**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 63‑11‑1720, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SO AS TO REVISE THE COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD BY INCREASING THE VOTING MEMBERS FROM TWENTY TO TWENTY‑TWO AND BY REVISING NONVOTING MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD; AND BY ADDING SECTION 63‑11‑1725 SO AS TO PROVIDE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP, POWERS, AND DUTIES OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA ADVISORY COUNCIL ESTABLISHED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE “IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007” TO ADDRESS ISSUES RELATING TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 63‑11‑1720 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“Section 63‑11‑1720. (A) There is created the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees which must be chaired by the Governor and must include the State Superintendent of Education ~~who~~, both of whom shall serve as ex officio, voting members of the board. ~~The board is composed of the twenty appointed, voting members as follows:~~

(B) The board is composed of twenty‑two voting members appointed in the following manner:

(1) The Governor shall appoint two members from each of ~~the following~~ these sectors:

(a) parents of young children;

(b) business community;

(c) early childhood educators;

(d) medical ~~or~~ providers and child care and development providers, one member from each profession; and

(e) the General Assembly, one member from the Senate and one member from the House of Representatives; and

(f) the Board of the United Way Association of South Carolina.

(2) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint one member from each of ~~the following~~ these sectors:

(a) parents of young children;

(b) business community;

(c) early childhood educators; and

(d) medical providers or child care and development providers.

(3) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member from each of ~~the following~~ these sectors:

(a) parents of young children;

(b) business community;

(c) early childhood educators; and

(d) medical providers or child care and development providers.

(4) The Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, or ~~his~~ a designee.

(5) The Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee, or ~~his~~ a designee.

(6) The chief executive officer ~~of~~ from each of ~~the following~~, these agencies, who shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member:

(a) Department of Social Services, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(b) Department of Health and Environmental Control, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(c) Department of Health and Human Services, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(d) Department of Mental Health, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(e) Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(f) Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(g) Department of Transportation, or ~~his~~ a designee;

(h) Department of Commerce, or a designee;

(i) Department of Employment and Workforce, or a designee;

(j) State Budget and Control Board, ~~Division~~ Office of Research and Statistics, or ~~his~~ a designee; ~~and~~

(~~i~~k) State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, or a designee;

(l) State Commission on Higher Education, or a designee;

(m) State Head Start Collaboration Officer, or a designee; and

(n) Children’s Trust Fund of South Carolina, or a designee.

(7) The Governor shall appoint one member from each of these ~~following~~ organizations ~~shall designate one member to~~ who shall serve as ~~an ex officio~~ nonvoting ~~member~~ members:

(a) South Carolina State Library; and

(b) ~~Transportation Association of South Carolina~~; ~~and~~

~~(c)~~ State Advisory Committee on the Regulation of Childcare Facilities.

(8) The Governor shall appoint two executive directors of local partnerships who shall serve as nonvoting members. One must represent rural regions of the State and one must represent urban areas of the State. These members must be appointed from the nomination of two candidates for each office submitted to the Governor following an election by their peers.

(C)(1) In appointing members specified in subsections (B)(1), (2), and (3), the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall consult in an effort to achieve equitable geographic representation on the board, including representation from each congressional district.

(2) Members of the General Assembly serving on this board shall serve notwithstanding the provisions of Section 8‑13‑770.

~~(B)~~(D) ~~The terms of the~~ Members ~~are for~~ serve terms of four years and until their successors are appointed and qualify~~, except of those first appointed. When making the initial appointments, the Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall designate half of their appointments to serve two‑year terms only~~. The ~~appointments~~ terms of ~~the~~ members from the General Assembly ~~shall be coterminous~~ must run concurrently with their terms of elected office.

~~(C)~~(E) Vacancies for any reason must be filled in the manner of the original appointment for the unexpired term. A member may not serve more than two terms or eight years, whichever is longer. ~~A member who misses more than three consecutive meetings without excuse or a member who resigns must be replaced in the same manner as his predecessor~~ The Governor may remove a member of the board in accordance with Section 1‑3‑240.

(F) Members may be paid per diem, mileage, and subsistence as established by the board not to exceed standards provided by law for state boards, committees, and commissions.

(G) A complete report of the activities of the First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees must be ~~made~~ submitted annually to the General Assembly.”

SECTION 2. Article 17, Chapter 11, Title 63 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 63‑11‑1725. (A) For the purposes of this article, ‘advisory council’ means the South Carolina Advisory Council established by Executive Order Number 2010‑06 in compliance with the Improving ‘Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007’, 42 U.S.C. Section 9837b, et seq.

(B) Membership of the advisory council is composed of the membership of the Board of Trustees of the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness and two members from the United Way Association of South Carolina, one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The voting and nonvoting members of the Board of Trustees of the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness shall serve as voting members of the South Carolina Advisory Council, concurrent with the member’s service on the board of trustees. The members appointed from the United Way Association of South Carolina shall serve as voting members of the South Carolina Advisory Council, for terms of four years and until their successors are appointed and qualify.

(C) The advisory council is an entity distinct from the Board of Trustees of the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness and shall act accordingly to fulfill its responsibilities under 42 U.S.C. Section 9837b(b)(1)(D)(i) of the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. The advisory council shall keep separate minutes that explicitly distinguish its actions and votes from those made when acting in the capacity of the board of trustees. The advisory council shall adjourn before acting as the board of trustees, and the board of trustees shall adjourn before acting as the advisory council.

(D) The State Director of First Steps shall coordinate the activities of the advisory council. Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 9837b(b)(1)(D)(i), the advisory council shall:

(1) conduct a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to the age of school entry, including an assessment of the availability of high quality prekindergarten services for low income children in the State;

(2) identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally funded and state‑funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among state agencies responsible for administering these programs;

(3) develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;

(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;

(5) develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in the State;

(6) assess the capacity and effectiveness of two‑year and four‑year public and private institutions of higher education in the State for supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which these institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or prekindergarten program;

(7) make recommendations for improvements in state early learning standards and undertake efforts to develop high quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate;

(8) develop and publish, using available demographic data, an indicators‑based measure of school readiness at the state and community level;

(9) incorporate, within the periodic statewide needs assessments required in 42 U.S.C. Section 9837b, data related to the capacity and efforts of private sector providers, Head Start providers, and local school districts to serve children from birth to age five, including fiscal, enrollment, and capacity data; and

(10) perform all other functions, as permitted under federal and state law, to improve coordination and delivery of early childhood education and development to children in this State.

(E) The advisory council shall designate one meeting as its annual meeting. All of the chief executive officers of state agencies represented on the advisory council shall attend the annual meeting in person.

(F) The advisory council shall submit an annual report of its activities to the Governor and General Assembly.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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