



Carolina Family Engagement Center

# Family Engagement VOICE

July 2020

*Equity,  
Opportunity  
& Excellence  
in Education*



*“We’re in  
this  
together.”*



**College of  
Education**

## CFEC Virtual Family Talent Show

The Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC) recently hosted a Virtual Family Talent Show series, featuring students of all ages and their families from across the state. CFEC brought together students, siblings, parents, grandparents, cousins – and even family farm animals – in a showcase of talent to help families celebrate their creativity during a time when they are physically separated from their school communities. Students and families from all corners of the state took part, had fun, and “wowed” the audiences tuning in. CFEC looks forward to virtually spotlighting students and family talent again in the future. To catch a glimpse of the incredible talent shared in the Virtual Family Talent Show series, [view the show’s trailer!](#)



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# UofSC's Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) Sketchnoting Workshops

Two Sketchnoting workshops hosted by the UofSC College of Education Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP), its Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ), and School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties, will take place virtually on Monday, July 20 via Zoom. Workshop times will be 9:00 am to 12 noon for one group, and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm for a second group. Three hours online might seem like a “long” session, but the presenters will provide lots of interaction and some breaks as well. We are thrilled that we are able to offer this engaging opportunity to educators across South Carolina and hope that you are able to join us.



[Click here to register.](#) Registration will remain open until the close of business on July 10.

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## Meet South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion

South Carolina Partnerships for Inclusion (SCPI) is a preschool inclusion initiative funded by the SC Department of Education's Office of Special Education Services and housed at the UofSC Yvonne and Schuyler Moore Child Development Research Center. SCPI's mission is to increase inclusive opportunities and school readiness for preschool children with disabilities.

SCPI supports school districts across South Carolina who opt-in to become part of this growing community of practice. Participating districts receive tiered technical assistance to develop cross-sector leadership teams and create and execute a five-year strategic plan to ensure that preschool children have access to, and are able to meaningfully participate in, the general education curriculum alongside children without disabilities.



SCPI hosts a full-day strategic planning workshop – District Leadership Day – to help school districts embark on this journey. During this kick-off event, participants will:

- Develop a strong understanding of what preschool inclusion is and why it matters;
- Establish a district-level cross-sector leadership team;
- Analyze their district's strengths and needs related to preschool inclusion, and;
- Create their five-year strategic plan.

After this workshop, all teams will receive a follow-up consultation on site, as well as opportunities for continued professional development and resources to implement their plan. Teams also have the opportunity to apply for additional, more targeted support.

To date, SCPI has worked with [41 school districts](#) across the state to facilitate leadership team development, and a new cohort of teams is welcomed annually. SCPI also has a state Steering Committee that serves in an advisory capacity, providing guidance on how best to engage community stakeholders in this work and supporting the inclusive placement of young children with disabilities. This committee has representatives from over 15 local agencies and organizations. For more information, check the [SCPI website!](#) You can also call (803) 429-0519 or email [SCPI@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:SCPI@mailbox.sc.edu).

SCPI offers a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year, with the next scheduled training – the [Research to Practice Summer Camp](#) co-hosted with the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) – will be held July 20-23. This is a FREE, weeklong, multi-course virtual training opportunity for educators and administrators, and will provide participants high-quality sessions with expert speakers, hot topics, real-time chat rooms to communicate questions, and planned networking time with colleagues.

Registration for the early childhood sessions will open the week of June 29, so make sure to [subscribe to the SCPI newsletter](#) to receive alerts and updates.

# Need Convenient and Safe Summer Professional Learning?

Francis Marion University's Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty focuses on supporting the development of educator knowledge and skills, specifically in their work with under-resourced learners and their families.



The national health crisis prompted the Center to reconfigure its traditionally face-to-face Summer Institute as a distance event. A series of 17 free webinars offered live in June are now available with on-demand all-access through the month of July to “Virtual Summer Institute Series” subscribers. Show notes and certificates of attendance are included with all subscriptions.

The series has emerged as a mix of pedagogy, research, and inspiration. Learn why the brain matters—especially in this challenging time, how to motivate students in budget-neutral ways, and practices that matter most when uncertainty prevails.

Featured keynotes include Dr. Joyce Epstein’s *Effective and Equitable Partnerships: Engage Parents with Low Incomes in their Children’s Education*, Dr. Robyn Jackson’s *7 Questions You Must Answer before We Re-Open School*, and the *5 P’s of Life* presented by Richland Two Superintendent Dr. Baron Davis.

