



## Meeting of the Board of Trustees

February 17, 2022

Cathy Novinger Girl Scouts Leadership Center  
1107 Williams St. Columbia, SC 29201

### AGENDA

- I. Roll Call (Georgia Mjartan)
- II. Public Comment Period  
The public is invited to provide comments relevant to the SC Early Childhood Advisory Council and/or South Carolina First Steps during this period. Members of the public wishing to speak must sign up before the meeting. Comments should be limited to no more than three minutes per speaker.
- III. Call to Order and Approve Agenda (David Morley)  
**Motion:** To adopt the agenda as submitted  
**Motion:** To adopt the December 3, 2021 minutes as submitted  
**Attachments:** December 3, 2021 Minutes
- IV. Executive Committee Report (David Morley)  
**Attachments:** Executive Committee Report, Executive Committee Meetings Minutes, SC First Steps Board of Trustees and Early Childhood Advisory Council 2022 Meeting Schedule
- V. Consent Agenda: Motions Recommended by Committees (David Morley)
  - a. **Motion:** To approve the 2022 Board of Trustees & ECAC meeting dates (Executive Committee recommends)
  - b. **Motion:** To disallow certain unallowable costs for Abbeville County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation. (Executive Committee recommends)
  - c. **Motion:** To disallow certain unallowable costs for Greenwood County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation. (Executive Committee recommends)
  - d. **Motion:** To approve the addition of standards for the evidence-based program Strengthening Families Program (SFP) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards (Program and Grant Committee recommends)
- VI. Finance and Administration Committee (Walter Fleming)  
**Attachments:** Finance and Administration Committee Report, Finance and Administration Committee Meeting Minutes, FY 2022 Financial Status Report as January 31, 2022, FY 2022 Donations Report as of January 31, 2022
- VII. Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee (Jennifer McConnell)



**Attachments:** Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Report, Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting Minutes, First Steps Program Accountability Standards Strengthening Families 0-5

VIII. Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee (Dr. Amy Williams)

**Attachments:** Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Report, Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes

IX. Legislative Committee (Sen. Gerald Malloy)

X. Executive Director's Report (Georgia Mjartan)

**Attachments:** Executive Director's Report

XI. Check Presentations (Dave Morley)

XII. **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees



**Board of Trustees Meeting**

December 3, 2021

2:00PM

<https://zoom.us/j/92196505922?pwd=WnA4MFlyZWJXWmFJU21xK2YzWndFdz09>

*Draft Minutes*

**Members Present (15):**

Dave Morley, Chair	Jennifer McConnell
Dr. Shelley Canright, Vice Chair	Alexia Newman
Sen. Greg Hembree	Janie Neeley
Mary Lynne Diggs	Roger Pryor
Dr. Michelle Fry	Dr. Edward Simmer
John Hayes	Sue Williams
Tim Holt	
Michael Leach	
Dr. David Mathis	

**Members Absent (8):**

Sen. Gerald Malloy  
Rep. Rita Allison  
Rep. Jerry Govan  
Walter Fleming  
Robert Kerr  
Jesica Mackey  
Dr. Amy Williams  
Nicole Wynkoop

**Attendees (66)**

Georgia Mjartan	Jayne Buckley	Pauletta Plowden
Arthur Brewton	Jenny May	Rachal Hatton-Moore
Allison Kemner	J Kimrey	Rogers Pender
Amy Engle	Jon Artz	Rusty Monhollon
Avian Jones	Joy Mazur	Samantha Ingram
Belinda Cain	Justina Siuba	Sarah Eargle
Betty Gardiner	Kaitlyn Richards	Sean McLoughlin
Bryan Borroughs	Karen Oliver	Sharon Bruton
Carletta Isreal	Kate Roach	Shayla Pettigrew
Carolyn Ellis	Kathy Fitzgerald	Sheila Cornwell
Chelsea Richard	Keisha Gray	SheKiah Reese
Cheryl Scales-Chavis	Kerry Cordan	Sheila Prialeau
Cindy Ellis	Kristi Manseth	Steve Rider
Cindy Galloway	Kristin Zeaser-Sydow	Taylor Jones
Cindy Kellett	Kristine Jenkins	Tresa Nelson
Delores Rock	LaMyra Sanders	Cheri Shapiro
Dione Ashley	Laura Baker	Mackenna Perry
Derek Cromwell	Lexi Jones	Vernell Gray Fuller
Dione Brabham	Lis Guimaraes	
Dorian Young	Mark Barnes	
Felicia Battle	Martha Strickland	
Gina Beebe	Matt Weyer	
Ianna Wilson-Goodridge	Nur Tanyel	
Jabari Clyburn	Pierce McNair	

Ms. Jones conducted a roll call.



Ms. Jones reported there were no members of the public that requested to speak.

Mr. Morley called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. Mr. Morley requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Dr. Canright provided the motion. Mr. Holt provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the October 21, 2021 minutes. Sen. Hembree provided the motion. Ms. McConnell provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Cheri Shapiro of the University of South Carolina and Drs. Kristi Manseth and MacKenna Perry of Pacific Research Evaluation provided a presentation on the Parent as Teachers External Evaluation for FY 16-17 through FY 18-19. Dr.

Mr. Morley provided a report on the Executive Committee. He welcomed Dr. Michelle Fry, Director of the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs. He asked for a motion to approve the SCFS Bonus Policy. Dr. Williams provided the motion and Dr. Canright seconded. It was approved unanimously. Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the 2022 meeting dates. Dr. Mathis provided the motion and Ms. McConnell seconded. The trustees will be surveyed for meeting preferences before voting on the calendar. Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the following consent agenda. Sen. Hembree provided the motion. Dr. Simmer provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda: **Motions Recommended by Committees** (David Morley)

- a. **Motion:** To approve the SCFS Pay for Performance Increase Policy (Executive Committee recommends)
- b. **Motion:** To approve the 16 Local Partnerships for waivers to carry forward FY21 grant funds to be expended in FY22 according to the plans submitted to this committee by Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell, Berkeley, Chester, Clarendon, Fairfield, Greenwood, Horry, Jasper, Marion, Oconee, Pickens, Sumter, and Union County First Steps. (Program and Grant Committee recommends)

Mr. Holt reported on the Finance and Administration Committee. He stated the organization is in excellent financial condition. He shared that in the state budget request to the Governor's office the organization asked for \$6 million in recurring funds to local partnerships and an increase in payments to 4K providers. Mr. Holt shared that work is continuing on the corrective action plans for Abbeville and Greenwood counties as well as efforts for Local Partnership staff to participate in the State Retirement System.

