



Minutes from the September 18, 2025 Meeting

Council Members Present (16): Rep. Terry Alexander, Frances Anderson, Tony Cantone, Jacque Curtin, Mary Lynne Diggs, Dr. James Durant, John Hayes, Sen. Greg Hembree, David Lisk, Dorothy Priester, Jack McBride, Roger Pryor, Dr. Edward Simmer, Wes Wooten, Dr. Amy Williams (Vice Chair), Sue Williams

Council Members Absent (9): Dr. Robert Bank, Sen. Jason Elliott, Rep. Shannon Erickson, Constance Holloway, Jesica Mackey, Eunice Medina, Dave Morley (Chairman), Janie Neeley, Mary Anne Scott

Others Present (31): Austin Reed, Beth Moore, Betty Washington, Bradley Harris, Candi Lalonde, Cheryl Scales, Crystal Campbell, Delores Rock, Emily Prillaman, Gina Beebe, Haymee Giuliani, Iris Ballen-Morant, Jabari Bodrick, Jenny May, Jessica Fluker, Jon Artz, Karen Oliver, Kate Roach, Katrina Valliere, Kenna Hoover, Kerry Cordan, Kim Chariker, Kim Trudell, Kristen Martocchio, LaMyra Sanders-Dukes, Laura Baker, Lexi Jones, Marietta Melton Burch, Rachal Hatton-Moore, Samantha Ingram, Sarah Eargle

The meeting was called to order at 2:58 p.m.

Vice Chair Dr. Amy Williams asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Dorothy Priester made the motion, seconded by Mr. David Lisk. The motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Williams asked for a motion to approve the June 19, 2025, minutes. Ms. Priester made the motion, seconded by Mr. Lisk. The motion was unanimously approved.

Kerrie Schnake, SC Infant Mental Health Association, CEO, gave an update on the Partners for Early Attuned Relationships (PEAR) Program. She shared that the PEAR program decreased both program- and child-level expulsion and suspension risk, reduced challenging behaviors, and minimized exclusionary discipline.

ECAC agencies provided the following updates:

SC Department of Education Director of Office of Instructional Supports, Alisha Green, Ed.D., shared that the SC General Assembly approved a Proviso last year requiring school districts to share 4K wait lists with First Steps 4K. A pilot is underway in Aiken and Lexington 1 to refine the process for sharing referral.

Ann Vandervliet, agency director, reported on the activities of the Interagency Collaboration Committee. Roughly 12 significant planning documents were found across five broad categories: Early Care and Education, Food and Nutrition, Health and Safety, Parenting and Family Support, and Special Needs and Early Intervention. She shared how the working groups contribute to the Strategic Plan.

Amber Gillum, SCDSS Deputy State Director Economic Services, shared results from Untapped Potential. The report found that disruptions in childcare costs South Carolina's economy approximately \$997 million dollars annually.

Sue Williams, Children's Trust CEO, shared that this year's Home Visiting Summit was successful. Next year's summit will occur in Columbia in August. She also shared that Triple P will be expanded but the budget was smaller than anticipated.

Dr. Edward Simmer, Department of Public Health Agency Director, shared that mobile health units are now providing services. The department is working with HealthySC to create a dashboard of accessible data on their website.

Mary Lynn Diggs, SC Head Start Director, made the reminder that the ECAC is in the Head Start Act, so it may be helpful to include Head Start in the early childhood systems updates. She also shared that South Carolina belongs to a new Head Start region with North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, so services may differ.

Dr. Williams asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lisk made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Priester. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.