Meeting of the Board of Trustees

June 16, 2022, 2:00PM
Via Zoom

AGENDA

I. **Roll Call** (Avian Jones)

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 April 21, 2022 minutes as submitted
Attachments: SC First Steps Board of Trustees April 21, 2022 Minutes

IV. **Executive Committee Report** (David Morley)
Attachments: Executive Committee Report, Executive Committee Meetings Minutes

V. **Consent Agenda:** Motions Recommended by Committees (David Morley)
- **a.** To approve the Enhanced Core Function Family Café' evidenced-informed program to be added to the FY23 program listing. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)
- **b.** To approve the new evidenced-based and evidenced-informed program guidelines to begin in the FY23 grant year. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)
- **c.** To approve the update of the Program and Operational Guidelines and updates as presented to begin in FY23 grant year. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)
- **d.** To approve Formula Funding grant awards to the First Steps Local Partnerships, excluding Abbeville County First Steps and Greenwood County First Steps. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)

VI. **For discussion and action**
- **a.** Abbeville County First Steps
- **b.** Greenwood County First Steps

VII. **First Steps Is Here: School Transition (**www.CountdownSC.org) **(**Beth Moore, Director of Communications)
Tammy Medlin, Kindergarten Teacher, Discovery School
Lucy Garcia, Kindergarten Teacher, Erwin Elementary
Attachments: Countdown to Kindergarten: 2022 Will be a Record Summer

VIII. **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment** (Dr. Jenny May, Education Oversight Committee)
Attachments: Closing the Gap: Fall 2021 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results, Closing the Gap: First Steps 4K

IX. **Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee** (Dr. Amy Williams)
Attachments: Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Report, Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes

X. **Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee** (Jennifer McConnell)
Attachments: Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Report, Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting Minutes, FY23 Countdown to 4K, FY23 Enhanced Early Education, FY23 Café, FY23 Family Connects, FY23 Countdown to Kindergarten, FY23 Parenting Program Guidelines, FY23 Core Functions Operational Guidelines, FY23 Operational Guidelines, Projected Local Partnership Budget FY23, FY23 Breakdown by County

XI. **Finance and Administration Committee** (Tim Holt)
Attachments: Finance and Administration Committee Report, Finance and Administration Committee Meeting Minutes, FY 2022 Financial Status Report as May 31, 2022, FY 2022 Donations Report as of May 31, 2022

XII. **Legislative Committee** (Sen. Gerald Malloy)
Attachments: Legislative Committee Report

XIII. **Executive Director's Report** (Georgia Mjartan)
Attachments: Executive Director's Report, Quality Enhancement/Quality Counts Your Voice Matters Report, Quality Enhancement/Quality Counts Your Voice Matters Response

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

Board of Trustees Meeting
April 21, 2022 2:00PM
SC First Steps
636 Rosewood Drive Columbia, SC 29201

Draft Minutes

Members Present (16):		**Members Absent (7):**
Dave Morley, Chair	Mike Leach	Jacque Curtin
Dr. Shelley Canright, Vice Chair	Jesica Mackey	Michelle Fry
Rep. Paula Calhoon	David Mathis	Robert Kerr
Mary Lynne Diggs	Jennifer McConnell	Sen. Gerald Malloy
Rep. Jerry Govan	Roger Pryor	Janie Neeley
John Hayes	Dr. Edward Simmer	Alexia Newman
Sen. Greg Hembree	Sue Williams	Nicole Wynkoop
Tim Holt	Amy Williams	

Attendees (19)

Georgia Mjartan	Andi Phillips	Jon Artz	Lexi Jones
Avian Jones	Alex Mabie	Valerie Johnson	Justina Siuba
Jim Riddle	Chelsea Richard	Lis Guimaraes	Kathy Fitzgerald
Melody DeLisa	Karen Oliver	Mark Barnes	Derek Cromwell
Tom Lacas	Rachal Hatton	Kaitlyn Richards	

Ms. Mjartan 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 2:12 p.m. Mr. Morley requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Ms. Williams provided the motion. Dr. Simmer provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the February 17, 2022 minutes. Dr. Mathis provided the motion. Ms. Williams provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley provided a report on the Executive Committee. He thanked Mr. Fleming for his eleven years of service on the board and announced the appointment of Ms. Jacque Curtin to replace Mr. Fleming. Mr. Morley thanked Rep. Allison for her service to the board and announced Rep. Paula Calhoon as Rep. Allison's designee. He announced the following committee appointments and changes: Rep. Calhoon to the Legislative Committee; Ms. Curtin to the Finance Committee; Mr. Holt as the Chairman of the Finance Committee; Mr. Morley to the Strategic Planning Committee.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the following consent agenda. Mr. Holt provided the motion. Dr. Mathis provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

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

a. **Motion:** Noting that the intent of the Board is to maintain the goals that were originally established in the First Steps 2020-2025 strategic plan, requesting a motion to authorize staff to convert overarching measure of success two from a proportion of First Steps children served by high intensity programs to a proportion of eligible children statewide served by First Steps' high intensity programs. (Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee recommends)
b. **Motion:** To approve the addition of Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) and Language Environment Analysis (Lena Start) as evidenced-based and high intensity strategies to be included in the South Carolina First Steps list of approved evidence-based programs. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)
c. **Motion:** To approve the addition of standards for the evidence-based programs Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-Up (ABC), Healthy Steps, and Language Environment Analysis (Lena Start) to the Grant year 22 Partnership Program and Operational Guidelines. (Program and Grants Committee recommends)
d. **Motion:** To approve the update of standards for the evidence-based programs Nurturing Parent, and Positive Parenting Program (Triple P0 Level 4 to the Grant Year 23 Partnership Program and Operational Guidelines). (Program and Grants Committee recommends)

Ms. Mjartan shared the plan to have a representative from the field present at board meetings for the remainder of the fiscal year as a part of the First Steps is Here campaign. She introduced Melody DeLisa, the Lead Parent Educator at Charleston County First Steps. Ms. DeLisa shared her personal experience as a recipient of parent educating services and the positive outcomes she has seen in her community as a parent educator.

Andi Phillips, Founder and Managing Partner and Alex Mabie, Investment Analyst of Maycomb Capital presented on ways and opportunities to increase the organization's funding to expand its reach and programs across the state.

Dr. Williams reported on the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee and shared the plan to organize the research around the Birth through Five Plan and to evaluate childcare scholarships for the next prevalent program evaluation due in November 2023. Dr. Williams asked for a motion to evaluate Child Care Scholarships in FY23-24 (Due November 1, 2023) for the next prevalent program evaluation. Mr. Leach provided the motion. Rep. Calhoon provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. McConnell reported on the Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee. She shared the committees approval of Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) and Language Environment Analysis (Lena Start) and its standards, and the update of standards for the evidence-based programs Nurturing Parent and Positive Parenting Program.

Mr. Holt reported on the Finance and Administration Committee. He reported that 97% of the funds given to the organization are put to use. Mr. Holt asked for a motion to approve the 2020 Form 990 submission. Dr. Mathis provided the motion. Sen. Hembree provided the second and the motion was unanimously approved. He shared that the methods used to complete the allocation model for 2022-2023 were impacted by pandemic and posed significant implications to the partnerships. Mr. Holt

made the motion to: defer for Evaluation the allocation model. Do not implement the model as it currently stands for the upcoming year. This would result in each Local Partnership receiving the same amount of funding as they received for 2021-22; establish a new Task Force to analyze the data, discuss and evaluate changes to the Allocation Model; and allow the Task Force to make recommendations to the Board on modifications to the Allocation Model that would insulate it from inaccuracies in the data going forward. Sen. Hembree provided the second and after brief discussion the motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Holt shared that the agency is on track financially and at the end of the fiscal year the agency will be under budget.

Sen. Hembree provided a legislative update. Rep. Govan provided an update in H.5111 and PEBA's assurance to continue to serve the partnership employees affected by the bill. Mr. Holt stated that there is an ongoing investigation by the Office of the Inspector General into Greenwood County First Steps and Abbeville County First Steps.

Ms. Mjartan provided the Executive Director's report where she shared the process of reauthorization for the agency through a formal facilitated process, the restart of Board-to-Board meetings, and the communications to legislators regarding delegation appointments to their local First Steps Boards. She shared an update on the progress of 4K statewide expansion, the funds raised for the inaugural state-wide fundraiser, A Night to Celebrate Community, and a summary of results from the second annual team survey.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Williams provided the motion. Dr. Simmer seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:53 pm by Mr. Morley

To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: David Morley, Chairman, Executive Committee

Date: June 16, 2022

RE: Executive Committee Report

Acknowledgment of visitors at today's meeting:

- Dr. Jenny May, Director of Evaluation, SC Education Oversight Committee
- Countdown to Kindergarten

Executive Committee Actions – May 17 & May 19, 2022

The Executive Committee of the Board of South Carolina First Steps met on May 17, 2022. Minutes from the meetings are attached. During the meeting, the Office of the Inspector General released a report on their investigation of Abbeville County First Steps and Greenwood County First Steps. The executive committee members acted on behalf of the full board regarding the two partnerships with the condition that once the members, staff, and attorney had reviewed the full OIG report, the motions may be revised. The original motions taken were subsequently revised and replaced at a special called meeting for this purpose on May 19, 2022. The revised, final motions, action taken on behalf of the full Board of Trustees, are as follows:

Regarding Abbeville County First Steps:

Motion made by Tim Holt, seconded by Shelley Canright, unanimously approved.
Motion to supersede and replace the prior May 17, 2022, motion with the following:

"In light of the September 2021 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding Abbeville County First Steps, subsequent unresolved request to Abbeville County First Steps to address the findings, failure of Abbeville County First Steps to adequately address the findings raised by the OIG report, and additional actions and omissions identified in a second OIG investigation (report issued May 2022), the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Abbeville County First Steps address the findings raised in the OIG reports and take corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps including, but not limited to, replacing the Abbeville County First Steps Executive Director, initiating the recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative in the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report, and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies. If the Abbeville County First Steps board fails to address the matters referenced above, by June 15, 2022, to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, no new contracts or grant awards with Abbeville County First Steps will be executed."

Regarding Greenwood County First Steps:

Motion made by Jennifer McConnell, seconded by Amy Williams, unanimously approved.
Motion to supersede and replace the prior May 17, 2022, motion with the following:

"In light of the May 2022 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding Greenwood County First Steps, the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Greenwood County First Steps address the findings raised in the OIG report and take corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, including but not limited to replacing the Executive Director, initiating recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative in the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies. If the Greenwood County First Steps board fails to address the matters identified above, by June 15, 2022, to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, no new contracts or grant awards with Greenwood County First Steps will be executed."

Board-to-Board Meetings

The purpose of these meeting is to offer interested board members from the state and local level the chance to meet each other, exchange ideas and facilitate further networking and discussion. Additionally, as we are preparing for the legislative process of seeking reauthorization for First Steps, we have contracted with an external facilitator, Anne Sinclair, who will be joining our meetings to facilitate a discussion about what's working and what could be improved about First Steps, information we will use to inform legislators and help shape the future of First Steps. Your and your fellow board members' voices matter. We hope you'll take the time to join us to make these productive meetings.

All **Board-to-Board meetings are from 1:00 pm– 2:30 pm** and will take place by **Zoom**

May 2, 2022	**Board to Board - Catawba Region**
June 6, 2022	**Board to Board - Piedmont Region**
July 11, 2022	**Board to Board - Midlands Region**
August 1, 2022	**Board to Board - Pee Dee Region**
September 12, 2022	**Board to Board - Low Country Region**
October 10, 2022	**Board to Board - Coastal Region**
November 7, 2022	**Board to Board - Upstate Region**

Local and State Board Members may contact Kathy Fitzgerald at kfitzgerald@scfirststeps.org to RSVP or to submit questions or agenda items ahead of time.

Reauthorization – Feedback from Key Stakeholders

First Steps has contracted with external facilitator Anne Sinclair to gather feedback on First Steps including what is working and areas for improvement that could be addressed in the legislative reauthorization process. Board feedback sessions will take place in the Summer / Fall of 2022.

Minutes from the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps

The Executive Committee met on May 17, 2022, for a meeting called to order at 3 pm. The following members were present by Zoom: David Morley, Shelley Canright, Tim Holt, Jennifer McConnell, Amy Williams and staff, Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director, Mark Barnes, Director of Administration, and Derek Cromwell. Roy Laney, attorney, was also present for a portion of the meeting. Senator Gerald Malloy was not present.

The committee entered executive session at 3:08 pm to discuss a legal matter. Attorney Roy Laney was called to join the meeting at that time. Motion by Amy Williams, second by Shelley Canright, unanimous approval to enter executive session.

The committee exited executive session with no action having been taken in executive session.

The following action was taken on behalf of the full Board of Trustees but was taken with the condition that once the members, staff, and attorney had reviewed the full Office of the Inspector General report (which was released during the meeting), the motions may be revised. (Please see subsequent May 19, 2022, meeting minutes in which these motions were in fact superseded and replaced.)

Motion: Tim Holt, Jennifer McConnell
Unanimous

"In light of the September 2021 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding misconduct and significant operational deficiencies of Abbeville County First Steps, subsequent unresolved request to Abbeville County First Steps to address the findings, failure of Abbeville County First Steps to adequately address the concerns raised by the OIG report, and subsequent actions and omissions requiring a second OIG investigation (issued May 2022), the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Abbeville County First Steps replace the Abbeville County First Steps Executive Director prior to June 15, 2022. If the local partnership board fails to address the concerns raised in the OIG reports to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, including but not limited to replacing the Executive Director, initiate recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative and Michael K. Gaskin the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions, no new contracts or grant awards with Abbeville County First Steps will be executed."

"In light of the May 17, 2022 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding misconduct and significant operational deficiencies of Greenwood County First Steps, the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Greenwood County First Steps replace the Greenwood County First Steps Executive Director prior to June 15, 2022. If the local partnership board fails to address the concerns raised in the OIG reports to the satisfaction of South

Carolina First Steps, including but not limited to replacing the Executive Director, initiate recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative and Michael K. Gaskin the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions, no new contracts or grant awards with Greenwood County First Steps will be executed."

Motion: Shelley Canright, Amy Williams
Unanimous

Other matters discussed at this meeting included:

- Legislative update
- Programmatic updates
- June First Steps and ECAC Board Meeting Planning
- Celebrate Community
  In relation to the experience and success of the fundraising event, there was a discussion about exploring establishing a foundation, which was supported by all present.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Minutes of Special Called Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps

On May 19, 2022, in response to the receipt of an Office of the Inspector General report regarding Greenwood County First Steps and Abbeville County First Steps, the Executive Committee convened for a special called meeting. A quorum was present. The following members were present in person: Shelley Canright, Jennifer McConnell and the following members were present by Zoom: David Morley, Tim Holt, and Amy Williams. Sen. Gerald Malloy attempted to join the meeting, but by the time he was able to join, the brief meeting had concluded. Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director was present in person as well. At 12:00 pm the meeting was called to order and agenda was approved with a motion by Tim Holt, second by Shelley Canright and unanimous approval.

Acting in relation to an urgent matter, the Executive Committee took the following action on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Motion made by Tim Holt, seconded by Shelley Canright, unanimously approved.
Motion to supersede and replace the prior May 17, 2022, motion with the following:

"In light of the September 2021 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding Abbeville County First Steps, subsequent unresolved request to Abbeville County First Steps to address the findings, failure of Abbeville County First Steps to adequately address the findings raised by the OIG report, and additional actions and omissions identified in a second OIG investigation (report issued May 2022), the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Abbeville County First Steps address the findings raised in the OIG reports and take corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps including, but not limited to, replacing the Abbeville County First Steps Executive Director, initiating the recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative in the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report, and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies. If the Abbeville County First Steps board fails to address the matters referenced above, by June 15, 2022, to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, no new contracts or grant awards with Abbeville County First Steps will be executed."