Ms. McConnell reported on the Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee. She reviewed the Local Partnerships Covid Waiver Request for 16 Local Partnerships. Mr. Cromwell shared information on the working groups that were created to strengthen operations and processes to better serve the Local Partnerships. Ms. Gardiner provided an update on the ESSER III Parenting Expansion funding.



Dr. Williams reported on the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee and shared that the University of South Carolina's Institute for Families and Society has been commissioned to complete the Child Care Technical Assistance evaluation.

Sen. Hembree provided a legislative update.

Ms. Mjartan provided the Executive Director's annual report and shared some of the many highlights on the activities of the organization over the last year. Ms. Mjartan shared information on the spring fundraiser and sponsorships that will benefit the local partnerships. She introduced new team members, reviewed the organization's vacancies, celebrated recently retired Local Partnership Executive Directors and welcomed new Local Partnership Executive Directors.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. McConnell provided the motion. Mr. Holt seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 pm by Mr. Morley



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees  
From: David Morley, Chairman, Executive Committee  
Date: February 11, 2022  
**RE: Executive Committee Report**

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The Executive Committee of the Board of South Carolina First Steps met on January 26, 2022 and held a special called meeting on February 11, 2022. Minutes from the meetings are attached.

**Governor Henry McMaster’s State of the State**

In his January 19<sup>th</sup> State of the State address, Governor Henry McMaster spoke of the success of statewide expansion of 4K, the many classrooms and centers added and great increase in children being served, and, notably, quoted survey data from First Steps 4K families showing the dramatic impact of First Steps 4K on parents’ ability to work or continue their own education.

**Debbie Robertson Special Recognition**

On February 3, 2022 members of the First Steps board and staff gathered at the State House to celebrate Debbie Robertson, former Chief Partnership Officer, who was formally honored for her twenty-one years of distinguished service in House Resolution H.4635.

**South Carolina Birth through Five Press Conference**

On February 17, 2022 at 10:30AM Governor Henry McMaster will unveil South Carolina’s Birth through Five Plan and celebrate the launch of First Five SC.

**Action Items**

With a quorum present, the committee acted on behalf of the full board on the following motions:

- a. Approve the 2022 Board of Trustees and ECAC meeting dates.  
Motion: Shelley Canright, Second: Walt Fleming, Unanimous approval
- b. To go into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter and to receive legal advice.  
Motion: Walt Fleming, Second: Shelley Canright, Unanimous approval
- c. To come out of Executive Session.  
Motion: Amy Williams, Second: Walt Fleming, Unanimous approval
- d. To disallow certain unallowable costs for Abbeville County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation.  
Motion: Amy Williams, Second: Shelley Canright, Unanimous approval

- e. To disallow certain unallowable costs for Greenwood County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation.

Motion: Amy Williams, Second: Shelley Canright, Unanimous approval



## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2022 at 3:00 pm by Zoom

Members Present: David Morley, Dr. Shelley Canright, Jennifer McConnell, Walt Fleming, Dr. Amy Williams  
Members Absent: Sen. Gerald Malloy  
SCFS Staff Present: Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director

The Executive Committee meeting of the South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees was called to order by David Morley at 3:00 pm on January 26, 2022.

The executive committee members acted on behalf of the full board on the following motion:

**Approve the 2022 Board of Trustees and ECAC meeting dates.**

The motion passed unanimously after being motioned by Shelley Canright and was seconded by Walt Fleming.

Georgia Mjartan provided the Executive Committee with the following informational updates:

- I. Legislative Update
  - Budget Request
  - JCLCC
  - Paid Parental Leave for State Employees
  - Governance
- II. Grantmaking Update
  - ESSER Parenting Expansion Grants Fundraising Update
  - End of Year Campaign
  - A Night to Celebrate Community
- III. Local Partnerships
  - Corrective Action
  - Child Care Scholarships
- IV. 4K
  - Statewide Expansion
  - 2022 – 2023 Applications Launched
  - EOC Report
- V. ECAC
  - Birth through Five Plan
    - o ICC Role & Next Steps
    - o Final Document
    - o Press Conference
  - First Five SC
    - o Soft Launch
    - o Press Conference



- Marketing Campaign
- Other initiatives:
  - Family Voice Council
  - Technical College Work Skills Scholarships for First Steps Families
  - PreK to K Family Engagement Transitions Working Group (Ed. Commission of the States)
  - ECE Business Collaboratory Working Group (First Children’s Finance)
- VI. Personnel / HR**
  - New Hires
    - Darcy Huffman, 4K Administrative Lead
    - Tracy Darby, Fiscal Specialist
    - Hannah Hayes, Front Desk Administrative Assistant
  - Vacancies
    - 4K Coach Horry County
    - Grants Accountant
    - Database Administrator
  - EPMS / Review
  - Pay for Performance
  - All Team Survey
  - COVID-19 Update
  - Rosewood Building

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.



## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2022 at 1:45 pm by Zoom

Members Present: David Morley, Dr. Shelley Canright, Jennifer McConnell, Walt Fleming, Dr. Amy Williams  
Members Absent: Sen. Gerald Malloy  
SCFS Staff Present: Mark Barnes, Director of Administration, Derek Cromwell, Chief Partnership Officer, and Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director  
Others Present: Roy Laney, Attorney for South Carolina First Steps

A special called meeting of the Executive Committee of the South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees was called to order by David Morley at 1:45 pm on February 11, 2022.

