Governance Work Group is working to identify information to include on public dashboards about children enrolled in early childhood programs and services.

Work continues:

Building a partner on-boarding process

Finalizing the MOA to accompany the ECIDS Data Governance Charter

Drafting long-term data sharing agreement

Transitions

1. The Carolina Family Engagement Center, SC Dept. of Education, and ECAC Two-Generation Coordinator attended the Education Commission of the States' Kindergarten Transition Policy Symposium in Denver May 3-6, 2022 and presented about the SC Pre-K to K Transition Plan: Family Engagement on May 3, 2022.
2. ["Ready, Set, Go!"](#) was published and is currently being distributed widely.
 - a. The publication is a collaborative product from Family Connection SC, SC Department of Education, and SC First Steps/ECAC.
3. The workgroup continues to meet to implement tactics that support transition activities:
 - a. The [Transitions from Pre-K to 5K Parent Survey 2022](#) is open and currently has 244 responses and will close June 30.
 - b. Subgroups have been formed to create transitions toolkits for teachers, administrators, and home visitors throughout Summer and Fall 2022.
 - c. [Countdownsc.org](#) has been added to the transitions resources on [First Five SC](#).
 - d. Focus groups with teachers about transitions practices and supports needed will begin in August 2022.

Family Voice Council (FVC)

1. 38 total interest forms received
 - a. 24 families met eligibility requirement (parent of child aged birth-5, recipient of public service)
 - b. 19 families completed on-boarding
 - c. 0 families are in on-boarding or consideration process



- d. 5 members will renew for a second year term starting August 1, 2022, with possibly 3 more renewing.
 - e. 1 Family Voice Council seat open; recruitment is on-going for 2022-2023 terms with 3-6 seats opening August and September.
 2. June 17th leadership training from Clemson ThinkShops, and July and August meeting presentations are being scheduled based on member requests.

Palmetto Pre-K (portal address: www.PalmettoPrek.org)

February 1, 2020 – May 31, 2022

Unique website visitors: 108,532

Total leads: 16,472

Eligible for at least one program: 13,794

Head Start eligible: 6,377

First Steps 4K eligible: 4,472

Public school eligible: 6,973

SC DSS voucher eligible: 2,160

Grants

1. Alliance for Early Success
 - a. Updates to the SC Policy Landscape page on the Alliance website are in progress
 - b. An application for continued support is completed
2. Preschool Development Grant (PDG)
 - a. PDG supports the following activities for ECAC: Birth through Five Plan (production completed), First Five SC, Palmetto PreK, and Family Voice Council
 - i. Georgia Mjartan and Rachal Hatton-Moore participated in a podcast to showcase First Five SC among PDG grantees. The podcast will be available in July
 - b. Year 3 began April 30, 2022. This is the final year for the grant. States may request no-cost extensions as necessary.
 - c. PDG grantees were encouraged to participate in workgroups to develop visual representations of the early childhood system in each PDG state. SC has the largest number of workgroup members. Workgroups will meet a total of three times.