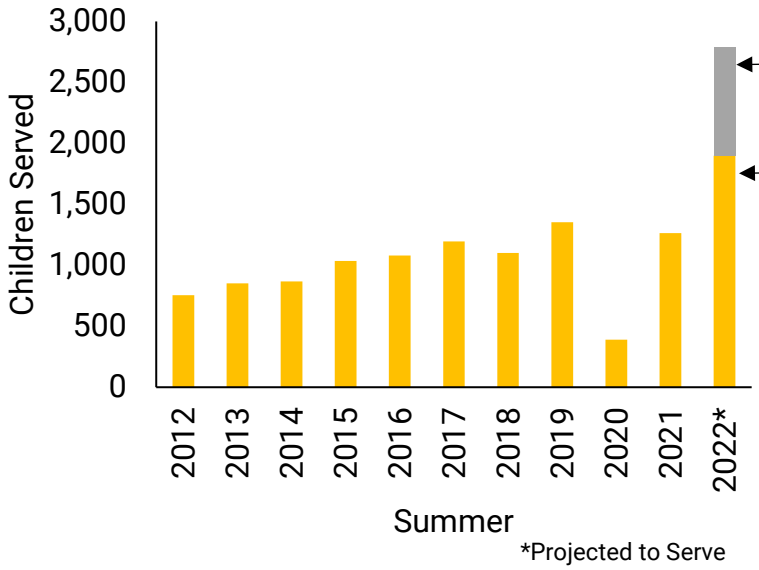
Motion made by Jennifer McConnell, seconded by Amy Williams, unanimously approved.
Motion to supersede and replace the prior May 17, 2022, motion with the following: Jennifer, Amy, All

"In light of the May 2022 Office of the Inspector General findings regarding Greenwood County First Steps, the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps requests that the Board of Greenwood County First Steps address the findings raised in the OIG report and take corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, including but not limited to replacing the Executive Director, initiating recoupment of funds improperly paid to Social Change Initiative in the amount recommended by the May 2022 OIG report and agreeing to a timeline on other corrective actions to address significant operational deficiencies. If the Greenwood County First Steps board fails to address the matters identified

above, by June 15, 2022, to the satisfaction of South Carolina First Steps, no new contracts or grant awards with Greenwood County First Steps will be executed."

Meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm.

2022 Will Be a Record Summer for First Steps' School Transition



Introducing **Countdown to 4K**
Projected to serve 886 children

Countdown to Kindergarten
Projected to serve 1,899 children
+50.2% over summer 2021
+91.9% over previous ten-year average

91%
of families served in Summer 2021 would recommend Countdown to Kindergarten to a friend or family member

Targeting At-Risk Children through 27 Local Partnerships

2,785
projected children will have at least one risk factor

including

129
projected dual language learners

97
projected students with disability

Positively Impacting Families and Teachers

In a Summer 2021 survey of 444 parents served, they reported that because of the program…

92% had their needs met well to prepare for their child's transition to kindergarten

88% said their child was more confident about starting kindergarten

86% were more confident about their child starting kindergarten

84% were better prepared to support their child with kindergarten skills

In a Summer 2021 survey of 248 teachers, they reported that because of the program…

98% believe they made a positive difference for the children and their families

97% felt respected by their First Steps Local Partnership

96% saw the program as dedicated to diversity and inclusion

92% were excited to work as Countdown teachers

CLOSING THE GAP

At the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) was administered to 53,767 kindergartners across South Carolina. The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee completed an analysis of the KRA Results. Here's what they found:

36% **of entering kindergartners were ready for school**

Disparities persist in kindergarten readiness in South Carolina.

An overarching measure of success for First Steps is to reduce the **racial/ethnic** gap in kindergarten readiness.

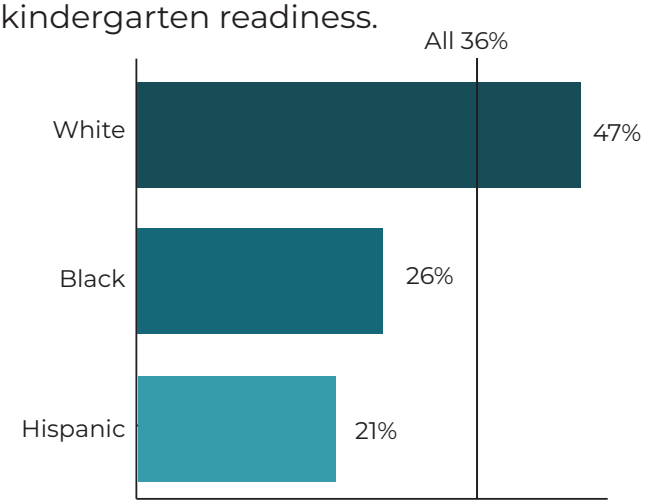


Figure 1 Kindergarten Readiness by Race/Ethnicity

There are **other disparities** that exist in kindergarten readiness.

26% in poverty < **53%** not in poverty

19% English is not primary language < **38%** English is primary language

17% with disabilities < **38%** without disabilities

35% in rural schools < **38%** in city schools

We have work to do to get more kindergartners **ready for school** statewide.

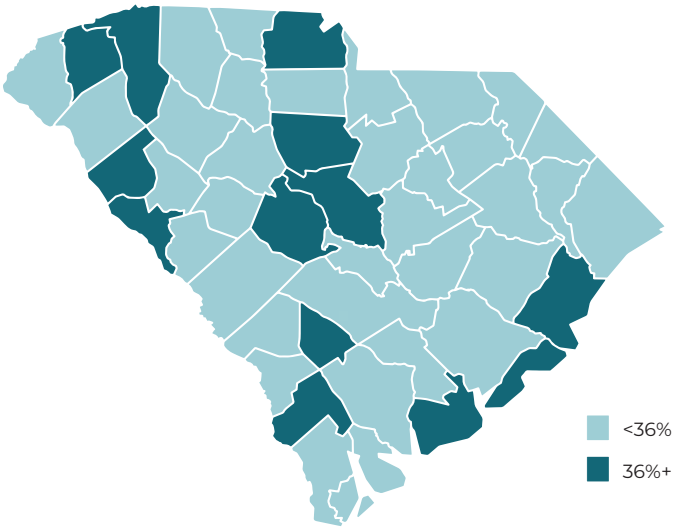


Figure 3 Kindergarten Readiness by County, compared to the State Overall

Kindergarten readiness is getting back on track to pre-pandemic levels.

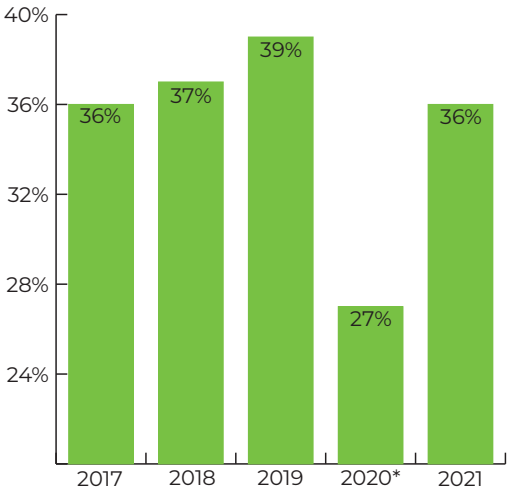


Figure 4 Kindergarten Readiness by Year; *Modified KRA due to COVID-19 Pandemic

#ClosingTheGap

FIRST STEPS SOUTH CAROLINA

Learn more at SCFIRSTSTEPS.ORG

CLOSING THE GAP

First Steps 4K gets children ready for school.

First Steps 4K has options that work for you & your family.

All First Steps 4K programs are in-person, 5 days per week, throughout the school year. Most providers offer a full day (8 hour) program.

Families have a variety of options including year-round, summer-only, or school-year only programs and traditional school-day programs or extended-day programs.

Children benefit from small class sizes (one to ten teacher to child ratio) and an evidence-based instructional curriculum that prepares them for school.

First Steps 4K + Siblings ensures care and education for the whole family, leaving no child behind.

Some centers offer transportation for no fee.

First Steps 4K empowers parents to work.

64%

credit their ability to work or go to school to their child's participation in First Steps 4K

77%

of them report working full-time

Your Voice Matters 4K Survey January 2022

First Steps 4K is closing the gap in kindergarten readiness for children in poverty.

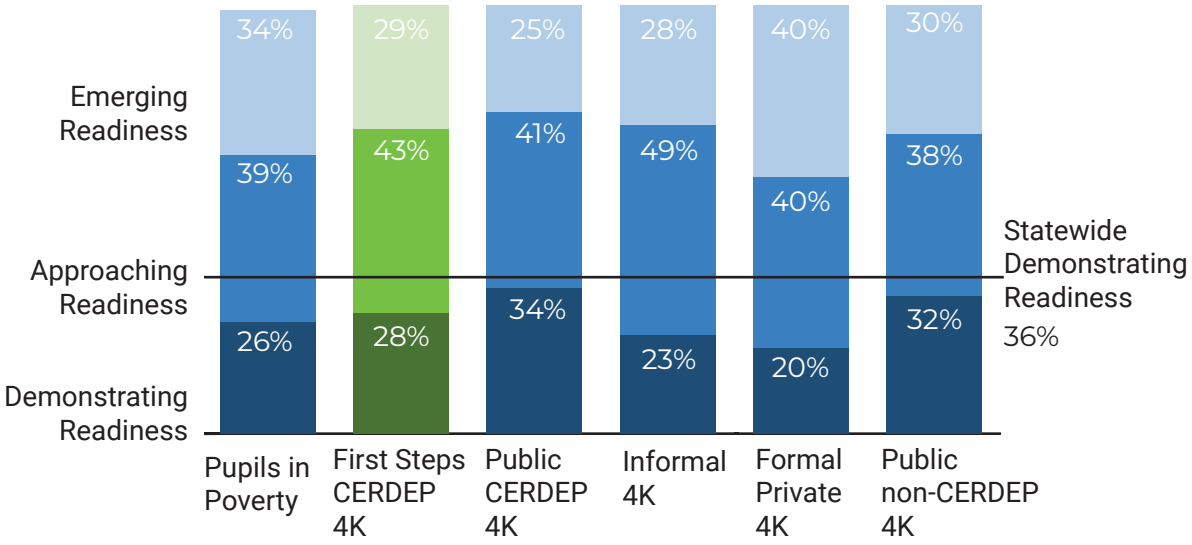


Figure. Pupils in Poverty (PIP) Overall KRA Results (Fall 2021 Administration) Served in CERDEP-Funded and Non-CERDEP-Funded Programs

Data Source: South Carolina Education Data Dashboard for 4K-5K Students

#ClosingTheGap

FIRST STEPS SOUTH CAROLINA

Learn more at Free4KSC.ORG

Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee

Chairwoman: Dr. Amy Williams

REPORT

The committee met on May 23, 2022 via Zoom. I was the only committee member present. The meeting opened with an acknowledgement of the ongoing work related to the Birth through Five plan and the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) and progress related to planning for sustainability of the ECIDS after the current federal funding sources end.

First Steps related business that was discussed included the progress on the new program and case management data system (KITS) and the ongoing monitoring of 'Every Child Ready,' the 2020-2025 strategic plan. The bulk of the meeting was spent discussing the upcoming prevalent program evaluation related to child care scholarships (due November 1, 2023). First Steps staff hope to pair the procurement process of this evaluation with the next five-year agency evaluation (FY19-23; due November 1, 2024). An in-depth discussion related to the five-year agency evaluation is planned for the committee's next meeting in July.

Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee

Monday, May 23, 2022, 2-3PM via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Dr. Amy Williams
Committee Members Absent: Alexia Newman; Jesica Mackey; Janie Neeley; Dave Morley
First Steps Staff Present: Dr. Chelsea Richard; Kate Roach

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 2:03PM. The meeting opened with an acknowledgement of the ongoing work through the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and the Interagency Collaboration Committee regarding the Birth through Five plan's four goal areas. One initiative of goal four that has a lot of momentum is the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). The ECIDS is funded through two federal grants: the Preschool Development Grant via the Administration for Children and Families (primary state grantee: Department of Social Services (DSS); ends April 2023) and the Statewide Longitudinal Data System Grant via the United States Department of Education (primary state grantee: Department of Education (SDE); ends March 2024). Currently, ECAC and First Steps staff are working on sustainability plans for ECIDS in collaboration with other agencies, namely DSS, SDE, Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, and Head Start Collaboration Office and grantees.

First Steps related business that was discussed included the progress on the new program and case management data system (KITS) and the ongoing monitoring of 'Every Child Ready,' the 2020-2025 strategic plan. The bulk of the meeting was spent discussing the upcoming prevalent program evaluation related to child care scholarships (due November 1, 2023). Kate Roach, Local Partnership Team Lead for Early Care and Education, gave an overview of child care scholarships, which are currently implemented by 22 counties. Kate discussed the various types and strategies for implementation, i.e., offering them alongside participation in parenting programs. A draft list of research questions was brought into the discussion, which covered the reach and impact of child care scholarships using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. First Steps staff hope to pair the procurement process of the evaluator for the child care scholarship evaluation with the next five-year agency evaluation (FY19-23; due November 1, 2024). A brief discussion was had related to the scope of the five-year agency evaluation. A more in-depth discussion related to the five-year agency evaluation is planned for the committee's July meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:56PM.

To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Jennifer McConnell

Date: May 19, 2022

RE: Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee

The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee met on May 19th, 2022; Minutes of the meeting are attached. The following motions were approved unanimously.

A. New Evidence-Informed Program Approval

i. Enhanced Core Function Family café'
Cafés are evidenced-informed structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) and Language Environment Analysis (Lena Start) as evidenced-based and high intensity strategies to be included in the South Carolina First Steps list of approved evidence-based programs.
Motioned by Roger Pryor, seconded by John Hayes, passed unanimously.

B. Program Guidelines (New)

i. FY23 Countdown to 4K (Formerly Reading Rocks) (New)
Countdown to 4K is an evidenced-informed (High Intensity) summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming 4K students and their families with, ideally, the individual who will serve as their 4K teacher or 4K teaching assistant during the coming year.

ii. FY23 Enhanced Early Education (New)
The Enhanced Early Education is an evidenced-based strategy that seeks to enhance services offered by early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) through supplemental materials and books distribution to classrooms. These enhancement resources provide important support to students and their families, and are not otherwise provided by their school district, the childcare provider, or other entity.

iii. FY23 Family Café (New)
Cafés are evidenced-informed structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned."

iv. **FY23 Family Connects (New)**
Family Connects is a nurse-based approach to supporting newborns and their families through nurse home visits, connecting families to services in the community, and supporting families with an individual approach to care. All families with children birth to 6 months are eligible for services receive services. Family Connects works with communities to establish implementation and sustainability plans, help establish community networks, and provides training for nurses who will conduct home visits.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the new evidenced-based and evidenced-informed program guidelines to begin in the FY23 grant year. Motioned by Shelley Canright, seconded by Roger Pryor, and unanimously approved.

C. Updated Programs and Operational Guidelines (See Attachments)

i. **FY23 Countdown to Kindergarten (Updated)**
Countdown to Kindergarten is an evidenced-informed summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming kindergartners and their families with, ideally, the individual the individual who will serve as their kindergarten teacher or kindergarten teaching assistant during the coming year.

ii. **FY23Parenting Program Guidelines (Updated)**
Parents as Teachers promotes the early development and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. As a result of its presence in communities, children receive developmental screenings, parents have access to resources, and families gain the opportunity to participate in home visits and group socialization.

iii. **FY23 Core Functions Operational Guideline (Updated)**
See Attached

iv. **Program & Operational Guidelines and updates for FY23 (see attached)**
Operations
•Deadline for data entry shortened from 30 days after the close of the quarter to 10 days
•Addition of language requiring consent forms for data collection
a. "A consent and authorization form must be completed and kept on file for all cases entered into the First Steps Data Collection System. Cases enrolled in programs for more than one year should complete a new consent form annually."
Governance
•Renaming of Records Retention Policy/Schedule document for consistency (available on First Steps website)
Fiscal Accountability
•Addition of language to include “private and non-state funds” for fiscal stewardship

compliance
•Clarification of process for excessive carry forward into consequences for first and second year
a. First Year- written justification/plan approved by state board AND corrective action plan
b. Second Year- corrective action plan AND subject to withholding of funds

General

•Considering additional language about data collection requirements for private and non-state funded programs
•Strengthening of language for cross-county services (revised "shall" to "are required to" inform, coordinate, and collaborate)

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the update of the Program and Operational Guidelines and updates as presented to begin in FY23 grant year. Motioned by Shelley Canright, seconded by Roger Pryor, and unanimously approved.

D. Formula Funding Grant Recommendation (see attached)

i. Digital copies of any application can be provided as requested.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee recommends the approval of the Formula Funding grant awards to the First Steps Local Partnerships, excluding Abbeville County First Steps and Greenwood County First Steps. Motioned by Shelley Canright, seconded by Roger Pryor, and unanimously approved.