The executive committee members took the following actions:

**To go into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter and to receive legal advice.**

Motion: Walt Fleming, Second: Shelley Canright, Unanimous approval

**To come out of Executive Session.**

Motion: Amy Williams, Second: Walt Fleming, Unanimous approval

No votes were taken in Executive Session. The additional action was taken:

**To recommend to the full board the following items:**

- a. **To disallow certain unallowable costs for Abbeville County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation.**
- b. **To disallow certain unallowable costs for Greenwood County First Steps and to suspend payments to that local partnership if they do not bring themselves back to a status of in compliance with their Corrective Action Plan within 15 days of notice subject to input from the legislative delegation.**

Motion: Amy Williams, Second: Shelley Canright, Unanimous approval

Shelley Canright motioned to adjourn the meeting, Jennifer McConnell seconded, will all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.



## **2022**

### **Board of Trustees and Early Childhood Advisory Council**

#### **Meeting Dates**

*Meetings will be held at 2 p.m. at*

<b>FEBRUARY 17, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>
<b>APRIL 21, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES RETREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>
<b>JUNE 16, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>
<b>AUGUST 18, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>
<b>OCTOBER 20, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>
<b>DECEMBER 1, 2022</b>	<b>2022 SC SUMMIT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD</b>
<b>DECEMBER 2, 2022</b>	<b>BOARD OF TRUSTEES ANNUAL MEETING EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL</b>



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Walter Fleming, Chairman, Finance and Administration Committee

Date: February 2, 2022

**RE: Finance and Administration Report**

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The Finance and Administration Committee met via Zoom conference call on February 2, 2022 to receive updates from staff. Detailed meeting minutes are attached. The committee brings forward no action items, and the following updates.

### **First Steps State Office**

#### **Financial Report**

2021-22: The YTD financial report was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. The organization continues to be in excellent financial condition, and our expenditures are below expectations as we work to expand our 4K Program statewide.

#### **Local Partnerships**

Mr. Barnes gave us an update on the violation of Corrective Action Plans by two Local Partnerships. He mentioned the signing a new contract that they indicated in their Corrective Action Plans would be discontinued. The staff is waiting on a response from the Board of Abbeville County First Steps as to the resolution, which is now overdue. Staff is reviewing the situation in order to suggest possible action by the staff and the Board of Trustees.

#### **Other Items**

Mr. Barnes gave us an update on the 2022-23 State Budget Request. In addition, he mentioned the work to secure the ability of the staff in the Local Partnerships to participate in the State Retirement System. That work is continuing.



## **Minutes from Finance and Administration Committee Meeting**

**February 2, 2022**

Members present: Walter Fleming, Chairman, Tim Holt

Members not present: N/A

Nonmembers present: Mark Barnes, Director of Administration; Lavinia Tejada, CPA, Director of Finance and Audits

With all public notices being provided, the Zoom meeting was called to order by Walter Fleming at 1:00 pm.

### **First Steps State Office**

#### **Financial Report**

The YTD financial report for 2021-22 was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. He shared that the expenditures for the year to date are less than the budget. This is due, in part, to the statewide expansion of the 4K Program. This is our first year of statewide expansion in the middle of a continuing pandemic. Our 4K staff is working hard to increase the number of centers, and students enrolled in the program. At this point we have more students enrolled than at anytime in the past, as well as the highest number of classrooms and centers. He mentioned the updated Donations Report was also included.

#### **State Budget Update**

Mr. Barnes updated the Committee on the status of the state budget request for next year. The request is for \$6 Million in recurring funds for the Local Partnerships. These funds would be used for two purposes, they include targeted or competitive grants, and for capacity and infrastructure with some of the funds being available to use for monitoring and support. In addition, we requested some proviso changes that would increase the amounts paid to the 4K providers for transportation, tuition, and classroom start-up funds. We presented our request to the House Ways and Means Education Subcommittee last month. The presentation went well. He reminded the Committee that we did not ask for any 4K funds as we will have enough carryforward along with the new recurring amount to cover the costs for the next fiscal year, 2022-23. The next step will be to present to the Senate Finance Committee.

#### **Local Partnerships**

##### **Update on Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps Partnerships**

First Steps State Office staff are following up on the Corrective Action Plans established by the two Local Partnerships. Mr. Barnes shared some information to the Committee related to the situation. The two Local Partnerships have extended their contract with Michael Gaskins after their Corrective Action Plans stated the contract would be eliminated. This is a violation of the Corrective Action Plan by each

of the two Boards. Mr. Barnes sent an email to Abbeville County First Steps and has had a discussion, along with Derek Cromwell, the Chief Partnership Officer, with their Board Chair and the Executive Director. There are several reasons that this is a problem. We have asked that their Board give us an update on the status of this contract by January 31, but no response has been received as of today. Mr. Barnes is working with the staff to develop recommendations on possible action by the First Steps Board of Trustees. One possibility would be to disallow this cost. Other actions may be necessary. A follow up meeting may need to be scheduled with the Program and Grants Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee prior to the next Board of Trustees meeting. Mr. Barnes will keep the Committee up to date on the situation.

### **Local Partnership Retirement Efforts**

The State Office is continuing work with their attorney to assist with supporting Local Partnership staff to be eligible to enroll in the state's retirement system. Mr. Barnes mentioned to the Committee that draft language has been developed that would meet PEBA's requirements of allowing Local Partnership staff to participate in the State's Retirement System. PEBA has signed off on the language. It might be introduced soon. We have seen some support for getting this done in SC's House of Representatives. If introduced in the House, there may be an attempt to get it introduced in the Senate as well.