Bonus content is also included with subscriptions, including featured presentations by Carolina Family Engagement Center Project Director Karen Utter and CFEC teacher partners (*Engaging All Families When the School Building is Closed*), and CFEC Regional Family Engagement Liaisons Julia Beaty, and Lorilei Swanson (*Building Best Practices for Engaging Families in Trauma-Responsive School Communities to Reduce the Impact of Trauma on All Students*).

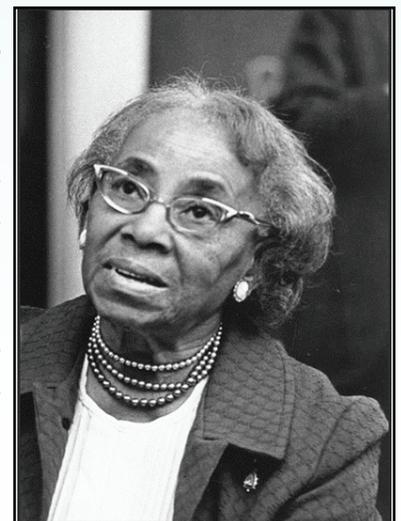
[View the entire “Virtual Summer Institute Series” line-up and subscribe on the Center’s website.](#)

## CFEC’s “Septima Speaks” Podcast

Listen to stories of family engagement from cradle to career while you are on the go with CFEC’s new [“Septima Speaks” podcast](#).

The podcast is named as a salute to the pioneering black educator and social justice advocate, South Carolinian Septima Poinsette Clark (1898-1987).

Tune in for conversations with students, families, school personnel, and community partners on happenings around South Carolina. The first podcast features UofSC senior Nakia McCloud and his reflections on pivotal educational experiences.



## First CFEC Ambassadors Are Now in Place

Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC) Ambassadors are individuals who have volunteered to serve as champions for family and community engagement in education within their local community or region of the state. Some examples of the activities these Ambassadors undertake are: communicating regularly with CFEC about local issues/needs/successes; identifying opportunities to speak at gatherings of education stakeholders; publicizing local success stories through traditional local media, social media, and community events/organizations; supporting local schools' family engagement initiatives (i.e., SIC, PTA/PTO); spearheading service projects that support CFEC/school family engagement projects (i.e., book drives); and identifying and encouraging potential parent leaders or community partners in their areas.



Current CFEC Ambassadors are: Becky Bean (Kershaw); Zenobia Edwards (Darlington, Florence, Lee); Carson King (Charleston); and Rosa Fulmore (Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester).

Anyone interested in being a volunteer CFEC Ambassador can indicate their interests by [filling out the CFEC Ambassador form](#).

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## 2020-21 Teacher Team Recipients

The following teachers have been selected as CFEC partners to facilitate the development, implementation, and evaluation of an evidence-informed family engagement plan for their classrooms using the Getting to Outcomes® (GTO) implementation science framework. The emphasis will be on:

- Strengthening existing family engagement classroom practices by ensuring that they have an evidence base and are culturally responsive;
- Building families' capacities to use engagement strategies most likely to help their children achieve priority academic and school climate mandates and goals;
- Enhancing the capacities of teachers to partner effectively with all families to support student achievement and development and;
- Enhancing teachers' abilities to use simple evaluation tools for continuous improvement and document the effectiveness of their family engagement practices.

Congratulations to these CFEC Teacher Team Partners for 2020-21: Ashley Bodine (Freedman Early Learning Center); LaTasha Gantt (Annie Burnside Elementary School); Dana Jendraszek (Freedman Early Learning Center); Tamaren Marcus (Mill Creek Elementary School); Sandy Norman (SC Public Charter School District); Jessica Pym (Williston-Elko High School); Lori Wenzinger (Irmo Middle School); and Lisa Young (Delmae Elementary School).

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## 2020-21 CFEC Parent Leadership Partners (PLP) Applications Still Open

CFEC's Parent Leadership Partners (PLP) program will invite up to 15 parent participants to learn new strategies, build leadership skills, and equip them to more effectively advocate for their children, families, and communities. The PLP cohort will participate in eight monthly sessions during the school year. Participants will also develop a plan to use their new knowledge, skills, and relationships to further their leadership goals. Selected participants who complete all PLP requirements will receive a \$1,000 stipend.