E. Derek Cromwell- Chief Partnership Officer Update

- Derek introduced invited SC First Steps guests Kerry Cordan, Gina Beebe, and Dione Brabham, Jon Artz, LaMyra Sanders, Kate Roach, Mark Barnes.
- An update was given by Mark Barnes and Derek Cromwell on IG report for Abbeville and Greenwood Counties
- We broke at 12:00 for an emergency executive committee meeting as Jennifer McConnell and Shelley Canright needed to attend the rest of the attendees broke for lunch.
- We reconvened at 12:25 where, Derek gave an update on the Targeted Grants.
  - *A. AmeriCorps*
    - a. Existing Site renewal
    - b. New Interest Application
  - *B. Core Functions*
    - a. Support of State Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning and System Collaboration.
    - b. Enhanced Core Functions Pilot: Family Café' (for current AmeriCorps sites)
  - *C. Parenting Programs*

a. Parenting Program Expansion Year 3 funding
b. Parents as Teachers Affiliate Support Funds
c. Parents as teachers: Continue/Join Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV)

D. Child Care Quality Programs

a. Childcare Technical Assistance Program Expansion: Year 2 funding (existing grantees only)

Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting

May 19, 2022
In Person and Virtual
11:30am- 1:00pm

Minutes

Board Presence: In person, Chair Jennifer McConnell, Shelley Canright, John Hayes, Roger Pryor (virtual)

State Staff Presence: In person, Derek Cromwell, Georgia Mjartan, Mark Barnes, Kerry Cordan, Gina Beebe, Dione Brabham, Jon Artz, LaMyra Sanders, Kate Roach, Kathy Fitzgerald, Chelsea Richards (virtual)

The meeting was called to order at 11:30 am by Jennifer McConnell.

Derek Cromwell- Chief Partnership Officer Update

- Derek introduced invited SC First Steps guests Kerry Cordan, Gina Beebe, and Dione Brabham, Jon Artz, LaMyra Sanders, Kate Roach, Mark Barnes.
- An update was given by Mark Barnes and Derek Cromwell on IG report for Abbeville and Greenwood Counties
- We broke at 12:00 for an emergency executive committee meeting as Jennifer McConnell and Shelley Canright needed to attend the rest of the attendees broke for lunch.
- We reconvened at 12:25 where, Derek gave an update on the Targeted Grants.
    A. *AmeriCorps*
        a. Existing Site renewal
        b. New Interest Application
    B. *Core Functions*
        a. Support of State Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning and System Collaboration.
        b. Enhanced Core Functions Pilot: Family Café' (for current AmeriCorps sites)
    C. *Parenting Programs*
        a. Parenting Program Expansion Year 3 funding
        b. Parents as Teachers Affiliate Support Funds
        c. Parents as teachers: Continue/Join Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV)
    D. *Child Care Quality Programs*
        a. Childcare Technical Assistance Program Expansion: Year 2 funding (existing grantees only)

A. New Evidenced informed

i. Enhanced Core Function Family Café'
Cafés are evidenced-informed structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned."

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee recommends approval of the Enhanced Core Function Family Café' evidenced-informed program to be added to the FY23 program listing.
Motioned: Shelley Canright Seconded: John Hayes All voted Yes

B. New Program Guidelines (See Attachments)

i. **FY23 Countdown to 4K (Formerly Reading Rocks) (New)**
Countdown to 4K is an evidenced-informed (High Intensity) summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming 4K students and their families with, ideally, the individual who will serve as their 4K teacher or 4K teaching assistant during the coming year.

ii. **FY23 Enhanced Early Education (New)**
The Enhanced Early Education is an evidenced-based strategy that seeks to enhance services offered by early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) through supplemental materials and books distribution to classrooms. These enhancement resources provide important support to students and their families, and are not otherwise provided by their school district, the childcare provider, or other entity.

iii. **FY23 Family Café (New)**
Cafés are evidenced-informed structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned."

iv. **FY23 Family Connects (New)**
Family Connects is a nurse-based approach to supporting newborns and their families through nurse home visits, connecting families to services in the community, and supporting families with an individual approach to care. All families with children birth to 6 months are eligible for services receive services. Family Connects works with communities to establish implementation and sustainability plans, help establish community networks, and provides training for nurses who will conduct home visits.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the new evidenced-based and evidenced-informed program guidelines to begin in the FY23 grant year.
Motioned: Shelley Canright Seconded: Roger Pryor All voted Yes

C. Updated Programs and Operational Guidelines (See Attachments)

i. **FY23 Countdown to Kindergarten (Updated)**
Countdown to Kindergarten is an evidenced-informed summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming kindergartners and their families with, ideally,

the individual the individual who will serve as their kindergarten teacher or kindergarten teaching assistant during the coming year.

ii. **FY23 Parenting Program Guidelines (Updated)**
Parents as Teachers promotes the early development and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. As a result of its presence in communities, children receive developmental screenings, parents have access to resources, and families gain the opportunity to participate in home visits and group socialization.

iii. **FY23 Core Functions Operational Guideline (Updated)**
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Operations
- Deadline for data entry shortened from 30 days after the close of the quarter to 10 days
- Addition of language requiring consent forms for data collection
  a. "A consent and authorization form must be completed and kept on file for all cases entered into the First Steps Data Collection System. Cases enrolled in programs for more than one year should complete a new consent form annually."

Governance
- Renaming of Records Retention Policy/Schedule document for consistency (available on FS website)

Fiscal Accountability
- Addition of language to include “private and non-state funds” for fiscal stewardship compliance
- Clarification of process for excessive carry forward into consequences for first and second year
  a. First Year- written justification/plan approved by state board AND corrective action plan
  b. Second Year- corrective action plan AND subject to withholding of funds

General
- Considering additional language about data collection requirements for private and non-state funded programs
- Strengthening of language for cross-county services (revised “shall” to “are required to” inform, coordinate, and collaborate)

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the update of the Program and Operational Guidelines and updates as presented to begin in FY23 grant year. Motioned: Shelley Canright Seconded: Roger Pryor All Voted Yes

D. Formula Funding Grant Recommendation (see attached)

i. Digital copies of any application can be provided as requested.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee recommends the approval of the Formula Funding grant awards to the First Steps Local Partnerships, excluding Abbeville County First Steps and Greenwood County First Steps.
Motioned: Shelley Canright Second: Roger Pryor All Voted Yes

Meeting was called to adjourn at 2:00 by Jennifer McConnell. The next meeting will be held on July 21, 2022 from 11:30-1:00, in person.

Countdown to 4K (407)

Evidence-Informed & High Intensity Strategy

Countdown to 4K is a summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming 4K students and their families with, ideally, the individual who will serve as their 4K teacher or 4K teaching assistant during the coming year.

Unit of service = 1 Child

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

At least 60% of CT4K families shall be identified based on two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors below (with 100% of families possessing at least one risk factor at the time of enrollment):

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Additional CTK Transition Risk Factors

Countdown to 4K (CT4K) shall be targeted toward families of children most likely to experience early school failure. Given the program's unique role in supporting school transition, several additional risk factors are associated with eligibility for this service. (CT4K-specific transition risk factors are noted in italic text in the list below, and do not extend to other First Steps-funded strategies.)

- An incoming kindergartner who has had an older sibling retained in/before the 3rd grade
- An incoming kindergartner who has been recommended for service based on significant social/emotional and/or behavioral difficulties – or those of an older sibling.
- An incoming kindergartner who has never been served within a full-time preschool program out of his/her home.
- An incoming kindergartner who is the oldest child in the family; that is, this is the first opportunity for the family to be involved in their child(ren)'s school.

Note that the last two factors (child has not attended full-time preschool and/or is oldest child in the family) may be considered in conjunction with one or more additional risks but may not be used to determine eligibility in isolation.

Client Retention
- For home visitation to be effective, it is critical that client families remain in the program long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. It is also important to understand, from a research perspective, how the number of client visits is linked with outcomes.
- Partnerships are encouraged to assure that most participating families receive 6 visits prior to exiting the program.
- Data on all families, if parental consent was obtained and records are available - regardless of the number of visits received and when they exited the program - must be entered in the FSDC.

Service Delivery

Adherence to the Countdown to 4K Curriculum
- While the CT4K curriculum offers substantial opportunity for personalization by individual teachers, each must adhere to its general format and ensure the delivery of each published lesson.
- Per the CT4K curriculum model, every effort should be made so that no family receive less than five (5) visits. The partnership shall make every effort to secure transportation services so that families can attend the final CT4K visit to the child's school.
- Grant Agreements may contain requirements for Service Delivery not outlined in Program Guidelines. An example is assuring Countdown teacher is child's soon-to-be 4K teacher or teaching assistant.

Note grant amendments may contain requirements for Service Delivery not outlined in Program Guidelines. An example, assuring Countdown teachers are children's soon-to-be 4K teacher or teaching assistant.

Placement within the Classroom of the Teacher
- Countdown to 4K is explicitly designed to connect children and families to the teachers with whom they will be working during the coming year. Accordingly, Partnerships must take steps to ensure the placement of CT4K client children in the classrooms of their home visitors. The expectation is that the Countdown home visitor is also the child's soon-to-be 4K teacher or soon-to-be 4K teaching assistant. For some outside grants (PDG, ESSER), it is required that 80% of enrolled children are assigned to their Countdown teacher's classroom in the upcoming school year.
- The CT4K curriculum must – without exception – include a meeting with the child's teacher at the school where the child will be attending 4K.
- When the child's CT4K teacher is not his/her soon-to-be 4K teacher AND the family's home language is not English, the CT4K home visitor must be fluent in the family's home language to ensure the curriculum is implemented in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. In addition, when available, toolkit contents are to be provided in the child's home language. The home visitor will work with the child's 5K teacher(s) to ensure that the dual language learner children receive ongoing transition materials and supports that are culturally and linguistically responsive.

Countdown to 4K Family Visits
The Countdown family visits can be scheduled flexibly, based upon the family and Countdown Teacher's schedules. The visits must be made the summer before the child enters 4K. No more than one visit can be made per day, and no more than two visits are to be made per week. Although home visits are encouraged, at times it might be necessary or prudent to hold the family visits elsewhere. In all instances, parents/caregivers are to be in attendance on all visits and for their duration.

Supports for children/families with specific needs – Dual Language Learner Families and Students with Disabilities
The role of the 4K Teacher is to increase family awareness of 4K expectations, create a positive relationship with the family, and assure a smooth transition to school. Support specialists will work with the 4K teacher to provide the home visits and additional supports to assure that child and family make a smooth transition to 4K and that their needs are met.
- Dual Language Learner Families

a. A home visitor fluent in the family's home language (Bilingual Home Visitor) collaborates with the 4K Teacher to assure that the transition to 4K is smooth.
b. The role of the Bilingual Home Visitor is to build trust with the family, support the family's relationships with the 4K Teacher and school, and assist in helping the family secure needed resources.
c. Within the first 6 weeks of the start of school, the Bilingual Home Visitor makes two follow-up home visits to assure that family needs are met and the transition to 4K has been smooth.
d. When available, toolkit books that are also available in the family's home language must be provided.

- Students with Disabilities
  a. A specialist with training in and experience with young children with disabilities (Disabilities Specialist) collaborates with the 4K Teacher to assure that the transition to 4K is smooth.
  b. The role of the Disabilities Specialist is to build trust with the family, support the family's relationships with the 4K Teacher and school, and assist in helping the family secure needed resources.
  c. Within the first 6 weeks of the start of school, the Disabilities Specialist makes two follow-up phone calls to the family to assure their needs are met and the transition to 4K has been smooth.
  d. One valuable resource for support students with disabilities is Family Connection of South Carolina. Disabilities Specialists and Countdown Teachers working with children with disabilities are encouraged to explore their offerings. If adaptative materials of the toolkit are needed to accommodate the disability, every effort should be made to provide them.
  e. If adaptative materials of the toolkit are needed to accommodate the disability, every effort should be made to provide them.

Countdown to 4K Training
All teachers must successfully complete the Countdown to 4K online training (including the final exam) prior to implementing the program. This includes Bilingual Home Visitors and Disabilities Specialists, who partner with the 4K teacher to implement the program.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development
Each Countdown teacher must participate in reflective supervision and professional development, by, at a minimum, logging on and reviewing the discussion on the Countdown to 4K teacher electronic forum as outlined in the Countdown to 4K Memorandum of Agreement for Countdown teachers.

Data Submission and Fiscal Administration

Outcome and Data Requirements

- The Partnership will be responsible for meeting all data requirements of SCFS within 30 days of receiving data from the teachers.
- CT4K client and program information must be entered into the First Steps Data Collection system (FSDC) within the program year that begins July 1, regardless of whether program activities (home visits) occurred prior to July 1.
- Projected to Serve for Countdown to 4K is to be entered for the fiscal year of the beginning of the summer of implementation. For example, for Summer 2023 CT4K, Projected to Serve is to be entered for FY23.
- Data for Summer 2023 CT4K is to be entered for FY24. Partnership staff is responsible for obtaining and entering (if not completed online) all survey responses. Partnerships will use the CT4K surveys provided by SC First Steps.

Fiscal Administration and Teacher Payment
The Partnership will be responsible for ensuring that each CT4K teacher adheres (in all regards) to his/her CT4K Memorandum of Agreement.

Enhanced Early Education with Book Distribution

The Enhanced Early Education strategy seeks to enhance services offered by early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) through supplemental materials and books distribution to classrooms. These enhancement resources provide important support to students and their families, and are not otherwise provided by their school district, the childcare provider, or other entity.

Unit of Service = 1 Child

Targeting

Classrooms that receive Enhanced Early Education resources, must have students that meet SCFS age-eligibility requirements (children aged 3 through 5).

Service Delivery

- In all cases, this portion of the Enhanced Early Education strategy must include materials and resource distribution to the focus classrooms, as detailed in these guidelines. Materials and books distribution are defined as the following:
  a. Materials Distribution: Partnerships purchase supplemental materials for early childhood classrooms to enhance and support learning activities. Materials may also be distributed to children to take home to extend classroom learning in the home environment.
  b. Book Distribution: Partnerships may distribute take-home books to children in focus classroom to promote shared reading time and foster healthy brain development, parent-child bonding, and early literacy skills.
- **Non-Supplantation** If Enhanced Early Education takes place in a school district setting, SC First Steps funds shall not be used to supplant – or in place of – any other resources or materials that would otherwise be provided by the school district. A letter from the school district must be provided annually stating that school district funds would not otherwise be spent on providing the materials and services delivered by the First Steps Local Partnerships through the Enhanced Early Education strategy.
- This strategy requires regular check-ins (bi-monthly) with the classroom teacher or school administrator to ensure that materials distributed are aligned to classroom learning. Materials and books must receive prior approval by the classroom teacher before purchase and distribution. If the local partnership has a Quality Enhancement or Quality Counts (602) strategy, it is recommended that the local partnership child care technical assistance provider is involved in the selection of materials and books to the classroom in coordination with the classroom teacher.

Assessment

- Client satisfaction surveys (e.g., families served, early childhood teachers whose classrooms receive services) must be administered at least annually. The data collected should be used for program improvement.

Data Submission and Monitoring

- **Data Collection** Data will include the number of children served (0 to 5 years only), number of families served, number of goods given, and other types of data relevant to the services offered. Prior to implementation of this strategy, approval from SCFS on connecting program and data expectations must be in place.
- **Monitoring** Electronic information should be made available to SCFS for evaluation purposes upon request.

Enhanced Early Education with Onsite Tutoring

Enhanced Early Education Onsite Tutoring must be paired with Enhanced Early Education (320) materials and resource distribution to the early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) and adhere to all guidelines for this strategy detailed in the Enhanced Early Education (320) program guidelines. In this context, tutoring is defined as one-on-one or small group instruction that supports classroom instruction. These program guidelines detail the specific service delivery, assessment, and data submission requirements of operating Enhanced Early Education with Onsite Tutoring.

Unit of Service = 1 Child

Targeting

Children that receive Enhanced Early Education Onsite Tutoring, must meet SCFS age-eligibility requirements (children aged 3-5). At least 60% of 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):

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Service Delivery

- **Intensity and Delivery** Onsite tutoring must be delivered to students aged 3 through 5 in classrooms receiving Enhanced Early Education materials and resources. Partnership shall:
  a. Serve students enrolled in 5K classrooms. Students must be under 6 years old when receiving in person, onsite tutoring services (i.e., must meet SCFS age eligibility requirements).
  b. Enroll students that the classroom teacher has prioritized as most in need of services and support, as identified by SC First Steps risk factors and/or student assessment information (ex., Measure of Academic Progress Test (MAP), the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALs), and/or World- Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) scores).
  c. Provide one-on-one or small group sessions at least once a week to participating students.
  d. Meet with classroom teacher at least bi-monthly to discuss children's progress and plan for future tutoring sessions based on student needs.
  e. Ensure tutoring support adheres to the research-based curriculum model used by the classroom. The classroom teacher shall determine and specify the focus of the tutoring session based on the specific need-areas of the child.
- **Non-Supplantation** If Onsite Tutoring occurs in a school district setting, SC First Steps funds shall not be used to supplant – or in place of – any tutoring or intervention services that would otherwise be provided by the school

district. A letter from the school district must be provided annually stating that school district funds would not otherwise be spent on providing the onsite tutoring services delivered by the First Steps Local Partnerships through the Enhanced Early Education strategy.

