

BabyRead Advisory Board Members

Marriann Cole Operations Excellence Officer at The Northridge Group, a women-owned management consulting firm serving Fortune 500 clients. Previously an Executive Director at Ameritech (now AT&T), spanning a 25-year career in finance, engineering, operations, and program management. B.A. in Math and Computer Science from Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa, and an MBA from the Illinois Institute of Technology's Executive Telecommunications Program.

Ann Douglas. Former Director of Early Learning for the School District of Oconee County. Oversaw all of the county's preschool intervention and 4K programs. B.S from Clemson University in Early Childhood Education and a M.Ed. in Elementary Education, with additional certifications in Special Education/Learning Disabilities and Elementary Administration and Supervision.

Marie Dunnam, B.A., MSD. Former Executive Director of Oconee County First Steps. Retired in 2018 after 17 years of service. The organization is an early education initiative to prepare children entering first grade healthy and ready to learn. Spent prior 20 years with Oconee County Department of Social Services. B.A. from Louisiana State University and a Master of Social Work (MSD) degree from the University of South Carolina.

Ellen Sanford., B.A., Georgia College, MA Mary Grove College, plus 20 hours in Early Literacy from Clemson University. Former Teacher Leader of Reading Recovery for the Oconee County Schools. Recently retired as head of Reading Recovery for the county, as an adjunct professor at Clemson University teaching early literacy, and as a kindergarten teacher in Seneca.

Beatriz Gil-Stewart., M.D. Physician with over 20 years of experience. Currently works at Oconee Pediatrics where she promotes reading through being a reader in BabyRead and as part of the Reach Out and Read program. A Spanish-speaking volunteer BabyRead reader for the past few years who promotes reading readiness in bi-lingual children. An advocate, began reading to her three children from birth.

Caren von Hippel, B.A. cum distinctione and magna cum laude, Mount Holyoke College, M.A. and Ph.D., University of Michigan. BabyRead® founder and President. With a dissertation in language and cognitive development, Caren has always been passionate about the role reading plays in the development of babies. For 5 years worked with Project Head Start and other projects funded by the Office of Child Development in Washington, D.C. Spent 30 years in business marketing; ran her own business marketing consulting company for 15 years; spent 6 years teaching 6 week classes in business marketing to U.S. and international executives.

Miss Alice Lee., Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education, Tri-county Technical College. Worked for HeadStart for 20 years in different areas. Worked in childcare for twenty plus years. Started at the Seneca HeadStart as an assistant teacher in the infant room; became Site Manager of Early HeadStart, then teacher in HeadStart to Center Manager.

Bill Walker, B.S. M.S. in Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Treasurer of BabyRead®. A businessman with nearly 40 years 'experience in many of the country's major computer companies. Expert in budget forecasting and management; developed curriculum and managed training departments with budgets of \$1M+.

Anna Webb. Attended elementary school in Seneca, SC and graduated from Blue Ridge High School. Mother of three children including a teacher. Joined BabyRead® in 2017 with her granddaughter's only child. For the past several years she and the grandmother have been caretakers for her granddaughter's only child who has been in Early Head Start since he was a baby.

Kathy Whitmire. B.S. from the University of Georgia and attended Oxford College of Emory University. Has an Administration and Supervision certification from Clemson University and did postgraduate work in Mind, Brain, and Teaching at Johns Hopkins University. An expert in the brain development of babies and young children. Former Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for Oconee County Schools, and former Principal of James M. Brown and Orchard Park Elementary Schools in Oconee County. Currently runs the Center 4 ADHD, Seneca, SC.