For more information and to apply, [visit the application site here](#).

# Regional Spotlight

**Manning Early Childhood Center, Ms. Rosa Stokes, Principal**  
**Ms. Ranina Outing, CFEC Pee Dee Regional Family Engagement Liaison**

The following excerpts are from longer submissions that CFEC plans to run – in full – in its mid-grant cycle report.

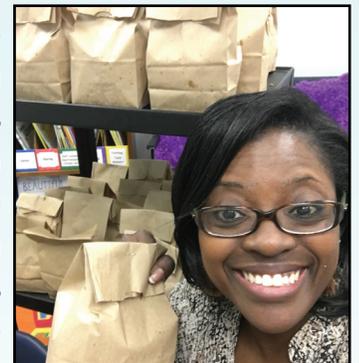
## Ms. Stokes' Submission



*Ms. Rosa Stokes, principal at MECC, at a pizza party*

“Manning Early Childhood Center’s focus is student achievement in a school learning community where families and community feel welcome. We strive to create effective programs for family and community involvement that support and strengthen our school community. We make diligent efforts to involve parents in helping them to develop advocacy skills so that they are better able to support their children’s needs at home. Families are encouraged to attend school-based workshops which offer strategies to assist with homework, goal setting, and many additional curriculum-related supports. Parents and community members are also offered the opportunity to be involved in school decision making processes; taking active roles as members on various school improvement teams as well as school committees.

“Being essentially in a rural school district, community support is important. Collaborating with the community supports our school’s efforts with providing and coordinating the influx of additional resources and services for families and the school community. Such community collaboration efforts have offered opportunities for the school to receive generous donations such as school supplies, food items by way of snack kits, and warm winter coats for the students. We know that collaborative relationships work best when meeting the needs of students and families. So, it is important for our school to establish ongoing rapport with families and community. Those first encounters should be positive ones, so we make every effort to ensure those first encounters are not crisis driven relationships with families.”



*Ms. Whitaker, counselor at MECC, at a popcorn fundraiser*

## Ms. Outing's Response

“MECC gave me an opportunity to be included and provide input on their School Renewal Plan, Title I Plan, and other initiatives over the 2019-20 school year. I worked with MECC to identify needs and areas of concern through its School Improvement Council (SIC) stakeholder team to include Principal Stokes and School Counselor Ms. Briana Whitaker. One of the goals that stemmed from the SIC meeting was to help improve school-wide attendance by reducing the number of students with chronic absences and tardies (18 or more days absent, 5 or more days tardy). As a result, an Attendance Awareness Program was planned

## “Regional Spotlight”

and implemented where my efforts were taken into consideration and utilized. I shared best practices by reviewing existing programs to fit the needs of families at MECC. I created an attendance awareness information sheet with MECC’s school logo for distribution to parents highlighting the importance of students being present at school. I also came up with creative ways to incentivize families and found funding to help purchase those items.

“Ms. Whitaker met with each of the selected students to set a personal goal per month and for the year as well as to discuss strategies they can do to help improve their own attendance. She sent an Attendance Awareness Campaign Letter home to parents, then later met with targeted parents/caregivers to discuss attendance concerns, answer questions, and to set a goal for improved 2019-20 attendance. We met regularly during the planning and implementation phase to put together incentive baskets to give to parents after a monthly drawing and to make any adjustments throughout the process. Afterward, we met again with Principal Stokes and the SIC to share updates and to get feedback moving forward. MECC recognized a class per month for the entire school for the greatest number of perfectly punctual days and one class per month for the entire school for the greatest number of perfect attendance days. Those two classes received a pizza party to celebrate their accomplishment which I attended and took photos. The atmosphere at MECC has always been pleasant and I have always felt welcomed and valued when working with the faculty, staff, families, community members, and stakeholder team. I look forward to contributing to school improvements and student success in the years to come!”



Ms. Ranina Outing, CFEC Pee Dee  
Regional Family Engagement Liaison

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More about the Carolina Family Engagement Center staff and CFEC’s work can be found on its [website](#). CFEC can also be followed on Facebook ([@CFECatUofSC](#)), Twitter ([@CarolinaFamily2](#)), and Instagram ([UofSCCFEC](#)).