Assessment

- An appropriate pre-and post-assessment, and/or ongoing assessment, measuring student learning or growth should be administered at the beginning and at the conclusion of the school year (ex., PALs, MAP).
- Efforts should be made to administer client satisfaction surveys (e.g., families served, early childhood teachers whose classrooms receive services) at least annually. The data collected should be used for program improvement. Electronic information should be made available to SCFS for evaluation purposes upon request.

Data Submission and Monitoring

- **Data Submission** If a Partnership engages in one-on-one onsite tutoring with children, the following data must be collected within the First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC): Child client demographic data, classroom tutoring sessions, program referrals, connections to services, pre- and post- assessment scores, 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, Connection Detail, and Risk Factors Reports.

Enhanced Early Education with Parent Workshops

Enhanced Early Education Parent Workshops must be paired with Enhanced Early Education (320) materials and resource distribution to the focus early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) and adhere to all guidelines for operating Enhanced Early Education with Parent Workshops.

Targeting

Classrooms that receive Enhanced Early Education resources, must have students that meet SCFS age-eligibility requirements (children aged 3 through 5).

Service Delivery

- In all cases, when Parent Workshops are a component of the Enhanced Early Education strategy, the Partnership shall:
  a. Develop workshops using input derived from participating school administrators, teachers, and families.
  b. Incorporate measurable objectives and at least one form of follow-up. At minimum, partnerships shall conduct a follow-up post assessment questionnaire to each participant.
- **Non-Supplantation** If Parent Workshops take place in a school district setting, SC First Steps funds shall not be used to supplant – or in place of – any other parent workshops or activities that would otherwise be provided by the school district. A letter from the school district must be provided annually stating that school district funds would not otherwise be spent on providing the parent workshops delivered by the First Steps Local Partnerships through the Enhanced Early Education strategy.

Staff Qualifications and Training

Individuals who deliver Parent Workshops must demonstrate expertise in the topic area as demonstrated by educational qualifications and experience.

Assessment

- Client satisfaction surveys must be administered to participating families after every parent workshop. The data collected should be used for program improvement. Electronic information should be made available to SCFS for evaluation purposes upon request.

Data Submission and Monitoring

- **Data Collection** Partnerships will enter monthly outputs data for parent workshops in the FSDC under the Enhanced Early Education strategy, including the number of parents attending workshops.
- **Monitoring** Partnerships are expected to keep an electronic record of topics covered in each parent workshop, workshop attendance, follow-ups, and the schools and classrooms served. Electronic information should be made available to SCFS for evaluation purposes upon request.

Enhanced Early Education with Enrichment Activities

Enrichment Activities must be paired with Enhanced Early Education (320) materials and resource distribution to the early childhood classrooms (children aged 3 through 5) and adhere to all guidelines for this program. Onsite enrichment activities are targeted, planned experiences where students can extend their learning to improve or enhance skills and knowledge. These program guidelines detail the specific service delivery, assessment, and data submission requirements of operating Enhanced Early Education with Enrichment Activities.

Service Delivery

- When enrichment activities are a component of the Enhanced Early Education strategy, the Partnership shall:
  a. Utilize a needs assessment process to develop and implement enrichment curriculum. Input should be derived from school administrators, teachers, and families.
  b. Consult classroom teachers to determine and specify the focus of enrichment activities. Enrichment activities must mirror the needs of students in the classrooms and align with classroom learning.
  c. Incorporate measurable objectives to help monitor onsite activities.
- **Non-Supplantation** If enrichment activities take place in a school district setting, SC First Steps funds shall not be used to supplant – or in place of – any other enrichment activities that would otherwise be provided by the school district. A letter from the school district must be provided annually stating that school district funds would not otherwise be spent on providing the enrichment activities delivered by the First Steps Local Partnerships through the Enhanced Early Education strategy.

Assessment

- Client satisfaction surveys should be administered to early childhood teachers whose classrooms receive services after every onsite enrichment activity. The data collected should be used for program improvement.

Data Submission and Monitoring

- **Data Collection** Partnerships will enter monthly outputs data for enrichment activities in the FSDC, including the number of students participating in the enrichment activities.
- **Monitoring** Partnerships are expected to keep an electronic record of the enrichment activity that occurred, dates that the enrichment activity, and the schools and classrooms served. Electronic information should be made available to SCFS for evaluation purposes upon request.

Family Cafe' (1XX)

Evidence Informed Strategy

Cafés are structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned."

The foundation of the Family Café is created through the utilization of Protective Factors. These factors are seen as positive countering events and have been known to reduce incidences of child abuse and neglect. **Family Café in a Box Protective Factors are:**

- Resilience: Parent Resilience
- Relationships: Positive Social Connections
- Support: Concrete Support in Times of Need
- Knowledge: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- Communication: Social and Emotional Competent

Unit of Service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure
At least 60% of families shall be identified on the basis of two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors below (with 100% of families possessing at least one risk factor at the time of enrollment):

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Client Retention

At least 75% of participating families (minimum of 10 families per cohort) must complete 7 sessions.

Frequency of Service

Implementation of the Family Café Model requires a minimum:

- 10 families per cohort (parents and caregivers to children ages 0 to 5 years old)
- 2 cohorts a year (20 + families)
- 7 session per cohort.

Recruitment

The local partnership should utilize AmeriCorps Member(s) to recruit eligible families to participate in Family Cafes as stated in the Targeted Grant Application.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

Local Partnerships will focus their efforts on providing enhanced core services to support families and enable children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed by: being a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families; serving as a local portal to connect families of preschool children to community-based services; and supporting the state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board.

Service Delivery

- Each cohort should complete a maximum of seven, two-hour sessions (virtual or in-person), facilitated by South Carolina First Steps AmeriCorps Members. All activities will come from the Be Storm Family Café in a Box curriculum.
- AmeriCorps Members must:
  a. maintain attendance records, sign-in sheets, a list of Community Advocates attending each session, and materials provided
  b. serve meals and provide childcare at each session
  c. provide incentives
- In addition to working with SCFS AmeriCorps Members, cohorts will also be serviced by Community Advocates at every session. Community Advocates should attend each session for the purpose of sharing information and community resources with program participants. Community Advocates may include, but are not limited to: officials from local state agencies, nonprofits, school district personnel, etc. Community Advocates must:
  a. distribute materials regarding community resources and support services

Connections (Referrals)

- Partnerships shall utilize formal or informal needs assessments to refer/link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial.
- Given the risk factor profile of clients/families served by First Steps, it is expected that a majority of clients will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the client's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- SCFS AmeriCorps Members shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- The Family Café' is a Peer-to-Peer model and all sessions should be facilitated by a SCFS AmeriCorps Member has completed curriculum training sponsored by Be Strong Families or South Carolina First Steps. If training is completed through Be Strong Families, the participant must submit a certificate of completion to the Core Functions Program Lead and SCFS AmeriCorps Program Coordinator. Being a parent of a young child supports the implementation of program reflection practices, however, it is not a requirement.
- Minimally qualified SCFS AmeriCorps Members must be able to establish a good rapport with Family Café'

participants.

- Café facilitators, and at least one other staff member within the participating partnership, must attend the Be Strong Café' Training, prior to serving families. If a facilitator is unable to attend the Be Strong Café' Training, the partnership will be responsible for making sure the facilitator receives the necessary training to implement the model with fidelity.
- Each member should have knowledge of both the language and culture of the community served.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

This is a pilot and county partnerships will be required to participate in quarterly discussions with the SCFS State Office to determine best practices as well as gather information about individual experiences with the Family Café'.

Assessments

- Following each cohort, families will be assessed using the Be Strong National Office Evaluation in session 7. Once completed, the local partnership must submit the completed evaluation to the SCFS State Office to be submitted to the Be Strong National Office. (Evaluations must be submitted to SCFS State Office within 10 days of assessment.)
- Quarterly meetings will be held with participating local partnerships and the SCFS State Office to support implementation, SCFS AmeriCorps Members, and debrief on the project. The meeting agenda will include reports on program outcomes, implementation successes and challenges, and the level of resources needed (money, staffing, etc.) for successful implementation.

Data Submission & Minimum Qualifications

Client demographic data	**# of clients enrolled:** families, adults, and children	Required for enrollment designated First Steps Data System
Risk factors	**100%** of families must possess at least one risk factor **At least 60%** of families should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment
Group Meetings	# of Group Meetings Total attendees Enrollee attendance Guest attendance	Data shall be entered within 7 days of completion.
Connections (Referrals)	SCFS AmeriCorps Members shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral. **70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.
Be Strong Assessment	Families will be assessed using the Be Strong National Office Evaluation in session 7.	Data will be submitted to SCFS State Office within 10 days of assessment.

Family Connects (911)

Evidence-Based & High Intensity Strategy

Family Connects is a nurse-based approach to supporting newborns and their families through nurse home visits, connecting families to services in the community, and supporting families with an individual approach to care. All families with children birth to 6 months are eligible for services receive services. Family Connects works with communities to establish implementation and sustainability plans, help establish community networks, and provides training for nurses who will conduct home visits.

Unit of Service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

- The Family Connects model seeks to serve all children and families birth to 6 months of age and is designed to be integrated into community services.

Client Retention

- Family Connects is intended to serve families 3 weeks after the birth of the child, with a short-term follow-up 9-12 weeks post-partum.
- The Family Connects model has no long-term retention requirement.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, individuals responsible for data entry shall ensure that Family Connects is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Intensity and Delivery

- Establishing a Family Connects Site
  a. To establish a Family Connects site, a partnership must establish a relationship with a medical/healthcare system.
  b. The Family Connects site must be engaged, assessed for readiness in partnership with Family Connects International and then apply for and be certified by the Family Connects International Office. Start-up to certification is usually a 2-year process.
  c. FC Sites must follow the expectations of Family Connects International, including FCI training, developing and maintaining an Implementation Plan, achieving fidelity, and data monitoring and reporting.
  d. Sites will also identify several key positions to lead the Family Connects Program:
  An Executive Director (can be % time), A Community Alignment Specialist, Nursing Supervisor, Nurse Home Visitor(s), and other support staff as needed, including a partnership with a Medical Director (MD).
  e. FCI also requires that program sites include a community alignment specialist to identify community resources and align the program with those resources.
- Family Connects can be housed in a variety of settings, but usually includes a nurse supervisor and nurse home visitors, a community alignment specialist, and other roles depending on the size of the delivery area.
- Site/community partners must communicate with Family Connects International to:
  a. Develop and maintain a community advisory board (CAB)
  b. Develop a plan for implementation
  c. Comply with all FCI intervention requirements and agreements, as outlined in MOA
  d. Continue consultation regarding fidelity and sustainability
  e. Finalize implementation plan
  f. Provide annual reports

Connections (Referrals)

- Nurses shall refer and connect families to services that they need may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.

- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Client screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Staff Qualifications and Training (as stated on HomVEE)

- Staff includes nurse home visitor(s), a nurse supervisor, a medical director, a data manager, and a program support coordinator.
- Nurse home visitors and nurse supervisors must be registered nurses with an active license in their state. FCI recommends but does not require that nurse home visitors and data managers hold a bachelor's degree and that nurse supervisors and program directors (if applicable) hold a master's degree. Community alignment specialists must hold a bachelor's degree, although a master's degree is preferred, and program support coordinators must hold a high school diploma, although a bachelor's degree is preferred.
- Nurse home visitors and nurse supervisors must receive pre-service training of the Family Connects model. In-service training is also included as part of the Family Connects International model.

Integrated Service Delivery

- Family Connects is a universal program, meaning that it will be offered to all families with a live birth in the catchment area during the program period.
- Given the risk factor profile of clients/families served by First Steps, it is expected that all will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the client's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard.

Data and Evaluation

Service Delivery	Site visit and follow up visit data	Nurses must deliver FCI Report related data to Local Partnership	Quarterly Report and Annual Report entered within 14 days of receipt	**Report** Quarterly FCI Outcomes Report
	Suggested Variables (from FCI Monthly KPI Snapshot; can be proved by partnership, REACH)	• Scheduling Rate • Completion Rate • Population Reach • Total Matrix Risks Identified • Risk and Non-Risk Referrals • PVC Closure • Referral Connection Rate		
Assessments	None completed outside of FCI model as administered by Nurse(s)			
Referrals	Referrals to community resources	**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report

Countdown to Kindergarten (406)

Evidence-Informed & High Intensity Strategy

Countdown to Kindergarten is a summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming kindergartners and their families with, ideally, the individual the individual who will serve as their kindergarten teacher or kindergarten teaching assistant during the coming year.

Unit of service = 1 Child

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Additional CTK Transition Risk Factors

Given the program's unique role in supporting school transition, several additional risk factors are associated with eligibility for this service. (CTK-specific transition risk factors are noted in italic text in the list below, and do not extend to other First Steps-funded strategies.)

- An incoming kindergartner who has had an older sibling retained in/before the 3rd grade
- An incoming kindergartner who has been recommended for service based on significant social/emotional and/or behavioral difficulties – or those of an older sibling.
- An incoming kindergartner who has never been served within a full-time preschool program out of his/her home.
- An incoming kindergartner who is the oldest child in the family; that is, this is the first opportunity for the family to be involved in their child(ren)'s school.

Note that the last two factors (child has not attended full-time preschool and/or is oldest child in the family) may be considered in conjunction with one or more additional risks but may not be used to determine eligibility in isolation.

Client Retention

- For home visitation to be effective, it is critical that client families remain in the program long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. It is also important to understand, from a research perspective, how the number of client visits is linked with outcomes.
- Partnerships are encouraged to assure that most participating families receive 6 visits prior to exiting the program.
- Data on all families, if parental consent was obtained and records are available - regardless of the number of visits received and when they exited the program - must be entered in the FSDC.

Service Delivery

Adherence to the Countdown to Kindergarten Curriculum

- While the CTK curriculum offers substantial opportunity for personalization by individual teachers, each must adhere to its general format and ensure the delivery of each published lesson.
- Per the CTK curriculum model, every effort should be made so that no family receive less than five (5) visits. The partnership shall make every effort to secure transportation services so that families can attend the final CTK visit to the child's school.

Note grant amendments may contain requirements for Service Delivery not outlined in Program Guidelines. An example, assuring Countdown teachers are children's soon-to-be kindergarten teacher or teaching assistant.

Placement within the Classroom of the Teacher

- Countdown to Kindergarten is explicitly designed to connect children and families to the teachers with whom they will be working during the coming year. Accordingly, Partnerships must take steps to ensure the placement of CTK client children in the classrooms of their home visitors. For some outside grants, it is required that 80% of enrolled children are assigned to their Countdown teacher's classroom in the upcoming school year. Partnerships must take steps to ensure the placement of CTK client children in the classrooms of their home visitors.
- The CTK curriculum must – without exception – include a meeting with the child's teacher at the school where the child will be attending kindergarten.
- When the child's CTK teacher is not his/her soon-to-be kindergarten teacher AND the family's home language is not English, the CTK home visitor must be fluent in the family's home language to ensure the curriculum is implemented in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. In addition, when available, toolkit contents are to be provided in the child's home language. The home visitor will work with the child's 5K teacher(s) to ensure that the dual language learner children receive ongoing transition materials and supports that are culturally and linguistically responsive.

Countdown to Kindergarten Family Visits

- The Countdown family visits can be scheduled flexibly, based upon the family and Countdown Teacher's schedules. The visits must be made the summer before the child enters kindergarten.
- No more than one visit can be made per day, and no more than two visits are to be made per week. Although home visits are encouraged, at times it might be necessary or prudent to hold the family visits elsewhere. In all instances, parents/caregivers are to be in attendance on all visits and for their duration.

Supports for children/families with specific needs – Dual Language Learner Families and Students with Disabilities
The role of the Kindergarten Teacher is to increase family awareness of kindergarten expectations, create a positive relationship with the family, and assure a smooth transition to school. Support specialists will work with the kindergarten teacher to provide the home visits and additional supports to assure that child and family make a smooth transition to kindergarten and that their needs are met.

- Dual Language Learner Families
  a. A home visitor fluent in the family's home language (Bilingual Home Visitor) collaborates with the Kindergarten Teacher to assure that the transition to kindergarten is smooth.
  b. The role of the Bilingual Home Visitor is to build trust with the family, support the family's relationships with the

Kindergarten Teacher and school, and assist in helping the family secure needed resources.
   c. Within the first 6 weeks of the start of school, the Bilingual Home Visitor makes two follow-up home visits to assure that family needs are met and the transition to kindergarten has been smooth.
   d. When available, toolkit books will be provided to the family in their home language.
- Students with Disabilities
   a. The role of the Disabilities Specialist is to build trust with the family, support the family's relationships with the Kindergarten Teacher and school, and assist in helping the family secure needed resources.
   b. A specialist with training in and experience with young children with disabilities (Disabilities Specialist) will collaborate with the Kindergarten Teacher to assure that the transition to kindergarten is smooth.
   c. Within the first 6 weeks of the start of school, the Disabilities Specialist makes two follow-up phone calls to the family to assure their needs are met and the transition to kindergarten has been smooth.
   d. One valuable resource for support students with disabilities is Family Connection of South Carolina. Disabilities Specialists and Countdown Teachers working with children with disabilities are encouraged to explore their offerings.
   e. If adaptative materials of the toolkit are needed to accommodate the disability, every effort should be made to provide them.