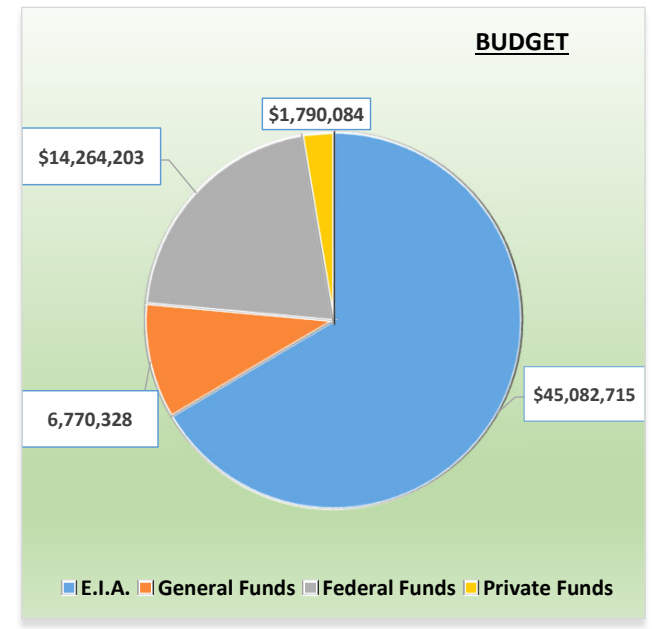
### **4K Program**

Staff gave an update on the program's status. This included an update on the statewide expansion efforts. We now have the largest number of centers enrolled, the highest number of classrooms, and the most children enrolled in our history. 4K Staff continue to work to add additional classrooms and centers to complete statewide expansion.

### **Other**

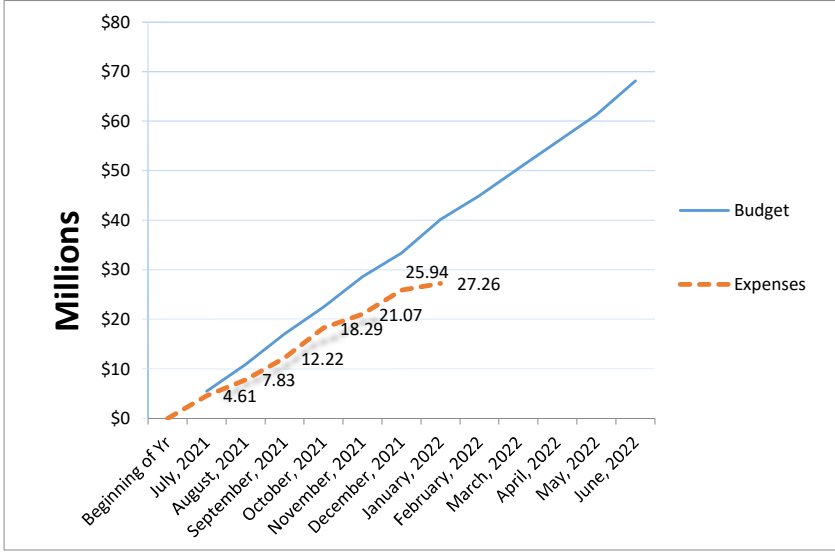
Mr. Barnes mentioned that the agency was working to award a number of federal grants funded with ESSER Funds received from the State Department of Education.

With no further business to discuss, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:33.



**As of  
January 31, 2022**

Spending Rates	
Projected	58%
Actual	41%



PROGRAMS / OPERATIONS	STATE APPROPRIATIONS			FEDERAL GRANTS			PRIVATE FUNDS			GRAND TOTAL			
	Description	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS	14,435,228	8,781,819	5,653,409	2,025,313		\$ 2,025,313				-	16,460,541	8,781,819	\$ 7,678,722
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT & TECH ASST.	2,896,900	1,334,592	1,562,308	3,385,280		\$ 3,385,280	198,393	42,500	155,893		6,480,573	1,377,092	\$ 5,103,481
PRIVATE 4-K	32,014,655	15,059,911	16,954,744	5,307,914		5,307,914				-	37,322,569	15,059,911	\$ 22,262,658
EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL	193,500	27,562	165,938	2,531,685	162,544	2,369,141	130,000		130,000		2,855,185	190,106	\$ 2,665,079
AMERICORPS				326,703	117,639	209,064				-	326,703	117,639	\$ 209,064
POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY	2,557,208	1,097,739	1,459,469	687,308		687,308	1,461,691	632,056	829,635		4,706,207	1,729,794	\$ 2,976,413
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>52,097,491</b>	<b>26,301,623</b>	<b>25,795,868</b>	<b>14,264,203</b>	<b>280,182</b>	<b>13,984,021</b>	<b>1,790,084</b>	<b>674,556</b>	<b>1,115,528</b>		<b>68,151,778</b>	<b>27,256,361</b>	<b>\$ 40,895,417</b>

**Notes:**

**1) Local Partnerships:**

- a. Funding Sources: Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funds
- b. Formula allocation cash advances are disbursed on a quarterly basis
- c. Expenditures reflect disbursements from SC First Steps (state-level)
- d. Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors

**2) Private budgets based on Projected Fund Raising and income & prior year cash.**

45,327,163	E.I.A.
6,770,328	General Funds
14,264,203	Federal Funds
1,790,084	Private Funds
<b>68,151,778</b>	

**3) LP Support & Technical Assistance**

- a. Contracted accounting firm (Manley Garvin, LLC)
- b. Accounting Software network support & Data Housing

Federal Funds:	
AmeriCorps:	326,703
SLDS:	173,017
PDG:	5,686,573
10% Quality	339,517
ESSER Funds	4,485,914
GEER Funds	3,252,479
	<b>14,264,203</b>

**3) LP Support & Technical Assistance (cont.)**

- c. Programmatic data housing & network support
- d. Workers' compensation insurance coverage
- e. External programmatic evaluation
- f. Financial audits-annually each LP
- g. Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors
- h. OFS program & finance staff (payroll, rent, contractual, supplies, travel, etc)
- i. Includes LP Countdown to Kindergarten program

