

What's Happening at SECA

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To Public Policy Chairs

Herman Knopf, Chair of the SECA Public Policy Commission, invites your input to develop a SECA position statement on the use of the federal stimulus money. E-mail him at knopf@sc.edu to share ideas and help him develop an agenda for our work as a group. We'll be in touch soon with specifics about how we may work together.

Enhancing Your SECA Membership Through the Web

We spent the last half of 2008 planning and developing the new SECA website, and it's ready to go!

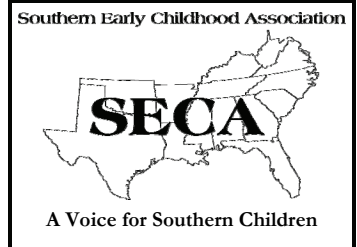
The spring issue of *The SECA Reporter* that is being printed and will be in the mail at the end of April has two pages devoted to the new content and functions of the site. Some new things you'll see:

- An **on-line membership registration system**. You can now join SECA on the Web and expedite your membership with us.
- An **on-line store** that will allow you to order SECA publications on-line. You'll still receive the same member discount that you

received through the old system.

- A **"members-only" section** that is especially for you. You'll find leadership information; information specifically for directors, students, and faculty; and information on how to become involved with SECA. This information won't be available to non-members.
- A **Dimensions index** and PDF's of the latest *Dimensions* issues.
- A **job listing site** where we'll post the job listing for a month without charge if you're a SECA member.

- **Discounts** with SECA's partners that are avail-



able to you because of your membership.

We'll continue to provide public policy information and information about your state affiliates to the public at large, but we're making the SECA website something that's "yours" because you are a member of our organization. **We value your contribution to SECA and hope you'll take advantage of the "perks of that membership.."**

Public Policy Resources from SECA

The Public Policy Commission convened two conference calls with Public Policy Chairs in the SECA states and has developed three initiatives to assist states in their work as the funding from the American

Recovery and Reinvestment Act becomes available. **SECA will produce resource documents** that will be posted on the website to assist you in your work at the state level. The documents will include

information about collaboration and maximizing the stimulus funds, how SECA states are spending those funds and guidance on possible accountability systems. Articles about each initiative follow.

Former SECA President and His Mustang

Phil Acord of Tennessee was SECA President in 2002 and 2003. During his tenure on the Board of Directors, we got to know Phil and heard many stories about his beloved Mustang.

The Mustang was Phil's transportation of choice, and he put many miles on his car driving to SECA Board meetings and our annual conferences. We always knew that Phil would come roaring up to the hotel or meeting site, ready to lead the meeting or act as an Ambassador for SECA. We also knew

that if you needed a snack, the Mustang was equipped with a variety of "munchies" that kept Phil from getting too hungry on the road.

We recently received an e-mail from Phil with photos to let us know that the



Mustang had just reached the 500,000 mile milestone and had come through without anything being done to the motor. His comment... "What a car!"

We congratulate both Phil and his Mustang and think the car may be going long after Phil! These are the "fun" stories of SECA, and we just had to share.

Collaboration and the ARRA: Resource #1

Collaboration and coordination of services has long been a topic of discussion as early childhood systems in our states have developed, but it's time to "dust off" those discussions and the many resources and strategies that have been devised during the last two decades.

With the additional funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the pressure at the state level to maximize those dollars and promote collaboration and coordination among

different programs and providers will be enhanced. President Obama has made it abundantly clear that he expects programs to be more efficient and effective, and it will be our responsibility to make that happen.

SECA has produced a resource guide that is posted on the Public Policy page at www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org that provides information about how to make collaboration a reality. We'll be happy to add other resources and state specific materials to the document.

"The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works—whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day...."

President Obama's Inaugural Address

What Did We Decide? Resource #2

As a second phase of our public policy resource development, we'll be contacting our public policy chairs and organizations in the SECA states to try to determine what decisions have been made about stimulus dollars and programs. **The SECA office will compile the information into a resource document that will be**

posted at www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org by the end of June. This document is designed to share state policy decisions that have impacted the SECA state early childhood systems. It will include information about both education and human services programs, and we'll let you know how funds have

been allocated to:

Support existing programs

Create new programs/jobs

Support professional development

Expand services for children

and other pertinent information. This document will include state resource contact information.

Accountability: Resource #3

The Obama administration continues to focus on “transparency and accountability” as the federal stimulus dollars begin to flow to the states.

For early childhood, this can pose a particular dilemma and we ask ourselves these questions:

- How do early childhood programs appropriately demonstrate accountability?
- How do accountability systems ensure that appropriate assess-

ment occurs with young children?