Countdown to Kindergarten Training
All teachers must successfully complete the Countdown to Kindergarten online training (including the final exam) prior to implementing the program. This includes Bilingual Home Visitors and Disabilities Specialists, who partner with the kindergarten teacher to implement the program.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development
Each Countdown teacher must participate in reflective supervision and professional development, by, at a minimum, logging on and reviewing the discussion on the Countdown to Kindergarten teacher electronic forum as outlined in the Countdown to Kindergarten Memorandum of Agreement for Countdown teachers.

Data Submission and Fiscal Administration

Outcome and Data Requirements
- The Partnership will be responsible for meeting all data requirements of SCFS within 30 days of receiving data from the teachers.
- CTK client and program information must be entered into the First Steps Data Collection system (FSDC) within the program year that begins July 1, regardless of whether program activities (home visits) occurred prior to July 1.
- Projected to Serve for Countdown to Kindergarten is to be entered for the fiscal year of the beginning of the summer of implementation. For example, for Summer 2023 CTK, Projected to Serve is to be entered for FY23. Data for Summer 2023 CTK is to be entered for FY24.
- Partnership staff is responsible for obtaining and entering (if not completed online) all survey responses. Partnerships will use the CTK surveys provided by SC First Steps.

Fiscal Administration and Teacher Payment
The Partnership will be responsible for ensuring that each CTK teacher adheres (in all regards) to his/her CTK Memorandum of Agreement.

Parents As Teachers (201)

Evidence-Based & High Intensity Strategy

Parents as Teachers promotes the early development and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. As a result of its presence in communities, children receive developmental screenings, parents have access to resources, and families gain the opportunity to participate in home visits and group socialization.

Local partnerships funding Parents as Teachers (PAT) shall work in collaboration with SC First Steps (in its capacity as South Carolina's State Office for Parents as Teachers) to ensure full compliance with national model guidelines. (Fidelity of implementation in SC includes meeting the 21 Essential Requirements of the Evidence Based Model along with a few SC-specific additions.) The following guideline includes a mix of both the expected Measurement Criteria for PAT National Center and First Step minimum requirements. The Measurement Criteria for PAT National Center is attached for clarity.

First Steps' home visitation strategies are designed to equip adults with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote the school readiness, healthy development, and long-term success of their preschool-aged children.

Unit of Service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age (Early Intervention)

- At least 70% of newly enrolled families shall contain an expectant mother and/or a child under thirty-six months of age.
- If unique and/or emergency circumstances warrant, Partnerships may enroll additional clients aged three-years or older with the provision of written justification to SC First Steps.

Client Retention

- For home visitation to be effective, it is critical that families remain long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. Each partnership will be required to demonstrate its retention of 75% of its families across nine or more months of program participation.
- **Pursuant to national model guidelines PAT affiliates must be designed to provide at least two full years of service to eligible families. (ER 1)**

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

In order to ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, parent educators shall ensure that Parents as Teachers is implemented to fidelity and comply with the following:

Home Visit Intensity and Delivery

- **Programs shall match the intensity of their service delivery to the specific needs of each family and case load of the parent educator, with no family being offered less than 2 visits monthly.**
- **Families identified as possessing two (2) or more board-approved risk factors (family stressors) shall receive home visitation up to weekly as the needs and availability of the family dictate. (ER 12)**
- For purposes of grant renewal, conditional approvals may be issued to Partnerships averaging fewer than 2.0 visits per family, per month. **For each family served, 1.8 average is considered the minimal threshold for visits per month, 2.0 is the targeted expectation, and 2.5 and above is considered outstanding intensity.**
- First Steps funded PAT programs shall maintain formal affiliate status via the Parents as Teachers National Center. SC First Steps and/or PAT National SC Implementation Specialist will host regular supportive conference calls or webinars to assist affiliates with tracking and meeting all model requirements. Supervisors are expected to attend these webinars each month. (ER8)
- **All Affiliate Programs should complete a minimum of 24 visits per year, per family, as is required from the National PAT Center. (ER 12)**
- In households in which two or more preschool-aged children reside, parent educators are permitted – but not required – to conduct separate visits designed to address the development of individual children. Alternately, curriculum information relating to the needs of each child may be combined into a single visit of greater duration. **All children in the home under age 6 shall be served in the program.**
- While PAT is ideally suited for delivery within the home (and home-based visitation expected as the primary method of service delivery), visits may be approved for delivery at an alternate location (a childcare center, family resource center, etc.) as either the documented needs of the family or safety of the visitor dictate. The alternative location must be suitable to delivery of parenting services such that integrity of the session and confidentiality of families is maintained. **Regardless of location, all visits must be one-on-one (First Steps-funded PAT visits may not be delivered in group settings); and entail the use of PAT-specific foundational plans and planning forms and last at least 45 minutes.** At a family's discretion and supervisor approval virtual and telecommunication visits will also be considered acceptable and count as a home visit.
- **Parent educators shall use the foundational visit plans, planning guide, and personal visits from the curriculum to design and deliver personal visits to families. (ER 11)**
- **Beginning July 2021 all PAT 2020 forms shall be used while delivering the model per PAT National Requirements**.
- Case Visit Data Entry
  a. Quarterly Data Checks will be provided to ensure that all parent educators are able to roll over families, get their program registered and begin entering family visits and other required data.
  b. Data on each home visit shall be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion.
  c. In the event that the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, the responsible party

shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 7-day window for subsequent entry.

Caseload Size

- **No parent educator may carry a caseload of more than twenty (20) active families**. *Smaller caseloads may be necessary based upon the intensity of services provided (ex: weekly home visits) or as determined by individual family needs.*
  a. **Parent educators working 32 or more hours per week** should serve no less than 15 families, unless approved by South Carolina First Steps Director of Parenting.
  b. **Parent educators working less than 32 hours per week** shall serve no less than 10 – 12 families, unless approved by South Carolina First Steps Director of Parenting.
- **No supervisor or lead parent educator may be assigned more than 12 Parent Educators, regardless of whether the parent educators are full or part time employees. (ER 5)**
- **Supervisors/Lead Parent Educators who are also serving families should serve 10 families or less, depending on the number of parent educators supervised.** For example, if a Supervisor/ Lead Parent Educator supervises 6 or more parent educators then she/he should serve no more than 5 families.

Group Connections

- **Each affiliate needs to offer families at least one group connection activity per month, for a total of at least 12 per program year. (ER 14)**

Screenings and Referrals

- **Parenting educators shall document the completion of all model-related health and developmental screenings to include hearing, vision, dental checks, etc. This should be completed by 7 months of age or within 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. (ER 15)**
- Parent educators shall seek to ensure that each participating family connects with a pediatric medical home and other community services as appropriate.
- **Each child shall be assessed using the age-appropriate developmental screening tools Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2, within 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. (ER 16)**
  a. Child Development Surveillance shall take place during each personal visit and shall be recorded on the PAT Milestone Check Form or CDC Milestones. (ER 17)
  b. If a developmental screening (conducted in association with any First Steps-funded program) indicates a possible developmental delay, the parent educator shall collaborate with parents/guardians to seek the consensual provision of these results to:
    i. child's pediatric care provider
    ii. 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.
  c. Parent educators will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern. Referrals should be entered in the First Steps Data Collection System within 7 days of developmental screening.
    i. 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 parent educator will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
    ii. The parent educator will continue to monitor the child's development and rescreen the child within 90 days of referred intervention.
    iii. Children receiving assistance through BabyNet do not need to be screened by Local County Partnership until BabyNet services have ended.
- **Parent Educators must screen at least 80% of eligible children in the ASQ3 and ASQ:SE2.**
- Partnerships and their staff shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established.

Connections (Referrals)

- Parent educators shall utilize readiness risk factors to refer and connect families to services that they need may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**

- Client screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Family Assessment (LSP) and Goal Setting

- First Steps PAT parent educators shall adhere to national model requirements pertaining to use of the Life Skills Progression (LSP), an approved family needs assessment tool. **The initial LSP is completed within 120 days of enrollment and then completed at and annually thereafter on the focus parent/ caregiver and is used for parent educator Information only. (ER 9)** All LSP items shall be entered into the First Steps designated data system. **Parent educators must administer the LSP to at least 75% of active parents.**
- Partnerships shall utilize the Life Skills Progression and/or other formal and informal needs assessments to refer/ link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial – either simultaneously or as part of a planned, multi-year service continuum. All referrals to other services shall be entered into the First Steps Data System.
- **All parenting and family strengthening caseworkers shall develop well-documented Family Goal Plans be-tween the home visitor and at least 60% of families (using the PAT Goal Setting form) within 3 months of the enrollment of each within the program, and subsequently update these plans at least semi-annually to gauge progress and goal attainment. (ER 10)**

Advisory Committee and Community Stakeholders

Each PAT Affiliate shall convene an advisory committee at least twice yearly. (ER 3) These meetings shall incorporate community stakeholders to identify service gaps and increase collaborative service referrals. This committee also advises, provides support for, and offers input to the affiliate program for planning and evaluation purposes.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- **All parent educators and supervisors in SC, including AmeriCorps members, must possess at least a high school diploma or equivalency with two years of related supervised work experience with young children and/or parents or two-year degree in early childhood education or closely related field.**
- **Each PAT Affiliate shall be overseen by one or more individuals certified as PAT Supervisors. New Supervisors shall attend the Foundational Curriculum and Model Implementation Training. (ER 6)**
- New parent educators must document successful completion of/initial certification in PAT's Foundational and Model Implementation Training.
- **Parent educators with caseloads that include children aged 3-5 must also maintain the Foundational 2 (3-5) certification. (ER 2 and ER 6)**
- **Each parent educator shall successfully complete his/her annual recertification and an additional twenty hours of professional development. (ER 8)**
- Each parent educator shall complete training in ASQ-3, ASQ:SE-2, LSP, ACIRI and HFPI.
- All training (for both program and individual staff members) must be documented on-site.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- Each parent educator shall participate in the PAT affiliate National Quality Endorsement process every 5th year and make ongoing use of:
  a. the PAT Parent Satisfaction Survey (annually),
  b. Parent Educator Performance Evaluation (annually),
  c. Parent Educator and Supervisor Self-Evaluations (annually),
  d. Program Evaluation by Parent Educators (annually)
  e. Peer Mentor Observation (optional).
- *Each program must submit an Affiliate Performance Report to PAT and South Carolina First Steps by the 3rd Friday of July*. **All Performance Measurement Reports generated by PAT National, and State Offices are to be used to develop Continuous Quality Improvement Plans. (ER 19) and (ER 20)**
- Each participating First Steps Partnership PAT program shall convene a monthly staff meeting of all pertinent program personnel and staff (to include those staff members providing both supervision and direct service to families) to review recruitment, standards compliance, programmatic data, and other issues related to strategy success. **A minimum of 2 hours of staff meetings per month for part-time and full-time parent educators. (ER 4)**
- **Full-time parent educators shall participate with their supervisor in individualized reflective supervision meetings at a minimum of 2 hours per month. No less than 18 hours of individualized reflective super-vision during the program year is expected.**
- **Part-time parent educators shall participate at a minimum of one hour of reflective supervision per month. (ER 4)**

- Supervisors who provide home visits to families as a parent educator must also engage in reflective supervision.

Assessments

- **Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)**
  All PAT Affiliates shall complete, at minimum, baseline and post assessments of the primary adult identified within each enrolled case using the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI). The initial HFPI should be completed within 45 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until program exit. (ER 21)
- **Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)**
  Each family containing children aged 30 months or older shall have their interactive literacy behaviors assessed by a trained evaluator using the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI). Each parent educator making use of the ACIRI shall document his/her attendance at a First Steps sponsored training on the instrument.
  a. An initial ACIRI shall be performed within 45 days of enrollment if the child is 30 months or older; the initial ACIRI should be done immediately after (not before) the child's 30-month birthday.
  b. Thereafter, ACIRI should be done at the following intervals during the first program year of enrollment: A 2nd ACIRI should be done before the current year's data deadline if the case was enrolled by December 31 AND the child was age eligible for ACIRI by December 31. If not, then a 2nd ACIRI is not required for data compliance, but highly recommended if there is any reason to believe the family may leave the program before the next program year starts.
  c. For the 2nd and subsequent years of enrollment, an ACIRI needs to be scheduled for the beginning and end of the program year (prior to the data deadline) IF the case only received one ACIRI during the first year of enrollment. If the case received 2 or more ACIRIs during the first year of enrollment, only one ACIRI is required per year thereafter.
  d. Regardless of how long a family has been served, or how long it has been since the family last received an ACIRI assessment, it is important to assess the family one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.
- Note that both the HFPI and ACIRI are utilized as assessments of adult behaviors and thus need not be completed with each adult-child pairing in the household. Post assessments should, however, assess the interactions of the same adult-child pairing observed during the baseline assessment.
- Monitoring and minimum requirements:
  a. SC First Steps may conduct randomized HFPI/ACIRI reliability monitoring.
  b. **Parent educators must assess at least 75% of active, eligible parents in HFPI and in ACIRI**.
- **All PAT Affiliates shall complete as a second outcome the American Academy of Pediatrics' Bright Futures schedule of recommended dates for well-child visits as documented in the PAT Child Health Record. This will be entered into the First Steps Data Collection System to determine the percentage of children who received the last recommended well-child visit on the Bright Futures Schedule. (ER 21)**

Data Submission & Minimum Qualifications

Client Level Data	Client Demographic Data	Number of families, adults, and children enrolled	Required for enrollment	**Report** Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more readiness risk factors	Data must be entered within **5 days** of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
	Targeting by Age	**At least 70%** of newly enrolled families shall contain an expectant mother and/or a child		

		under thirty-six months of age.		
	Client Retention	**Retention requirement** = **75%** of families must remain enrolled for nine or more months of program.		**Report** Retention Report
Service Delivery	Home Visits	**Minimal threshold for visits (average)** = 1.8 visits per month **Targeted expectation (average)** = 2.0 visits per month **Outstanding intensity (average)** = 2.5 visits per month **Minimal threshold for visit duration (average)** = 45 mins. – 1hr	Data on each home visit must be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	**Report** Parenting Intensity Summary
	Group Meetings	**Required reporting** • Number of group meetings • Total attendees • Enrollee attendance • Guest attendance	Data must be entered within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	**Report** Total Attendance - Case Data Entry Screen To isolate enrollee attendance run the Group Meeting Detail Report.
Developmental Screenings	Ages & Stages 3 Ages and Stages SE2	**Overarching Timeline -** At least 80% of children must be screened within 90 days of enrollment. **Minimum Screening Requirement** - Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ -3) 80%	Data must be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report

		Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%		
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful connections, home visitors must follow-up on initial referrals **within 10 days.**	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report
Assessments	Life Skills Progression (LSP)	The initial LSP is completed within 120 days of enrollment. Parent educators must administer the LSP to **at least 75%** of active parents.	Data must be entered within 7 days of the assessment.	**Report** Case Data Entry Screen – LSP Dashboard
	Family Goal Plans	Family Goal Plans must be developed and documented for **at least 60%** of families within **3 months** of the enrollment.		
	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)	Parent educators must assess at **least 75%** of parents using HFPI.	Data must be entered within 7 days of HFPI assessment.	**Report** HFPI Report
	Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)	Parent educators must assess **at least 75%** parents using ACIRI.	Data must be entered within 7 days of ACIRI assessment.	**Report** KIPS/ACIRI Accountability Report

At least annually, the affiliate gathers and summarizes feedback from families about the services they've received, using the results for program improvement. This summary information shall be shared with the SCFS State Office for purposes of providing support to affiliates. (ER 19)

Parent Child + (206)

Evidence-Based & High Intensity Strategy

Parent Child + works one-on-one with families who, despite facing significant life challenges, are committed to building a brighter future for their children and themselves. Over the course of two years, families receive 92 home visits and acquire a library of high-quality books, educational toys, and curricular guide sheets with tips on development, learning and play.

Successful implementation in SC includes meeting PC+ requirements along with additional SC-specific additions. The PC+ requirements are included for clarity.

Unit of service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age (Early Intervention)

- PC+ is designed for families with children ages 16-48 months of age, who are facing significant obstacles to school and life success including poverty, low literacy, limited education, language barriers, geographic

isolation, and/or homelessness.
- At least 70% of enrolled families must contain a child between 16-36 months.
- A family can receive PC+ services as a unit only once (one time PC+ rule). Families can only be re-enrolled with the permission of SC First Steps. All requests, including a detailed justification, must be submitted to the SC First Steps Director of Parenting for approval.