**4) State Appropriations Include EIA Funds and General Funds.**

**5) \$3.2 mil. in GEER Funds were awarded April 1 (reimbursable)**

# Donations

## FY 2022

As of January 31st, 2022



DATE RECEIVED	GENERAL	DONOR/PAYOR	FUNDS	PURPOSE / COMMENTS
Jul 19, 2021	25	Cindy Kellet	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jul 19, 2021	1,000	Brady Thomas	Restricted	Hampton County First Steps
Aug 1, 2021	10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	975	Jim & Melinda Robertson-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	20	James Rickenbaker-NFG	Restricted	Orangeburg County First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	96	Blackbaud Giving Foundation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	125	Flour Enterprise-The Benevity	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Sep 1, 2021	10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Oct 14, 2021	100	Flour Enterprise-The Benevity	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Oct 18, 2021	10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Oct 18, 2021	25	James Rickenbacker-Orangeburg Co.	Restricted	Orangeburg County First Steps
Oct 18, 2021	25	Sharon Daniels -Orangeburg Co.	Restricted	Orangeburg County First Steps
Oct 18, 2021	100	Chris Vanderford-Greenwood Co.	Restricted	Greenwood County First Steps
Nov 8, 2021	50	Laura Baker	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 3, 2021	150	Jennifer Wright-Lancaster Co.	Restricted	Lancaster County First Steps
Dec 3, 2021	200	Gloria Jennings-Richland Co.	Restricted	Richland County First Steps
Dec 3, 2021	25	Bethany Counts-Newberry Co.	Restricted	Newberry County First Steps
Dec 3, 2021	1,000	Aaron & Nicole Winkoop	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Dec 7, 2021	1,000	TS Holt Company	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Dec 9, 2021	5,000	Schwab Charitable-Marchelle Canright	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 21, 2021	80	Blackbaud Giving Foundation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	10	Bethany Counts-NFG	Restricted	Newberry County First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	970	Sunshine Foundation-NFG	Restricted	Barnwell County First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	25	Regina Eargle-NFG	Restricted	Newberry County First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	10	Tricia Gordon_NFG	Restricted	Barnwell County First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	24	Hazel Backman-NFG	Restricted	Richland County First Steps
Dec 31, 2021	100	Antionette Alston-NFG	Restricted	Newberry County First Steps
Jan 1, 2022	100	Karen Oliver	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 1, 2022	100	Karen Oliver	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 1, 2022	1,000	Hal Kaplan	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 2, 2022	10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Jan 5, 2022	100	Merita Ann Alison	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2022	500	Gregory Hembree	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2022	100	Debra Scott	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	2,500	David & Cheryl Morley	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 18, 2022	25	Alison Bowers-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps



Jan 18, 2022	30	Cindy Kellett-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	100	Audrey Whetsell-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	150	Valencia Johnson-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	24	Cassandra Barber-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	100	Elizabeth C. Gardiner-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	25	Delores Rock-NFG	Restricted	Orangeburg County FS
Jan 18, 2022	15	Delores Rock-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	25	Vanessa Jefferies-NFG	Restricted	Cherokee County FS
Jan 18, 2022	500	Janice E. Kilburn-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	600	Janice E. Kilburn-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	250	Anne Graybill-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	300	David M Mathis-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	100	Walter Fleming Jr-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	50	Alexia Newman-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	500	Michelle Fry-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	25	Veronica Reynolds-NFG	Restricted	Richland County FS
Jan 18, 2022	100	Eastern Region/Pam Bradley-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	30	Lauren E Moore-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	75	Cheryl Scales-Chavis-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	15	Dauida Price-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	97	Michael Artz-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	30	Billy E Bennett-NFG	Restricted	Sumter County FS
Jan 18, 2022	15	Jennifer Phelan-Ninh-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	45	Janice Moore-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	388	Georgia Mjartan-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	100	Mike Leach-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	50	Amy Williams-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 18, 2022	100	Julie Hussey-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 20, 2022	10,000	Fidelity Charitable-Morley Family Fund	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 20, 2022	5,000	Manley Garvin	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 20, 2022	1,000	Mark Robertson	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 25, 2022	1,000	Lourie Consulting Inc.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 31, 2022	2,500	Founders Federal Credit Union	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 31, 2022	1,000	Anlar LLC	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 31, 2022	1,000	Teaching Strategies	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate

\$ 40,940



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Jennifer McConnell

Date: January 20, 2022

**RE: Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee**

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The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee met on January 20, 2022; Minutes of the meeting are attached. The following motion was approved unanimously. Strengthening Families Program (SFP)- New evidenced-based requiring approval.

**Local Partnerships Strengthening Families Request:**

- Strengthening Families is a 14-session parent training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.

**\*Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of standards for the evidence-based program Strengthening Families Program (SFP) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards**

Motioned by Jennifer McConnell, seconded by Shelly Canright  
Motion passed unanimously.

**Derek Cromwell- Chief Partnership Officer Update**

- Derek talked about Legislative Delegation appointments to the local Boards.
- Over the next few weeks Georgia and Kaitlyn Richard, SCFS new Government Affairs Liaison will be contacting each of the Legislative local delegation members to:
  - Introduce Kaitlyn in her new role at SCFS
  - Distribute packets to each member which will include a copy of their local partnership annual report and a letter.
  - The letter has two main purposes:
    - To share information and highlights about SCFS and the local partnerships; and
    - To request that their delegation appoint members to the local partnership boards.
  - Within the letter, we clearly outline the process for appointing members and remind the legislators of both the criteria for members and the significant community value of these boards.
  - We are asking for these appointments to be made during the first quarter of 2022 and requesting that they notify the Executive Directors once an appointment has been made.

- For the local partnerships whose boards already have 4 appointed members, we will still be contacting the delegation members and providing them the local Annual Report. There just won't be any action requested.

### **Mark Barnes- Director of Administration**

Mark Barnes gave an update on Corrective Action Updates

- Mark updated the committee on all the actions that happened with Abbeville and Greenwood County First Steps over the past year.
- One area of concern was the need to eliminate a contract between Abbeville County First Steps and Michael Gaskin, Executive Director of Greenwood County First Steps to facilitate Abbeville's Fatherhood program by December 31, 2021. Unbeknown to SC First Steps, Abbeville County First Steps entered a new contract on December 2, 2021 with Michael Gaskin for the fatherhood and parenting program. This is a direct violation of the legal agreement and the violation of the corrective action plan for both Abbeville and Greenwood Counties.
- Phone conversations have been on going with Abbeville ED, Board Chair, Derek Cromwell, and Mark Barnes. We are giving Abbeville an opportunity to correct their actions, our attorney has been brought up to speed and we are encouraging Abbeville to get this situation corrected.



## Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting

January 20, 2022  
Zoom Webinar  
11:30am- 1:00pm

### Minutes

**Board Presence:** Chair Jennifer McConnell, Shelley Canright, Roger Pryor, John Hayes  
**State Staff Presence:** Derek Cromwell, Mark Barnes, Delores Rock & Kathy Fitzgerald  
Meeting was called to order at 11:38 am by Shelley Canright

#### Derek Cromwell- Chief Partnership Officer Update

- Derek talked about Legislative Delegation appointments to the local Boards.
- Over the next few weeks Georgia and Kaitlyn Richard, SCFS new Government Affairs Liaison will be contacting each of the Legislative local delegation members to:
  - Introduce Kaitlyn in her new role at SCFS
  - Distribute packets to each member which will include a copy of their local partnership annual report and a letter.
  - The letter has two main purposes:
    - To share information and highlights about SCFS and the local partnerships; and
    - To request that their delegation appoint members to the local partnership boards.
  - Within the letter, we clearly outline the process for appointing members and remind the legislators of both the criteria for members and the significant community value of these boards.
  - We are asking for these appointments to be made during the first quarter of 2022 and requesting that they notify the Executive Directors once an appointment has been made.
- For the local partnerships whose boards already have 4 appointed members, we will still be making contact with the delegation members and providing them the local Annual Report. There just won't be any action requested.

#### Mark Barnes- Director of Administration

Mark Barnes gave an update on Corrective Action Updates

##### Abbeville and Greenwood Counties

- Mark reminded us on all the actions that happened with in the past year. Since then, Abbeville has been working alleviate the corrective action, several the corrective action plan requirements have been implemented,
- One action was to eliminate a contract between First Steps and Michael Gaskin by October 15,2021, Abbeville asked for an extension and was granted the date of October 31,2021. Unbeknown to SC First Steps a new contract was drafted and signed on December 2,2021



for next 5 years with Michael Gaskin. This is a direct violation of the legal agreement and the violation of the corrective action plan.

- Phone conversations have been on going with Abbeville ED, Board Chair, Derek Cromwell, and Mark Barnes. We are giving Abbeville an opportunity to correct their actions, our attorney has been brought up to speed and we are encouraging Abbeville to get this situation cleaned up.

**Approve Program Standards (Action Item)**

- Strengthening Families Program (SFP)– New evidenced-based standard requiring approval.
  - Strengthening Families Program is a 14-session parent training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.

**\*Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of standards for the evidence-based program Strengthening Families Program (SFP) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards**

Motioned: Jennifer McConnell

Seconded: Shelly Canright

All voted Yes

Meeting was called to adjourn at 12:18 by Jennifer McConnell

Next Meeting March 17,2022 11:30-1:00

# FIRST STEPS PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

## Strengthening Families 0-5 (220)

### REQUIREMENTS FOR FY22:

#### SCFSBOT Designation: Evidence-Based

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a nationally and internationally recognized parenting and family strengthening program for high-risk families. It is a 14-session parent training program found to significantly improve parenting skills and family relationships, reduce problem behaviors, delinquency and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance.

Partnerships funding this strategy must adhere to national model guidelines.

#### **TARGETING:**

##### **Targeting Clients At-Risk Of Early School Failure**

At least 60% of home visitation clients shall be identified on the basis of two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors below (with 100% of client families possessing at least one risk factor at the time of enrollment):

- A preschool-aged child has been abused
- A preschool-aged child has been neglected
- A preschool-aged child has been placed in foster care
- Eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, e.g. Food Stamps) or Free School Lunches (130% of federal poverty level or below – with first priority given to TANF-eligible clients whose annual family income levels fall at 50% of federal poverty level or below)
- Eligibility for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Parts B (Preschool Special Education, ages 3-5) or C (BabyNet, ages 0-3)
- A preschool aged child with a developmental delay as documented by a physician or standardized assessment (not screening tool)
- Teenage mother/primary caregiver at or under the age of 20 (at the time of the focus child's birth)
- Low maternal/primary caregiver education (less than high school graduation at the time of focus child's birth)
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to the substance abuse of a caregiver
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver depression
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver mental illness
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver intellectual disability
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to domestic violence within the home
- Low birth weight (under 5.5 lbs.) in association with serious medical complications.
- English is not the primary language spoken in the home.
- Single parent household and has need of other services
- Transient/numerous family relocations and/or homeless
- Incarcerated Parent(s) (parent(s) is incarcerated in federal or state prison or local jail or was released from incarceration within the past year)
- Death in the Immediate Family (death of a parent/caregiver or sibling)
- Military Deployment (Parent/guardian is currently deployed or is within 2 years of returning from a deployment as an active duty member of the armed forces. Deployment is defined as any current or past event or activity that relates to duty in the armed forces that involves an operation, location, command or duty that is different from his/her normal duty assignment.)
- Recent Immigrant or Refugee Family - One or both parents are foreign-born and entered the country within the past 5 years

The following condition, while not considered part of SC First Steps' targeting criteria, is an additional characteristic that can put children at potentially higher risk for early school failure.

Additional high-risk characteristic tracked by First Steps-funded programs:

- Child was removed for behavioral reasons from one or more child care, Head Start or preschool setting.

#### **Targeting By Age (Early Intervention)**

100% of newly enrolled client households must contain one or more children between the ages of 0 and 5. Partnerships may not enroll children 6 and over.

### **Client Retention**

It is critical that client families remain in the program long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. Each partnership will be required to demonstrate its successful, long-term retention of 75% of its clients across their pre-determined program duration.

