

Bunnie Lempesis Ward

Work Experience:

Since joining the Education Oversight Committee in September 2014, Bunnie has managed various policy development and evaluation initiatives. Bunnie also works closely with the Executive Director to coordinate the annual state budget process for programs funded by the Education Improvement Act.

Prior to joining the EOC, Bunnie worked seven years as the Director of Early Education and Policy and Director of Community Capacity Building for United Way of the Midlands. During her tenure, she managed United Way's Advocacy Agenda and \$1.25 million in early education investments. Bunnie also directed the *Partners in Compassion Institute*, a three-year \$2.25 million federally-funded capacity building initiative. Bunnie was also an Evaluator with the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the S.C. Legislative Audit Council.

Areas of Expertise:

Early Care and Education. Bunnie serves as EOC staff lead for early childhood education. She also developed, implemented and manages the grant protocol for the SC Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program, which has awarded \$4 million from FY 2015-2018. At United Way, Bunnie transformed the education investment process to a unified comprehensive impact strategy focused on birth through high school, launching several new outcome-oriented community partnerships. Bunnie also managed the Midlands' region of the Child Care Resource and Referral system, growing the serve area from eight to fourteen counties and manage five staff members.

Evaluation. Bunnie manages the annual evaluation of state-funded full-day 4K and various early childhood pilots. She also conducts annual reviews of the Teacher Loan Program and Military-Connected Families. Bunnie was also served on federal and state evaluation audit teams, reviewing federal procurement and S.C. Department of Social Services.

Public Policy and Budgeting. Bunnie serves as staff support for the annual state budget process for over 55 programs that are funded by the SC Education

Improvement Act. She revamped the EIA reporting process, and staffs the EOC's Education Improvement Act Subcommittee, which reviews annual reports and makes annual policy and budget recommendations to the General Assembly.

Professional Activities:

Bunnie served as the Education Chair and as a member of the United Way of the Midlands Board of Directors in 2016-17. From 2012-17, she was the Chair of the Harbison West School Improvement Council. In 2016, Harbison West was one of five finalists for the Dick and Tunky Riley SIC Award. Bunnie also served as a volunteer tutor from 2012-2015.

Currently, Bunnie is a member of the District 5 Foundation Board; SIC member at Irmo Middle School; and a volunteer coach for a youth cross country team. She is a graduate of Leadership Columbia, the SC Education Policy Fellows Program and the Riley Institute Diversity Leaders Program.

Education:

A native of South Carolina, Bunnie graduated from Spring Valley High School in Columbia. She graduated *cum laude* from Harvard University with an A.B. in Social Anthropology in 1994. Subsequently, she received her Master's in Public Policy from the University of Southern California in 1999 and was awarded the Outstanding Graduate Student Award.