Client Retention

- For home visitation to be effective, it is critical that 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 families across two years of program participation.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, home visitors shall ensure Parent Child + is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

- **Parent Child+ (PC+) programs shall be designed to incorporate visits twice weekly for a minimum of 23 weeks or 46 home visits annually across a period of two years (46 weeks/92 visits total).**

Caseload Size

- No PC+ home visitor may carry a caseload of more than sixteen (16) active families. Smaller caseloads may be necessary based upon the intensity of services provided (or as determined by individual family needs).

Visit Delivery

- While home visitation models are ideally suited for delivery within the home (and home-based visitation expected as the primary method of service delivery), PC+ visits may be approved for delivery at an alternate location (a childcare center, family resource center, etc.) as either the documented needs of the family or safety of the visitor dictate. The alternative location must be suitable to delivery of parenting services such that integrity of the session and confidentiality of families is maintained. Regardless of location, all visits must be one-on-one (PC+ may not be delivered in group settings), entail the use of PC+-specific lesson plans and last at least 30 minutes apiece. At a family's discretion and supervisor approval virtual and telecommunication visits will also be considered acceptable and count as a home visit.
- Over the two-year period, families must acquire: 46 high quality books and educational toys; and 46 curricular guide sheets with tips on vocabulary-building, engaging conversation, skill development, social-emotional development, imaginative play, and literacy, music, and art activities.
- Data on each home visit shall be entered into the First Steps designated database within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, home visitors shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 7 day window for subsequent entry.

Screenings

- Each participating child will be assessed using an age-appropriate developmental screening tool (e.g. Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, Brigance, DIAL-3, or other validated, approved screening tool).
- **If a Local Partnership wishes to use a developmental screening tool other than Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, they must receive special permission from the SC First Steps Director of Parenting.**
- If the score indicates that the child's development is on track, the home visitor shall continue program offerings as scheduled, communicate with parents/guardians about the child's development, and offer activities for continued development
- If a child's score(s) fall in the monitoring range, as indicated by the screening tool, and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening, the home visitor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- If the screening indicates a possible delay, the home visitor 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.
- **At least 80% of child participants should be screened within 90 days of enrollment.**
- Partnerships and their funded home visitors shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support

services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. Client screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered into the FSDC within 7 days of screening and/or referral.

Connections (Referrals)

- Partnerships or PC+ home visitors shall utilize the PC+ family-centered assessment and/or other formal and informal needs assessments to refer/ link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial – either simultaneously or as part of a planned, multi-year service continuum. In addition, home visitors shall utilize readiness risk factors to refer and connect families to services they may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of children, adults, and families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Home visitors shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Family Assessment and Goal Setting

- All parenting and family strengthening home visitors shall develop well-documented Family Goal Plans between the home visitor and families (using the SCFS-issued template if needed) within 3 months of the enrollment of each within the program, and subsequently update these plans at least semi-annually to gauge progress and goal attainment.
- Partnerships shall utilize the Life Skills Progression and/or other formal and informal needs assessments to refer/ link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial – either simultaneously or as part of a planned, multi-year service continuum.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- **All PC+ home visitors must possess at least a high school diploma or equivalency with two years of related supervised experience, or a two-year degree in early childhood education or a closely related field and document successful completion of 16 hours of training prior to their first home visit.** If recruiting an AmeriCorps member, a high school diploma or equivalency is required.
- **Each PC+ home visitor shall meet the minimum education requirements above and be trained and supervised by a site coordinator approved by the PC+P National Center. Partnerships must employ at least one Site Coordinator trained by the PC+ National Center or a certified local trainer (with sites serving 60 or more families employing a second Site Coordinator).**

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- **Family Goal Setting** PC+ home visitors shall utilize Parent and Child Together (PACT) Observations to guide family goal setting and evaluate changes in parent behavior, as required, report all required data within the national PC+ Management Information System and administer the Evaluation of Child Behavior Traits (CBT) as required.
- **Supervision** Each participating PC+ program shall convene a supervisory meeting of all pertinent program personnel, home visitors and staff (to include those staff members providing both supervision and direct service to families) no less than quarterly to review recruitment, standards compliance, programmatic data and other issues related to strategy success.

Assessments

- **All participating families shall receive the Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) within 45 days of enrollment, and every 6 months thereafter until program exit.** The PICCOLO assessment shall be entered into the First Steps designated data system within 7 days.
- Thereafter, ACIRI should be done at the following intervals during the first program year of enrollment: A 2nd ACIRI should be done before the current year's data deadline if the case was enrolled by December 31 AND the child was age eligible for ACIRI by December 31. If not, then a 2nd ACIRI is not required for data compliance, but highly recommended if there is any reason to believe the family may leave the program before the next program year starts.
- For the 2nd and subsequent years of enrollment, an ACIRI needs to be scheduled for the beginning and end of the

program year (prior to the data deadline) IF the case only received one ACIRI during the first year of enrollment. If the case received 2 or more ACIRI during the first year of enrollment, only one ACIRI is required per year thereafter. Regardless of how long a family has been served, or how long it has been since the family last received a ACIRI, it is important to assess the family one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.

- SC First Steps may conduct randomized PICCOLO/ACIRI reliability monitoring. Sample client videos may be requested for confidential scoring review and shall be maintained on site for potential review for a period spanning four months from the date of original administration.
- Note PICCOLO and ACIRI are utilized as assessments of adult behaviors and thus need not be completed with each adult-child pairing in the household. Post assessments should, however, assess the interactions of the same adult-child pairing observed during the baseline assessment.
- **All home visitors must assess at least 75% of active, eligible parents in PICCOLO and in ACIRI.**

Data Submission & Minimum Qualifications

Client Level Data	Client Demographic Data	Number of families, adults, and children enrolled	Required for enrollment	**Report** Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more readiness risk factors	Data must be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
	Targeting By Age	**PC+ is designed for** = children 16 -48 months **At least 70%** of enrolled families must contain a child between 16 -36 months. As a result, a family can only receive PC+ services as a family unit one time.		
	Client Retention	**Retention requirement** = **75%** of families must remain enrolled for the 2 years of the program.		**Report** Retention Report
Service Delivery	Caseload Size	Home visitor caseload - less than or equal to 16 families.		
	Home Visits	**Visit requirements:** 2 visits per week 6 visits per month Visit duration = 30 minutes plus per visit	Data on each home visit must be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion.	**Report** Parenting Intensity Summary

			If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	
	Materials Distributed	46 high quality books and educational toys 46 curricular guide sheets		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
Developmental Screenings	Ages & Stages 3 Ages and Stages: SE2	**Minimum Screening Requirements** Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ -3) 80% Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%	Data must be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful connections, home visitors must follow-up on initial referrals **within 10 days.**	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report
Assessments	Life Skills Progression (LSP)	**Administered annually.**	Data should be entered within 7 days of the assessment.	**Report** Case Data Entry Screen – LSP Dashboard
	Family Goal Plans	Family Goal Plans must be developed within 3 months of a family's enrollment.	Report all required data within the national PC+ Management Information System.	**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations (PICCOLO)	Dosage PICCOLO should be administered within **45 days of enrollment** and **6 months thereafter.** Home visitors must assess **at least 75%** of eligible parents.	Data should be entered within 7 days of PICCOLO assessment.	**Report** Other Assessment Report

	Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)	Parent educators must assess **at least 75%** parents using ACIRI.	Data must be entered within 7 days of ACIRI assessment.	**Report** KIPS/ACIRI Accountability Report

Family Literacy Model (211)

Evidence-Informed Strategy

Early childhood education and parent education components of a family literacy strategy may be considered evidence-based if the component adheres to a program designated as evidence-based by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees. Those evidence-based components shall be funded and reported under their respective early education and parenting program codes.

Partnerships supporting comprehensive Family Literacy models within public school district settings or other public or private settings shall ensure that each caseworker delivers a four component Family Literacy Model, including: 1) Parent Education, 2) Adult Education, 3) Early Childhood Education and 4) Parent/Child Interaction. Qualified families shall participate in all four components.

Unit of service = 1 Parent

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Client Retention

- For a family literacy model to be effective, it is critical that 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 family literacy clients with both parent and child each receiving 120 hours of program participation.
- If one component is completed, such as the adult GED, in a shorter time span then the family shall continue to participate in the other three components for as long as needed (based on a family needs assessment.)

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, caseworkers shall ensure that the Family Literacy strategy is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Intensity and Delivery

a. Parent Education

- Programs shall match the intensity of their service delivery to the specific needs of each family with a minimum of 2 contacts per month. This component shall be delivered using an approved, evidence-based/parent education model. Approved models are EHS, PAT, Triple P, Incredible Years or other evidence-based curriculum model. Families identified as possessing two (2) or more board-approved risk factors shall receive services as the needs and availability of the family dictates with a minimum of 2 contacts per month.
- At least one parent education large group meeting/training shall be offered each month (per caseworker or area of service if large program).

b. Adult Education

- The adult/parent shall participate in an Adult Education Program recognized by the South Carolina Department of Education.
- Participation is desirable until the GED, High School Diploma or other educational goal is obtained.
- The adult/parent shall work independently with guidance and support from an Adult Ed Teacher or staff that meets requirements of SCDE, within the classroom setting at an individualized pace.

c. Early Childhood Education The preschool child shall be enrolled in a quality early childhood education program (preferably on location where the adult education class is conducted). A quality early childhood education program is defined as a program that is DSS licensed and exceeds minimum licensing requirements (participating in the ABC quality Program at a level B or higher) or has a DSS waiver of approval. If a DSS waiver is granted then a quality environment rating assessment needs to be done as well by a trained ERS evaluator. The Partnership Board may – upon the provision of written consent from SCFS - waivethis requirement if programs meeting this definition are geographically distant or unavailable to individual recipients.

d. Parent/Child Interactions

- The adult/child pair shall participate in a planned monthly interactive literacy play session. This shall occur in the child's classroom, home, or family resource center at a regular time designated by early education staff for parents to come and interact with their child.
- Interactive sessions may include "child's choice of play" within the classroom learning centers. This open choice play shall last for approximately 30-45 minutes. The final 15 minutes shall include a planned literacy activity led by early education staff, librarian, community visitor, or parents and shall include such literacy activities as singing songs, finger-plays, stories, literacy games, etc. that is appropriate for the age of the child.

Screenings

- Each participating child will be assessed using an age-appropriate developmental screening tool (e.g. Ages and Stages 3, Brigance, DIAL-3, or other validated, approved screening tool).
- **If a Local Partnership wishes to use a developmental screening tool other than Ages and Stages 3 they must receive special permission from the SC First Steps Director of Parenting.**
- If the score indicates that the child's development is on track, the caseworker shall continue program offerings as scheduled, communicate with parents/guardians about the child's development, and offer activities for continued development
- If a child's score(s) fall in the monitoring range, as indicated by the screening tool, and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening, the caseworker will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- If the screening indicates a possible delay, the caseworker 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.

- **At least 80% of child participants should be screened within 90 days of enrollment.**
- Partnerships and their funded caseworkers shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. Client screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered into the FSDC within 7 days of screening and/or referral.

Connections (Referrals)

- Caseworkers shall utilize readiness risk factors to refer and connect families to services they may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of children, adults, and families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Caseworkers shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Family Assessment and Goal Setting

- Family Literacy caseworkers shall use a family needs assessment to determine the priority needs of the family being served. The Life Skills Progression is a preferred option; however, a tool currently being used by a Family Literacy Program may be used.
- Caseworkers shall develop family service plans within 3 months of enrollment and subsequently update these plans every 6 to 12 months to gauge progress and goal attainment.

Assessments

- Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)
  Caseworkers shall complete, at minimum, baseline and post assessments of the primary parent identified within each enrolled case using the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI). The initial HFPI should be completed within 45 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until program exit.
- Regardless of how long a family has been served, or how long it has been since the family last received a HFPI, it is important to assess the family one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.
- Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)
  Each family containing children aged 30 months or older shall have their interactive literacy behaviors assessed by a trained evaluator using the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI). Each parent educator making use of the ACIRI shall document his/her attendance at a First Steps sponsored training on the instrument.
  a. An initial ACIRI shall be performed within 45 days of enrollment if the child is 30 months or older; the initial ACIRI should be done immediately after (not before) the child's 30-month birthday.
  b. Thereafter, ACIRI should be done at the following intervals during the first program year of enrollment: A 2nd ACIRI should be done before the current year's data deadline if the case was enrolled by December 31 AND the child was age-eligible for ACIRI by December 31. If not, then a 2nd ACIRI is not required for data compliance, but highly recommended if there is any reason to believe the family may leave the program before the next program year starts.
  c. For the 2nd and subsequent years of enrollment, an ACIRI needs to be scheduled for the beginning and end of the program year (prior to the data deadline) IF the case only received one ACIRI during the first year of enrollment. If the case received 2 or more ACIRIs during the first year of enrollment, only one ACIRI is required per year thereafter.
  d. Regardless of how long a family has been served, or how long it has been since the family last received an ACIRI assessment, it is important to assess the family one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.
- Note that both the HFPI and ACIRI are utilized as assessments of adult behaviors and thus need not be completed with each adult-child pairing in the household. Post assessments should, however, assess the interactions of the same adult-child pairing observed during the baseline assessment.
- Monitoring and minimum requirements:
  c. SC First Steps may conduct randomized HFPI/ACIRI reliability monitoring.

d. Parent educators must assess at least 75% of active, eligible, parents in HFPI and in ACIRI.

Data Submission & Minimum Requirements

Client Level Data	Client Demographic Data **If the partnership funds ONLY the parent education component of Family Literacy as an evidence-based model, that household data shall be entered in the FSDC under the respective parenting program code; otherwise, household data and participation in parenting activities will be entered under the Family Literacy program code (211) and connections entered to other program components funded by the local partnership. For budget purposes, early education expenditures, if evidence-based, should be separated into the appropriate Early Education program code but separate cases data entry outside of 211 is not required.**	# Families, adults, and children enrolled	Required for enrollment	**Report** Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
Service Delivery	Curriculum	**Parent Education** **Adult Education** **Early Childhood Education** **Parent/Child Interactions**	Data on shall be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion.	**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.

Developmental Screenings	Ages & Stages 3 Ages and Stages: SE2	**Minimum Screening Requirements** Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ -3) 80% Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%	Data must be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful connections, caseworkers must follow-up on initial referrals **within 10 days.**	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report
Family Assessment and Goal Setting	Family Service Plans	Case workers must: a. Develop plans within 3 months of a family's enrollment. b. Update plans every 6 to 12 months.		
Assessments	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)	Parent educators must assess at **least 75%** of eligible parents using the HFPI.	Data should be entered within 7 days of HFPI assessment.	**Report** HFPI Assessment
	Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI)	Parent educators must assess **at least 75%** of eligible parents using ACIRI.	Data should be entered within 7 days of ACIRI assessment.	**Report** KIPS/ACIRI Accountability Report

Early Steps to School Success (213)

Evidence-Based & High Intensity Strategy

Save the Children's Early Steps to School Success (ESSS) Program is designed to provide high-quality early childhood development services to young children and families living in under-resourced and underserved communities. Key components include home visits that focus on healthy pregnancy and early childhood development; a book bag exchange; fostering positive connections between families and schools; supporting school transitions; and connecting families to services and resources.

Partnerships funding Early Steps to School Success shall work in collaboration with SC First Steps to ensure full compliance with national model guidelines. Fidelity of implementation in SC includes meeting ESSS requirements along with a few SC-specific additions. The following standards include a mix of both; however, the inserted ESSS fidelity requirements are included for clarity.

Unit of service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age (Early Intervention)

- ESSS home visitation is designed for expectant mothers and/or children under 36 months of age.
- Supplemental group meetings and transition activities may be incorporated for children older than 36 months.

Client Retention

- For home visitation to be effective, 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 retention of 75% of its home visitation families across nine or more months of program participation.
- ESSS home visitors shall provide services to families for 12 months in a program year.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, home visitors shall ensure ESSS is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Caseload Size

- Every home visitor is required to have 20 children enrolled on their caseload. (Up to 30 additional children per home visitor may participate in the model's group meetings and transition activities (book bag exchange) for children older than 36 months.)