- What systems are currently in place in states that will be acceptable to early childhood professionals and could be expanded and enhanced?
- Will early childhood educators have a voice at the table as the accountability system is developed or modified?

SECA will develop a third set of resource documents to address this

issue. The documents (position statement, policy brief and point-counterpoint) will be developed, approved by the SECA Board of Directors and provided to states as guidance documents. They will include a synopsis of the research on the issue and a set of guiding principles that are developed by the Board of Directors and members.

Expected publication date of these documents is June 2009. *It's not a question of whether we will be accountable but how.*

Everything You Wanted to Know About SECA!

The Membership Commission of the SECA Board of Directors has asked that we develop a program kit about the organization that can be utilized by local chapters/affiliates.

During the 2008 state conferences, our SECA Representative (Georgia Lamirand, President, or Terry Green, Immediate Past-President) convened focus groups in each of the states to ask these questions:

- What do you know about SECA?

- If you're not a member, why not?
- What member benefits do you receive from SECA?

We found out that we have a lot of work to do in helping our members to understand the membership structure, particularly in those states that have the NAEYC,

SECA and state membership combined. **The kit will be designed to answer those questions and distributed by the end of July 2009. The kits will be sent to local chapter presidents.**

The kit is designed to provide an outline for a program at the local chapter/affiliate level. It will include a copy of the SECA membership video, a discussion outline, handouts, and information about how to order door prizes, *Dimensions*, brochures, etc.

SECA 2010: The Early Childhood Years: Time of Opportunity

Put the dates of January 21-23, 2010 on your calendar and get ready for a great SECA 2010 in Little Rock, Arkansas! The annual conference will be held at the Peabody Hotel (yes, the one with the ducks!) in downtown Little Rock

You'll find the latest information on

the conference at www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org

Conference registration will be available on-line in September 2009 and you'll receive discounted registration if you register on-line.

The website has preliminary information, including basic conference regis-

tration fees and hotel information available now.

If you would like to present, you'll find the Call for Proposals on the conference page of the website. Deadline to submit a proposal is August 1, 2009.

See you in Little Rock!

Southern Early Childhood Association

1123 South University, Ste 255
Little Rock, AR 72204

PO Box 55930
Little Rock, AR 72215-5930

Phone: 800-305-SECA
Fax: 501-227-5297
Email: info@SouthernEarlyChildhood.org

The Voice for Southern Children

We're on the web!
www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org

Southern Early Childhood Association



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Sister Roberta Bailey, FL State Representative

Beth Parr, GA State Representative

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Beverly Peden, MS State Representative

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Crystal Campbell, SC State Representative

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Judy Carnahan-Webb, TX State Representative

Toni Cacace-Beshears, VA State Representative

Melanie Clark, WV State Representative

Dr. Herman Knopf, (SC), Member-at-Large & Public Policy Chair

Carol Montealegre (FL), Member-at-Large

Go to the SECA website for e-mail addresses for the Board.

SECA Board of Directors Changes Its 2009 Meeting Schedule

The SECA Board of Directors will meet in Little Rock, Arkansas on June 27-30, 2009. This meeting will replace the fall Board meeting that was previously held in November. Since the annual conference that includes the spring Board meeting has been moved to January or February of each year, utilizing the existing Board schedule (spring and fall) would mean that two meetings would be held within 2-3 months of each other.

In order to resolve this issue, the Board decided to schedule the second meeting of the year in the summer so that it would occur within 6 months of the prior meeting. They also voted to move the Executive Committee meeting to the fall timeframe, allowing the

Executive Committee to prepare for the Board meeting at annual conference. In the fall, the Executive Committee will review the year-end financial position of the organization and develop the next year's budget. During that meeting a full Board conference call will be held to vote on the budget for the next program year. SECA by-laws allow the Board to vote by various means, including conference calls and e-mail.

During the year, the Board Commissions (Board working groups) meet by conference call between Board meetings. Each Commission is charged with researching, developing and presenting program initiatives to the full Board for consideration. SECA

Commissions for 2009 are:

Public Policy - Dr. Herman Knopf (SC) (chair), Dee Ard (AL), Beth Parr (GA), Sister Roberta Bailey (FL)

Membership - Kathy Attaway (KY) (chair), Debbie Ferguson (TN), Carol Montealegre (FL), Janie Humphries (LA)

Leadership - Susan Carrigan (OK) (chair), Toni Cacace-Beshears (VA), Judy Carnahan - Webb (TX), Cindy Ramagos (LA)

Professional Development - Joanna Grymes (chair), Beverly Peden (MS), Crystal Campbell (SC), Melanie Clark (WV)

If you have any agenda items that you wish to have considered for the June Board meeting, please send to gbean@southernearlychildhood.org.