Program duration:

- Infant and Toddler, SFP Birth – 3, 14 sessions
- Pre-school children, SFP 3 – 5 years, 14 sessions

### **SERVICE DELIVERY:**

#### **Model Fidelity**

In order to ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, vendors shall ensure that each First Steps-funded parenting/family strengthening strategy is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

#### **Group Intensity and Delivery:**

- **Programs shall offer group-based once a week. Groups last 2.5 hours each week includes dinner together, parent class & children's class, and family time to close the session. The duration of services will span over 14 weeks. Retrospective pre assessment is given at session 4, post assessment is given at session 13. Last session is designated to graduation.**
- Program curriculum includes:
  - a) Children's sessions – Children's sessions are built around developmental activities that foster positive parent-child interactions and other approaches to learning as specified by SFP curriculum.
  - b) Parenting sessions – Parenting sessions provide detailed training in child growth, healthy development, and positive interactions with children.
  - c) Family sessions – Family sessions incorporate experiential exercises that allow parents and children to practice what they learned in either their parenting or children's sessions.
- Staffing structure: 2 group leaders to facilitate parenting groups, two group leaders for children's group, and 1 program coordinator

#### **Screenings and Referrals:**

- **Each client child shall be assessed using the age-appropriate developmental screening tools Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2, in week 4 of 14 week curriculum.** In the event that a developmental screening (conducted in association with any First Steps-funded program) indicates a possible developmental delay, the vendor shall collaborate with parents/guardians to seek the consensual provision of these results to: (a) the child's pediatric care provider, and (b) either BabyNet (ages 0-3) or the child's zoned school district and Disabilities and Special Needs Board (ages 3-5) for additional diagnostic evaluation. Vendors shall maintain (within the First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral. In addition, the Vendor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development.
- **If a child scores in the monitoring range on ASQ3 and/or ASQ:SE2** in two or more categories and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening questionnaire, the vendor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development.
- Strengthening Family vendors must screen at least 80% of eligible clients in the ASQ3 and ASQ:SE2.
- Partnerships and their funded vendors shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. 60% of families that receive at least one personal visit shall be connected to at least one community resource in the program year. Active and sustained efforts to connect client families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.

#### **Integrated Serve Delivery and Referral:**

- SPF group leaders must complete Participant Progress forms following each session.
- Partnerships shall utilize formal or informal need assessments to refer/link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial. All referrals to other services shall be entered into the First Steps Data System.

**Staff Qualifications and Training:**

- Each SPF group leader shall attend a two-to-three-day training covering the following topics: underlying theoretical concepts, program mechanics, recruitment and retention of families, overview of the curriculum, facilitation groups, ethical situations, and role plays. In addition, each group leader shall be trained to lead both parenting and children's sessions. Training is provided by HH Training & Consulting, LLC.

**Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development**

- Supervisors hold a weekly staff meeting with program staff to provide reflective supervision and weekly individualized reflective supervision meetings to review client recruitment and retention, guideline compliance, and programmatic data reviews.

**ASSESSMENT**

- **For parent** Retrospective pre assessment is given at session 4, post assessment is given at session 13.
- **For child** Each birth to 3 shall be rescreen using the age-appropriate developmental screening tools Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2, at the end of session 14.

**DATA SUBMISSION:**

- **Data Collection** The following data must be collected within the First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC): parent/child client demographic data, group sessions, program referrals, connections to services, developmental screenings, pre/post-assessments, and risk factors
- **Monitoring** Local First Steps Partnerships shall monitor progress of each provider and ensure model fidelity with: Cases Visit Summary and Projected to Served, Group Session Detail, Group Meetings Section – Case Data Entry Screen, Connection Detail, ASQ, Assessment Program Records, and Risk Factors Reports.
- *Unit of service = 1 family*





## **Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee**

**Chairwoman: Dr. Amy Williams**

### **REPORT**

The committee met on January 24, 2022, and Janie Neeley, Dave Morley, and myself were present. The meeting opened with a discussion about challenges and brainstorm of solutions for measuring outcomes related to outreach, i.e., successfully connecting families to services and resources and the impacts of their receipt of these services and resources.

Then, the discussion shifted to the prevalent program evaluations, on the heels of the Parents as Teachers one that was presented at the December board meeting. First Steps has commissioned the University of South Carolina's Institute for Families in Society for the next prevalent program evaluation on child care technical assistance, which encompasses Quality Enhancement, Quality Counts, and training and professional development. This evaluation is due to the General Assembly on November 1, 2022.

The meeting closed with a presentation of the findings from two recent Your Voice Matters feedback loops. There was reflection from the committee on the power of these feedback loops, including the highlight that the 4K family survey results were mentioned in Governor Henry McMaster's 2022 State of the State address.



## **Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee**

**Monday, January 24, 2022, 2-3PM via Zoom**

Committee Members Present: Dr. Amy Williams; Janie Neeley; Dave Morley

Committee Members Absent: Alexia Newman; Jesica Mackey

First Steps Staff Present: Dr. Chelsea Richard; Betty Gardiner; Lexi Jones

### **MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 2:03PM. The meeting opened with an initial discussion about challenges related to measuring outcomes related to outreach, i.e., connecting families to services and resources. This is a challenge for the First Steps' AmeriCorps program and core functions of Local Partnerships, particularly because what the outreach activities are varies across counties and over time. There was discussion about several data collection methods, like the power and timeliness of surveys, e.g., "Because of First Steps, I now...", and how the integrated data system may be part of the solution, i.e., linking individual-level data between those referred, those eligible, and those successfully connected to services. There was also emphasis on the ability to connect the investment to population-level impacts and how this may be more powerful than tracking the individual-level impacts.

The discussion shifted to the prevalent program evaluations, on the heels of the Parents as Teachers one that was presented at the December board meeting. First Steps has commissioned the University of South Carolina's Institute for Families in Society for the next prevalent program evaluation on child care technical assistance, which encompasses Quality Enhancement, Quality Counts, and training and professional development. This evaluation is due to the General Assembly on November 1, 2022. The meeting closed with a presentation from First Steps Evaluation Coordinator, Lexi Jones, on the findings from two recent Your Voice Matters feedback loops. The first, which was of child care directors and teachers who received Quality Enhancement and Quality Counts, is currently in the meaning making phase with key informant interviews. The second, which was of First Steps 4K families, is also in the meaning making phase with focus groups. There was reflection from the committee on the power of these feedback loops, including the highlight that the 4K family survey results were mentioned in Governor Henry McMaster's 2022 State of the State address. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00PM.