Home Visit Intensity and Delivery

- Programs shall match the intensity of their service delivery to the specific needs of each family and case load of families per home visitor, with no family being offered less than **2** visits monthly. Families identified as possessing two (2) or more board-approved risk factors (family stressors) shall receive home visitation up to weekly as the needs and availability of the family dictate. (For purposes of grant renewal, conditional approvals may be issued to Partnerships averaging fewer than **2.0** visits per family, per month. For each family served, **1.8** average is considered the minimal threshold for visits per month, **2.0** is the targeted expectation, and **2.5** and above is considered outstanding in-tensity.)
- While the ESSS model is ideally suited for delivery within the home (and home-based visitation expected as the primary method of service delivery), visits may be approved for delivery at an alternate location (a childcare center, family resource center, etc.) as either the documented needs of the family or safety of the visitor dictate. The alternative location must be suitable to delivery of parenting services such that integrity of the session and confidentiality of families is maintained. A family's discretion and supervisor approval virtual and telecommunication visits will also be considered acceptable and count as a home visit.
- Regardless of location, all visits must be one-on-one (ESSS visits may not be delivered in group settings), and at least **1** hour.
- Data on each home visit shall be entered into the ESSS data system and the First Steps data system each week by the following Monday, close of business.

Group Meetings

- At least one parent group shall be offered each month (12 per year) for parents receiving home visits and those participating in the three- year-old book bag exchange.

Screenings

- Home visitors shall document the completion of the ESSS HOME Inventory within 90 days of enrollment and at least annually thereafter.
- Home visitors shall seek to ensure that each family is connected with a pediatric medical home and other community services as appropriate.
- Each participating child will be assessed using an age-appropriate developmental screening tool (e.g. Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, Brigance, DIAL-3, or other validated, approved screening tool). **If a Local Partnership wishes to use a developmental screening tool other than Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, they must receive special permission from the SC First Steps Director of Parenting.**
- If the score indicates that the child's development is on track, the home visitor shall continue program offerings as

scheduled, communicate with parents/guardians about the child's development, and offer activities for continued development
- If a child's score(s) fall in the monitoring range, as indicated by the screening tool, and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening, the home visitor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- If the screening indicates a possible delay, the home visitor 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.
- **At least 80% of child participants should be screened within 90 days of enrollment.**
- Partnerships and their funded home visitors shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. Client screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered into the FSDC within 7 days of screening and/or referral.

Connections (Referrals)

- Home visitors shall utilize risk factors to refer and connect families to services that they need may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children. In addition, home visitors shall also use ESSS HOME Inventory to refer/ link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial – either simultaneously or as part of a planned, multi-year service continuum.
- Given the risk factor profile of families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Home visitors shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Family Assessment and Goal Setting

- All home visitors shall develop well-documented Family Goal Plans between the home visitor and families within 3 months of the enrollment and subsequently update these plans at least semi-annually to gauge progress and goal attainment.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- Home visitors must possess at least a high school diploma or equivalency with two years of related supervised experience, and/or a two-year degree in early childhood education or a closely related field and document successful completion of 16 hours of training prior to their first home visit.
- If recruiting an AmeriCorps member, a high school diploma or equivalency is required.
- Each home visitor in a First Steps-funded ESSS program shall successfully complete at least four hours minimum of professional development each month. This shall be documented and approved by Save the Children. Annual training (for both the program and individual staff members) must be documented on-site by each home visitor.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- Each ESSS program shall convene a supervisory meeting of all pertinent program personnel/home visitors (to include those staff members providing both supervision and direct service to families) no less than quarterly to review recruitment, standards compliance, programmatic data and other issues related to strategy success.

Assessments

- Each ESSS home visitor must complete, at minimum, baseline and post assessments of the primary adult client identified within each enrolled case using the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI). Unless another parenting skills inventory is required by the Early Steps National Model (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test Fourth Edition (PPVT-4); HOME Inventory).
- The initial HFPI (or alternative assessment) should be completed within 45 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until program exit.

- Regardless of how long a family has been served, or received their last HFPI assessment, families must be assessed one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.
- SC First Steps may conduct randomized HFPI reliability monitoring. Sample client videos may be requested for confidential scoring review and shall be maintained on site for potential review for a period spanning four months from the date of original administration.
- **First Steps-funded home visitors must assess at least 75% of active, eligible using HFPI.**

Data Submission & Minimum Requirements

Client Level Data	**Client Demographic Data**	**# Families, adults, and children enrolled**	**Required for enrollment**	**Report Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report**
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
	Targeting By Age	ESSS home visitation is designed for expectant mothers and/or children under 36 months of age.		
	Client Retention	**Retention requirement** = **75%** of families must remain enrolled for the 2 years of the program.		**Report** Retention Report
Service Delivery	Home Visits	**Minimal threshold for visits (average)** = 1.8 visits per month **Targeted expectation (average)** = 2.0 visits per month	Data on each home visit must be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	**Report** Parenting Intensity Summary
	Group Meetings	**Requirement** = At least one parent education group meeting shall be offered each month – 12 per year. **Reporting Requirements** Number of group meetings Total attendees	Data must be entered within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all	**Report** Total Attendance -Case Data Entry Screen To isolate enrollee attendance run the Group Meeting Detail Report.

		Enrollee attendance Guest attendance	data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	
Developmental Screenings	Early Steps to School Success HOME Inventory	Home visitors shall document the completion of the ESSS HOME Inventory within 90 days of enrollment.		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Ages & Stages 3 Ages and Stages: SE2	**Minimum Screening Requirements** Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ -3) 80% Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%	Data must be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful connections, home visitors must follow-up on initial referrals within 10 days.	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report
Family Assessment and Goal Setting	Family Goal Plans	Family Goal Plans must be developed within 3 months of a family's enrollment.		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
Assessments	Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)			**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)	Parent educators must assess at **least 75%** of eligible parents in HFPI.	Data should be entered within 7 days of HFPI assessment.	**Report** HFPI Report

Incredible Years® (215)

Evidence-Based & High Intensity Strategy

Incredible Years® is a group-based intervention that seeks to strengthen parenting competencies, parent involvement in children's school experiences, and children's academic, social, and emotional skills. Additional outcomes include reductions in child behavior problems, improved child social skills, emotional literacy, self-regulation, problem solving, and school readiness as well as improved parenting skills and parent-child- teacher relationships.

Unit of service = 1 Family

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age

- Family enrollment is determined according to age:

a. **Parents and Babies Program (0-12 months)**
b. **Toddler Basic Program (ages 1-3)**
c. **Preschool Basic Program (ages 3-6)**
d. **Advanced Program (ages 4-12)**

- If children fall into the clinical range on disruptive behavior disorders or if parents exhibit multiple risk factors, then groups should be limited to 6-7 families. If families are referred for moderate level risk (child or parent), then group size can range from 6-10 families.

Client Retention

- Each partnership will be required to demonstrate its successful, long-term retention of 75% of its families across their pre-determined program duration.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, group facilitators shall ensure that Incredible Years is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Group Sessions

- Each group must be run by trained group leaders.
- Group leaders must adhere to the Incredible Years materials/curriculum in implementing the group sessions. The curriculum structure and materials outline expectations for planning, delivery, follow-up, and monitoring program activities.
- Group Types:

Parents and Babies Program (0-12 months)

a. The Parents and Babies Program teaches parents how to: (1) provide emotional security to their children; and (2) encourage their babies physical and language development.
b. Each group meeting should encourage peer support, the use of video vignettes to stimulate group discussion, and shared learning around parenting skills.
c. 9-12 weekly two-hour group sessions

Toddler Basic Program (ages 1-3)

a. The Toddler Basic Program teaches parents how to: (1) help toddlers feel emotionally secure; (2) encourage toddler's language, social, and emotional development; (3) establish behavioral norms; (4) handle separations and reunions; and (5) use positive discipline.
b. Each group meeting should encourage peer support, the use of video vignettes to stimulate group discussion, and shared learning around parenting skills.
c. 13 weekly two-hour group sessions

Preschool Basic Program (ages 3-6)

a. The Preschool Basic parenting program strengthens parent-child interactions and attachment, reducing harsh discipline and fostering parents' ability to promote children's social, emotional, and language development. Parents also learn how to build school readiness skills.
b. Each group meeting should encourage peer support, the use of video vignettes to stimulate group discussion, and shared learning around parenting skills.
c. 18-20 weekly two hour group sessions

Advanced Program (ages 4 to 12)

a. The Advanced Program builds on the Preschool and School Age Basic Programs by focusing on parents' interpersonal issues such as effective communication and problem-solving skills, anger and depression management, and ways to give and get support.
b. 9-11 weekly two hour group sessions

- **Session Checklists** Group leaders' complete session checklists and evaluations after each group session.
- **Make up Sessions** Group leaders should provide make up sessions when families miss sessions.
- Data on program activities (other than home visits) shall be entered into the FSDC database within 7 days of completion. In the event that the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, group facilitators shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 7 day window for subsequent entry.

Other Supporting Activities

- Calls to parents between sessions.

- Individual parent - child coaching as needed.
- Supplemental Home Coaching – The IY curriculum includes a one-on-one home visit based parent-coach model that can be used alongside babies, toddler, and preschool weekly sessions. IY eligibility criteria must be met for a family to quality for supplemental services. Home coaching sessions shall be entered within 7 days of the visit.
- Other programs, the Attentive Parenting Program (universal prevention program) and the Autism Parent Program are available for targeted populations. The IY Series also includes program for training teachers (1-8 years), day care providers and children with a social and emotional curriculum.

Screenings

- Each participating child will be assessed using an age-appropriate developmental screening tool (e.g. Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, Brigance, DIAL-3, or other validated, approved screening tool). **If a Local Partnership wishes to use a developmental screening tool other than Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, they must receive special permission from the SC First Steps Director of Parenting.**
- If the score indicates that the child's development is on track, the group facilitator shall continue program offerings as scheduled, communicate with parents/guardians about the child's development, and offer activities for continued development
- If a child's score(s) fall in the monitoring range, as indicated by the screening tool, and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening, the group facilitator will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- If the screening indicates a possible delay, the group facilitator 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.
- At **least 80% of child participants should be screened within 90 days of enrollment.**
- Partnerships and their funded group facilitators shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. Developmental screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered into the FSDC within 7 days of screening and/or referral.

Connections (Referrals)

- Caseworkers shall utilize risk factors to refer and connect families to services that they need may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Caseworkers shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- At least one of the two group leaders must possess a MA degree. (Each group must be run by two trained group leaders.)
- If no MA level therapist is available, exceptions may be made for BA level group leaders with extensive experience working with families (ability to collaborate with parents, understanding of child development and cognitive social learning theory).
- IY has a progression process for the different levels of certification. Minimal requirements are for an IY Group Leader, and they require attending an authorized IY training workshop, studying therapist manuals, books and DVDs, and on-going peer review, consultation, and supervision.
- Baby Parent Group Leader Training is a 2-day training is for group leaders seeking training in the Baby program. Basic Parent Group Leader is a 3-day Training, and it covers the 2-8 age range. The training equips group leaders to lead 3 different protocols: Toddler, Preschool Basic, and early years portion of the School Age parent programs (for parents of children ages 6-8 years old). Advanced Parent Group Leader requires a 2-day Training and is offered once group leaders have become comfortable with the Basic program methods. It is required that participants in the Advanced training have already received the 3-day Basic training. Participants in this workshop have ideally completed the accreditation/certification process for the Basic program(s). The Attentive Parenting Group Leader requires a 2-day

training and is designed to promote positive parenting strategies to parents of children ages 2-6 years old. It is required that participants in the Attentive Parenting training have already received the 3-day Basic training and be used as a booster or follow up review to sustain changes and explore in more depth teaching children self- regulation and problem-solving methods.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- Group leaders should have on-going consultation and coaching as they lead their groups, especially before they become certified in the Basic Program. Our recommended consultation schedule is for group leaders to have monthly Skype calls with an IY trainer or mentor while they are leading groups until the point that they become accredited as group leaders.
- Accredited group leaders should lead at least one group every 18 months.
- Accredited group leaders should participate in a fidelity check every 18 months—this could be a coaching session with an accredited peer coach, a video review of a group by a mentor or trainer, or an in-person or skype consultation with a mentor or trainer.

Assessments

- Group leaders are required to collect weekly parent evaluations and a post-group final evaluation and session protocols.
- First Steps programs shall administer client satisfaction surveys at least annually, and use data collected for program improvement.
- All group facilitators shall complete, at minimum, baseline and post assessments of the primary adult identified within each enrolled case using the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI). The initial HFPI should be completed within 45 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until program exit
- Regardless of how long a family has been served, or how long it has been since the family last received a HFPI, it is important to assess the family one final time within 30 days of exiting the program, if possible.
- Each family must be assessed with the HOME Inventory per ESSS model requirements.
- SC First Steps may conduct randomized HFPI reliability monitoring. Sample client videos may be requested for confidential scoring review and shall be maintained on site for potential review for a period spanning four months from the date of original administration.
- Group facilitators must assess at least 75% of active, eligible parents in HFPI.

Data Submission & Minimum Requirements

Client Level Data	Client Demographic Data	# Families, adults, and children enrolled	Required for enrollment	**Report** Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
	Client Retention	**Retention requirement** = **75%** of families must remain enrolled for nine or more months of program.		**Report** Retention Report

Service Delivery	Group Meetings	**Group Types** • Parents and Babies Program (0-12 months) • Toddler Basic Program (ages 1-3) • Preschool Basic Program (ages 3-6) • Advanced Program (ages 4 to 12) **Required reporting:** • Number of group meetings • Total attendees • Enrollee attendance • Guest attendance	Data must be entered within 7 days of completion. If the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, the individual must submit this information to the Partnership within 7 days.	**Report** Total Attendance - Case Data Entry Screen To isolate enrollee attendance run the Group Meeting Detail Report.
	Other Supporting Activities	Calls to parents between sessions. Individual parent - child coaching as needed. Supplemental Home Coaching	Data on each activity shall be entered within 7 days of completion.	**Report** Case Data Entry Screen
Screenings	Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2	**At least 80%** of children must be screened within 90 days of enrollment. Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ -3) 80% Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%	Data should be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report

		connections, caseworkers must follow-up on initial referrals within 10 days.		
Assessments	Parent evaluations	Weekly		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Post group evaluation	Final session requirement.		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI)	Parent educators must assess at **least 75%** of eligible parents using the Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (HFPI).	Data should be entered within 7 days of HFPI assessment.	**Report** HFPI Report

Raising A Reader (217)

Evidence-Informed Strategy

The mission of Raising a Reader (RAR) is to engage families in a routine of daily "book-cuddling" with their children to foster healthy brain development, parent-child bonding, and early literacy skills critical for school success. It has been shown to be effective in increasing children's oral language and reading comprehension when implemented in conjunction with parent literacy training.

RAR's central components are informal professional development for early childhood educators, a weekly book rotation, parent engagement, child-driven literacy experiences, and library connections. It is intended to be implemented as a family literacy supplement to a center- or home-based early learning and development program such as Head Start/Early Head Start, childcare, home visitation, or family literacy.

Unit of service = 1 Child

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

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

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age

- RAR's intended audience is children 30 months and above, their caregivers, and early childhood educators.

Client Retention

- Families are involved in RAR for as long as their child(ren) are enrolled at a host site (childcare centers, Head Start, preschools).

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, caseworkers shall ensure that RAR is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Intensity and Delivery

- Each local partnership must secure and maintain affiliate status throughout the duration program. Service is to be delivered following program standards and include the parent literacy training component as described below:
  - Weekly book rotation (RAR red book bags with 3-4 books depending on child age.)
  - Classroom activities
  - Raising a Reacher curriculum and associated program activities
  - Regular contact with RAR parents
  - Meaningful relationships with libraries
- Data on program activities (other than home visits) shall be entered into the FSDC database within 7days of completion. Home visits shall be entered within 7 days. In the event that the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, caseworkers shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 7 day window for subsequent entry (7 days for home visits).

Other Supporting Activities

- Include any supplemental activities of the program that are in addition to the program's core service, if applicable (example: group connections for PAT). Do not include screenings, referrals, or assessments as they are included elsewhere in the standards.

Connections (Referrals)

- Caseworkers shall utilize risk factors to refer and connect families to services they may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Home visitors shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Integrated Service Delivery

- The RAR coordinator assures that families are meaningfully connected to the library by ensuring that parents receive information about the library and a library card application and are invited to attend a library event.
- Blue book bags (for carrying library books and gentle reminders for families to continue borrowing books and maintain book sharing routines) are introduced and provided to each child once during his/her participation in RAR.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- As per the RAR Affiliate Agreement, all RAR coordinators must attend an RAR National Coordinator Training. All implementers must attend two trainings conducted by a coordinator. These trainings must include a kickoff orientation and implementer skill building training as outlined in the RAR Affiliate Agreement. All

implementers must receive onsite coaching at least once a year as part of a coordinator site visit.
- Appropriate personnel should also be trained in any screenings or assessments used by the program.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- The RAR Online Affiliate Network is available to Affiliates via a password-protected area of Raising A Reader's web site. This network enables Affiliates to share best practices, access Raising A Reader tools and templates, view newsletters and sustainability archives, and see the most up-to- date RAR calendar.
- All coordinators will conduct two trainings for implementers each program year. As per the RAR Affiliate Agreement, the trainings are Kickoff Orientation and Program and Skill Building Training.
- All RAR implementers are to receive onsite coaching at least once a year as part of a coordinator site visit. The RAR parent survey, site rubric and/or other tools can be used to assess implementation of the RAR program.

