

The State Advisory Committee on the
Regulation of Child Care Facilities

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

DSS State Office / North Tower Building
1535 Confederate Avenue Columbia, SC 29201

Members Present:

Tricia Sheldon
Althea Benson
Edward Brashier – via conference call
Tammy Compton
Lisa Corning
Shadie Hall – via conference call
Vickie Hoover
Chasity Lesley
Roger Pryor – via conference call
Jessica Sharp
Reginald Williams

Members Absent:

Justin Hopson, Bonnye Hughes, Felicia O’Neal, Brandy O’Neill,
Patricia Scarry

Staff to Committee:

Samuel Frederick, Brooke Jones, Melissa Outen

Guests:

Monica Akers-Bellamy, SC Child Care Resource & Referral
– via conference call
Michele Bowers, Director of ECE / SC DSS
Tex Davis, Assistant General Counsel
Rachel Ellis, Director at Grace Early Learning Center
Debra Earwood, SC Association of Christian Schools
Beverly Hunter, Director of ABC Quality / SC DSS
Melanie Keller, Willowdale Children’s Academy
Cathy Kovacs, ABC Quality / SC DSS
Morgan Massenburg, DECE Outreach Manager
– via conference call
Connelly-Anne Ragley, Director of Communications and External
Affairs / SC DSS
Heather Reyes, SC Child Care Resource & Referral
– via conference call

Tricia Sheldon, Chair, shared that she resigned from La Petite Academy at the beginning of the summer and is now teaching Early Childhood and Education courses at USC. The new board members, guests, and Legal Counsel were introduced.

Once the eighth member joined via conference call, the meeting was called to order at 10:07 am.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes; the motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the agenda; the motion was approved unanimously.

Tex Davis, Assistant General Counsel, discussed the process of getting regulations approved by the legislator.

Tricia Sheldon, Chair, stated that she would like the proposed Family Child Care Home Regulations to be completed during this legislative session since it concerns her that the current regulations do not address the Health and Safety topics and that they are not being inspected for health and safety.

In response Mr. Davis referred to 63 – 13 – 180 (1) (e): The department shall submit final drafts of its regulations to the Legislative Council as proposed regulations, and the Administrative Procedures Act Sections 1–23–10 et seq., governs their promulgation.

Tex Davis discussed the timeline of the getting the Family Child Care Home Regulations submitted to the Administrative Law Court and how it would be close to when the 2023 term adjourns. Connelly-Anne Ragley stated they adjourn May 11th, 2023.

Cynthia Lara addresses the concerns of the Chair, by stating that Child Care Licensing does monitor Health and Safety by using the FCCH Section of the Child Care Licensing Law when we make visits and that complaint visits are made as well. Michele Bowers also stated how FCCH providers who participate in ABC Quality get a visit from them at least once a year as they are required to complete the training on the Health and Safety topics. 364 Family Child Care Homes (almost half) participate in ABC Quality currently.

Old Business:

Discussion of the status of new members – Governor McMaster approved five new board members. Connelly-Anne Ragley stated if your term expires you can continue to serve until you're replaced or reappointed. If you miss more than two meetings without an unexcused absence the Governor can remove a member.

Regulations for Faith-Based – the Chair stated we were one meeting away from having it completed.

The Chair, brought up the discussion of working on Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Home, Group Child Care Home and Faith-Based regulations simultaneously as it is now time for a review of the Center regulations anyway. The Family Child Care Home proposed regulations are done besides one point that needed to be changed and finishing touches.

Tex Davis stated it is necessary to have the notice of draft for any changes to the regulations submitted by April 2023, so the final proposed regulations could be submitted by the end of 2023.

New Business:

The Chair presented a discussion regarding the requests from SCAECE (South Carolina Association for Early Care and Education) – They held a board meeting at the end of November. They want to be allowed to call their Licensing Specialist if they are out of ratio by 2 or so children and not be cited should the Licensing Specialist happen to make a visit during this time. They also discussed the hardships this industry is facing with staffing and want to remove or significantly lessen the 6-month experience or time frame for caregiver/teachers. Cynthia Lara expressed concerns of not having staff with experience working in child care and how that could increase the number of complaints received by Child Care Licensing. A question was asked about the status of the Sub Pool and Michele Bowers stated it's close to having a contract. The plan is to have a Sub Pool of already trained staff who have all of their background checks completed and are ready to work. The Committee discussed how to make specific changes to the law and Roger Pryor asked a question about send a joint recommendation for a specific law change to the legislators as it might carry some weight regarding that specific law. A discussion about advisement and consent from the committee and Tex Davis explained the concept of advice and consent which meant that the Committee should cooperate with the Department in reviewing the proposed regulations but that they can shoot down any regulations the Department may bring forth. More discussion about how to engage your legislators as private citizens could be done to ensure your changes to the law can be heard.

More discussion related to teacher/caregivers and Michele Bowers mentioned ways that we may be able to use American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding a bonus program to the teacher/caregiver every 6 months that would be paid directly to the teacher/caregiver. There were also discussions on how to attach safe sleep training to the discussion as there have been deaths in Licensed child care facilities.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting; the motion was approved unanimously to adjourn at 12:07 pm.