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Georgia Mjartan

Date: February 17, 2022

RE: Executive Director's Report

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## **FY2023 Budget Request**

### **Every Child READY**

**Request:** \$6 million in recurring funds

**Purpose:** Increase the number of infants, toddlers and preschoolers participating in programs proven to accelerate early learning and development, improve early childhood health, strengthen families, expand access to high-quality child care, and support a successful start to school.

**Mechanism:** Distribute to First Steps Local Partnerships through competitive and targeted grants, prioritizing programs for children birth through three, rural communities, and communities where KRA scores are below state average.

**Uses:** Support and expand effective programs, build local partnerships' capacity, staffing and infrastructure, and monitor and evaluate measurable progress toward goals.

### **First Steps 4K Proviso Request– No new funds requested**

- Increase tuition rate to 4K providers by \$270 (5.6% inflation)- \$5016 per child
- Increase transportation reimbursement by \$32.88 (5.6% inflation) - \$619.88 per child
- Classroom Start-Up Grants– increase by \$400 per child and \$4000 per classroom of 7+ children, from \$10,000 to \$14,000 per classroom.

### **Parenting Expansion (ESSER III)**

- \$4,910,000 over 3 years (FY22-FY24)
  - o 45 applications received totaling \$14.3 million in requests
- Purpose: expand existing, or establish high-intensity, evidence-based parenting programs
- Eligible applicants: First Steps local partnerships
- 22 counties have received award notifications to date:
  - o **Parents as Teachers:** Barnwell, Clarendon, Darlington, Fairfield, Lancaster, Laurens, Lexington, Sumter, Union, Williamsburg
  - o **Other Models:** Cherokee, Chesterfield, Colleton, Dillon, Edgefield, Lee, Marion, McCormick, Newberry, Marlboro, Oconee, Saluda
- Funding priorities : geographic areas of high poverty; rural areas; school districts with 3-year average percentage of “demonstrating readiness” on KRA below the state average

- Selection criteria: demonstration of need (including waiting lists); quality of plan to recruit and retain families and workforce members; past performance of parenting programs

### **First Steps 4K**

#### **Enrollment and Capacity**

2021 – 2022 School Year, As of February 5, 2022

- 2885 students enrolled as of 2/5/2022
- 3257 total served to date
- 310 active centers with 290 active classrooms

#### **Application for 2022 – 2023 School Year is Live**

- Marketing is underway
- Applications are already being received

#### **Language and Literacy Boost**

ESSER funded initiative to promote intentional teaching practices that develop and encourage high quality language and literacy environments and instruction in First Steps 4K classrooms.

- 87 sites participating in 30 counties
- 2.5 years
- \$11,000 per program year with at least 45% of funds toward teacher compensation
- Directors and teachers participate in information sessions to discuss expectations, goals and benefits before joining the program

#### **Expanding 4K in Underserved Communities**

4 grants have been awarded to centers to increase capacity by at least 10 additional First Steps 4K children per center. These grants may be used for building renovations, materials and staffing costs, and / or other obstacles currently preventing the organization's participation in the First Steps 4K program. Grantees must commit to serving at least 10 additional students per year for a minimum of three years.

### **A Night to Celebrate Community**

- South Carolina First Steps' inaugural, state-wide fundraising event
- April 28, 2022, 6 – 10 pm
- Live music, dancing, food and libations, outdoor fun
- \$56,000 raised to date
- Tickets on sale now: \$100 / ticket

### **Tax Checkoff Campaign**

- Line 6 of the SC State Tax Form 1-330
- Give to SC First Steps to School Readiness Fund – spread the word

## **Legislative Session – Monitoring**

### **H. 3211 – Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children**

- This bill would add 4 new ex-officio members to the JCLCC, one of which would be SC First Steps, amendment eliminates sunset

### **H. 3560 and S. 11 – Paid Family Leave Bill**

- The Senate bill would provide 8 weeks of paid leave for mothers and 4 weeks for fathers who are FTE state employees
- The House bill would provide 12 weeks of leave to both mothers and fathers who are FTE state employees.
- Both bills apply to parents who have recently had a child or recently adopted a child.

### **H. 3888 – Study Committee on State of Mental Health in SC**

- Joint resolution to create a study committee to examine the state of mental health of South Carolina residents.

### **H. 3611 – Workforce and Education Data Oversight Committee (WEDOC)**

- Establish a committee to support the mission of the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development

### **H. 3183 – Act to Establish Pay Equity**

- All employees must be paid wages at rates similar to employees of other races, religions, sexes, ages, disability status, etc. for comparable work

### **H. 4507 – Prohibit Mask Mandate**

- Would prohibit all state agencies and departments from requiring individuals wear a face mask at its facilities

### **H. 4577 & H. 3102 – Abolish the EOC and CHE**

- Abolish the EOC and CHE to create a new SC Commission for Comprehensive Education which would follow the preschool-20 educational system

### **H. 4605 – Freedom from Ideological Coercion and Indoctrination**

- Would impose requirements and restrictions related to discriminatory concepts, on state-funded entities and vendors

### **H. 4799 – Critical Race Theory**

- Would restrict any entity receiving state funds from requiring or providing trainings and programming on the tenets of critical race theory

## **HR & Operations**

SC First Steps have the following new staff members:

- Darcy Huffman, 4K Administrative Lead
- Tracy Darby, Fiscal Specialist
- Hannah Hayes, Front Desk Administrative Assistant

Currently, the organization has the following vacancies:

- 4K Coach Horry County
- Grants Accountant
- Database Administrator

COVID-19: The agency has received a limited number of COVID rapid self-test kits for employees who are symptomatic or have been recently exposed to a positive COVID case. In partnership with the SC State Department of Education, First Steps has received N95/KN95 masks to distribute to staff. Mask wearing and safety protocols within the building are still being enforced.