Assessments

- Family literacy strategies require partnerships to measure pre-to-post change in language and literacy outcomes, per the goals of the program model. The RAR Affiliate Agreement lists the following assessments as appropriate for use with the model: DIBELS, PPVT, Creative Curriculum, and PALS.
- RAR Parent Surveys (baseline and follow-up or retrospective surveys) are to be administered to determine behavior change in parents and children.
- First Steps programs shall administer client satisfaction surveys at least annually, and use data collected for program improvement.

Additional Assessments

- If an implementer is using RAR to support an evidence-based high-intensity parenting strategy, other assessments associated with that model may be used.
- Programs are also encouraged, but are not required, to use the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) as a means of assessing both parent and child changes in literacy behaviors.
- Client assessments shall be entered in the FSDC within 7 days of administration.

Data Submission & Minimum Requirements

Client Level Data	**Client Demographic Data**	**# Families, adults, and children enrolled**	**Required for enrollment**	**Report Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report**
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
Service Delivery	Book Rotations	RAR red books, 3-4 books (depending on ages of the child)	Data should be entered within 5 days of book rotation – Outputs	**Report** Outputs Summary Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report

		To determine the number of successful connections, home visitors must follow-up on initial referrals within 10 days.		
Assessments	The RAR Affiliate Agreement lists the following assessments as appropriate for use with the model: DIBELS, PPVT, Creative Curriculum, and PALS.			**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	RAR Parent Surveys (baseline and follow-up or retrospective surveys)			**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Programs are also encouraged, but are not required, to use the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) as a means of assessing both parent and child changes in literacy behaviors.			

Raising A Reader Enhanced (218)

Evidence-Based & High-Intensity Strategy

The mission of Raising a Reader - Enhanced (RAR - E) is to engage families in a routine of daily "book-cuddling" with their children to foster healthy brain development, parent-child bonding, and early literacy skills critical for school success. It has been shown to be effective in increasing children's oral language and reading comprehension when implemented in conjunction with parent literacy training.

RAR – E's central components are informal professional development for early childhood educators, a weekly book rotation, parent engagement, child-driven literacy experiences, and library connections. It is intended to be implemented as a family literacy supplement to a center- or home-based early learning and development program such as Head Start/Early Head Start, childcare, home visitation, or family literacy.

Unit of service = 1 Child

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

At least 60% of home visitation and RAR - E families 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):

Readiness Risk Factors:

- 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 families 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 childcare, Head Start or preschool setting.

Targeting By Age

- With the understanding that RAR-E enrollment is open to all age-eligible children (birth to 8 years), partnerships are encouraged to target RAR-E enrollment to children 3 and under.

Client Retention

- Families are involved in RAR - E for as long as their child(ren) are enrolled at a host site (childcare centers, Head Start, preschools).

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, caseworkers shall ensure that RAR - E is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

Intensity and Delivery

- Each local partnership must secure and maintain affiliate status throughout the duration program. Service is to be delivered following program standards and include the parent literacy training component as described below:
  - Weekly book rotation (RAR – E) red book bags with 3-4 books depending on child age.)
  - Classroom activities
  - Raising a Reacher curriculum and associated program activities
  - Regular contact with RAR - E parents
  - Meaningful relationships with libraries
- Data on program activities (other than home visits) shall be entered into the FSDC database within 7days of completion. In the event that the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all data entry, caseworkers shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 7 day window for subsequent entry (7 days for home visits).

Groups

- The parent literacy component of RAR-E consists of parent instruction in shared reading techniques and time for parents to practice the new techniques with their own children.
- Minimum of 5 parent sessions per year which includes 30 min of didactic and demonstrative instruction and 30 minutes for parents to practice reading to their children using the new shared reading techniques learned in training.

Other Supplemental Activities

- Include any supplemental activities of the program that are in addition to the program's core service, if applicable (example: group connections for PAT). Do not include screenings, referrals, or assessments as they are included elsewhere in the standards.

Screening

- Each participating child will be assessed using an age-appropriate developmental screening tool (e.g. Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, Brigance, DIAL-3, or other validated, approved screening tool).
- **If a Local Partnership wishes to use a developmental screening tool other than Ages and Stages 3, Ages and Stages SE-2, they must receive special permission from the SC First Steps Director of Parenting.**
- If the score indicates that the child's development is on track, the caseworker shall continue program offerings as scheduled, communicate with parents/guardians about the child's development, and offer activities for continued development
- If a child's score(s) fall in the monitoring range, as indicated by the screening tool, and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening, the caseworker will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- If the screening indicates a possible delay, the caseworker 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.
- At least 80% of child participants should be screened within 90 days of enrollment.
- Partnerships and their funded caseworkers shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support

services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. Developmental screenings and referrals based on those screening results shall be entered into the FSDC within 7 days of screening and/or referral.

Connections (Referrals)

- Caseworkers shall utilize risk factors to refer and connect families to services they may need or want to strengthen their families and provide optimal development for their preschool children.
- Given the risk factor profile of families served by First Steps, it is expected that most families will be connected to services in addition to this program. Pre-existing connections made prior to the family's involvement with First Steps may count toward this standard. Active and sustained efforts to connect families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.
- **70% of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year.**
- Home visitors shall maintain (within the designated First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- Referrals and successful connections shall be entered (within the First Steps Data Collection System) within 7 days of referral.

Integrated Service Delivery

- The RAR – E coordinator must connect families to their local library, by helping them secure a library card and access library-based events and information.
- Blue book bags are for carrying library books and gentle reminders for families to continue borrowing books and maintain book sharing routines and provided to each child once during his/her participation in RAR - E.

Staff Qualifications and Training

- As per the RAR Affiliate Agreement, all RAR - E coordinators must attend an RAR National Coordinator Training. All implementers must attend two trainings conducted by a coordinator. These trainings must include a kickoff orientation and implementer skill building training as outlined in the RAR Affiliate Agreement. All implementers must receive onsite coaching at least once a year as part of a coordinator site visit.
- Appropriate personnel should also be trained in any screenings or assessments used by the program.

Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- The RAR Online Affiliate Network is available to Affiliates via a password-protected area of Raising A Reader's web site. This network enables Affiliates to share best practices, access Raising A Reader tools and templates, view newsletters and sustainability archives, and see the most up-to-date RAR - E calendar.
- All coordinators will conduct two trainings for implementers each program year. As per the RAR Affiliate Agreement, the trainings are Kickoff Orientation and Program and Skill Building Training.
- All RAR - E implementers are to receive onsite coaching at least once a year as part of a coordinator site visit. The RAR - E parent survey, site rubric and/or other tools can be used to assess implementation of the RAR - E program.

Assessments

- Family literacy strategies require partnerships to measure pre-to-post change in language and literacy outcomes, per the goals of the program model. The RAR Affiliate Agreement lists the following assessments as appropriate for use with the model: DIBELS, PPVT, Creative Curriculum, and PALS.
- RAR - E Parent Surveys (baseline and follow-up or retrospective surveys) are to be administered to determine behavior change in parents and children.
- First Steps programs shall administer client satisfaction surveys at least annually, and use data collected for program improvement.

Additional Assessments

- If an implementer is using RAR - E to support an evidence-based high-intensity parenting strategy, other assessments associated with that model may be used.
- Programs are also encouraged, but are not required, to use the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) as a means of assessing both parent and child changes in literacy behaviors.
- Client assessments shall be entered in the FSDC within 7 days of administration.

Data Submission & Minimum Requirements

Client Level Data	**Client Demographic Data**	**# Families, adults, and children enrolled**	**Required for enrollment**	**Report Case Visit Summary and Projected to Serve Report**
Targeting	Risk Factors	**100% of families** must possess at least one risk factor At least **60% of families** should have two (2) or more of the readiness risk factors	Data should be entered within 5 days of a family's enrollment	**Report** Risk Factor Report
Service Delivery	Book Rotations	RAR - E red books, 3-4 books (depending on ages of the child)	Data should be entered within 5 days of book rotation – Outputs	**Report** Outputs Summary Report
	Blue Book Bags			
	Group Meetings	Minimum of 5 parent sessions per year which 30 min of didactic and demonstrative instruction & 30 minutes for parents to practice reading	Data should be entered within 7 days of group meeting.	**Report** Case Data Entry Screen/To isolate enrollee attendance run Group Meeting Detail Report
	Other Supplemental Activities	As Needed		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
Screenings	Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2	**At least 80%** of children must be screened within 90 days of enrollment. Ages & Stages 3 (ASQ - 3) 80% Ages and Stages SE2 (ASQ:SE2) 80%	Data should be entered within 7 days of developmental screening.	**Report** ASQ Report
Connections (Referrals)		**70%** of families served must have at least one successful connection per program year. To determine the number of successful connections, home visitors must follow-up on initial referrals within 10 days.	Data should be entered within 7 days of initial referral and within 7 days of follow-up.	**Report** Connection Detail Report

Assessments	The RAR Affiliate Agreement lists the following assessments as appropriate for use with the model: DIBELS, PPVT, Creative Curriculum, and PALS.	**Select and submit to Director of Parent Programs for approval.**		**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	RAR – E Parent Surveys (baseline and follow-up or retrospective surveys)			**Report** N/a Partnership must keep records on site.
	Programs are also encouraged, but are not required, to use the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) as a means of assessing both parent and child changes in literacy behaviors. (optional)			**Report** KIPS/ACIRI Accountability Report

Reach Out and Read (219)

Evidence-Based & High-Intensity Strategy

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a nonprofit organization that seeks to improve family literacy through pediatric care settings. The program gives young children in low-income families a foundation for success by incorporating books into pediatric care settings and encouraging families to read aloud together. Intended outcomes are more frequent reading at home and improvements in children's language development.

Unit of Service = 1 Child

Targeting

Targeting Clients At-Risk of Early School Failure

- The ROR intervention seeks to serve low-income families with children from birth to 5 years of age and receiving services from a primary pediatric setting. Since ROR is delivered in primary care settings, partnerships must have strong relationships with physicians engaging in program delivery.
- Clinics should target:
  a. Most at-risk families
  b. Low literacy families (families with little to no reading at home and/or lack of enjoyment in reading)

Targeting by Age

- Reach Out and Read is intended to serve families until children enter school.

Client Retention

- Although there is no minimum length of time for the program, research has shown that the longer families are involved with the program, the more positive effects are seen.

Service Delivery

Model Fidelity

To ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, caseworkers shall ensure that each Reach Out and Read is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. "Fidelity" is defined as complying with the following:

Intensity and Delivery

- Clinic must be engaged, assessed for readiness in partnership with ROR Carolinas office, and then apply for and be approved by the Reach Out and Read National Center.
- In the application phase, clinics will identify a Medical Champion—the pediatric care MD, DO, NP, or PA who will champion the cause and:
  a. Ensure that Reach Out and Read best practices are implemented throughout the pediatric or family practice department
  b. Foster discussion of and create support for efficient systems (book delivery to the exam room)
  c. Assure compliance with requisite online training by provider staff
  d. Share relevant information with medical providers on early literacy and language development and Provider Bulletins that Reach Out and Read makes available from time to time; and
  e. Act as the medical "face" of the program; connect with the executive leadership of the health center, clinic, or practice.
- Clinic must follow all expectations of Reach Out and Read, including provider training, collecting routine data and determining how books will be supplied.
- Clinic/community partners must communicate with ROR of the Carolinas to:
  a. Comply with all ROR intervention requirements and agreements, as outlined in MOA
  b. Communication with RORC team about program integration, including and funding available for programs.
- In the application phase, clinics will also identify the Program Coordinator--a staff member familiar with the clinic, staff, and patient population, and who will:
  a. Support the Medical Consultant and is responsible for administrative aspects

b. Order the books
c. Track the number of books distributed
d. Help to complete the semi-annual Progress Reports; and
e. Ensue a literacy-rich environment
f. Coordinate volunteer readers (if any)
g. Communication with the RORC team/Program Specialist
h. Support the RORC annual parent survey process

Integrated Service and Delivery

Program staff shall utilize client risk factors, screening/assessment results when provided by physicians (when applicable), and results of client interactions, to refer and connect clients to services that they may need or want to strengthen their family's development.

Data Submission

The ROR model calls for completion of semi-annual progress reports, parent feedback surveys and medical consultant surveys. Data collected generates reports that are requested from Reach Out and Read State Program Director on a quarterly basis.

Service Delivery	Number of practices served	Quarterly Outcomes Report	FSDC outputs	Outputs report
	Number of children served	Quarterly Outcomes Report	FSDC outputs	Outputs report
	Number of books given	Quarterly Outcomes Report	FSDC outputs	Outputs report
Assessments	None			
Referrals	None completed			

Core Functions

1. A First Steps Partnership Board shall, among its other powers and duties:
   - coordinate a collaborative effort at the county or multicounty level which will bring the community together to identify the area needs related to the goals of First Steps to School Readiness; develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs; develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan; and integrate service delivery where possible; and
   - coordinate and oversee the implementation of the comprehensive strategic plan including, but not limited to, direct service provision, contracting for service provision, and organization and management of volunteer programs.

2. Effective July 1, 2016, each partnership's comprehensive plan shall include the following core functions:
   - service as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
   - service as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families;
   - support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board;
   - community mobilization;
   - needs assessment every 3 years; and
   - collect information and submit an annual report by October first to the First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees, and otherwise participate in the annual review and the three-year evaluation of operations and programs. Before December 1, 2017, and annually before December first thereafter, the Office of South Carolina First Steps shall publish each local partnership's comprehensive plan and annual report on the office's website. Reports must include, but not be limited to:
     i. determination of the current level and data pertaining to the delivery and effectiveness of services for young children and their families, including the numbers of preschool children and their families served;
     ii. strategic goals for increased availability, accessibility, quality, and efficiency of activities and services for young children and their families which will enable children to reach school ready to succeed; monitoring of progress toward strategic goals;
     iii. report on implementation activities;
     iv. recommendations for changes to the strategic plan which may include new areas of implementation;
     v. evaluation and report of program effectiveness and client satisfaction before, during, and after the implementation of the strategic plan, where available; and
     vi. estimation of cost savings attributable to increased efficiency and effectiveness of delivery of services to young children and their families, where available.

Core Function Categories

Local Portal Activities

Effective July 1, 2016, the local partnership **shall serve as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children** (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(4)(a)). These services shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and include, at minimum:

- **Accessibility** Dedicated physical space within the partnership's county and with appropriate signage that is accessible to the public and clients they serve. Additionally, this official Local Partnership address must have a set weekly schedule and publicized hours. The Local Partnership shall adhere to publicized office hours.
- **Responsiveness to requests for assistance** Phone access must be available during regular business hours each week that includes voice mail and the capability to receive and return messages (phone, text, email, etc.) in a timely manner.
- **Referrals** Activities must include, but are not limited to:
  i. Maintaining an up-to-date inventory of available programs and services for referring families. An up-to-date list of community resources should be available to clients, community partners, and the state office of First Steps at all times; including, providing local/regional resource directories (print and/or online) of local partnerships programs/services and community resources.
  ii. Sharing information about the First Five SC portal with families and receiving applications and referrals from First Five SC portal.
  iii. Partnership staff and volunteers who provide these services shall possess the requisite knowledge of and relationships with providers to connect families.
  iv. Making referrals by phone, online resources, and/or social media for children 0-5 and families not enrolled in

First Steps services
v. Connecting to services and programs not provided by First Steps *(E.g. Benefit Bank; Medicaid; Parent and Family Resource Center; Federal & State Emergency Aid; Disaster Assistance); etc.)*
- **Developmental Screenings** Provide developmental screenings to prioritize family's needs and referrals for children 0-5 and families not enrolled in First Steps services

Community Convener

As a component of community mobilization, starting July 1, 2016, local partnerships shall serve as a **community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families** (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(4)(b)). This function shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and include, at minimum:
- The partnership board should identify one or more unmet needs impacting preschool children and their families from: their most recent Needs and Resources Assessment; and/or school readiness priorities outlined in the SC First Steps Board's Strategic Plan.
- The partnership leading or serving as a collaborating partner in establishing and coordinating a community-wide effort to address the identified need(s), with the active involvement of partnership board members and staff.
- Local Team Meetings: it is recommended that the local partnership convene, at least annually, a meeting between partnership staff and a member of the SCFS local partnership Program Officer team, including (if applicable) representatives from state First Steps programs located within the partnership's service area, for the purpose of improving coordination and collaboration across state and local First Steps programs and with other programs and services in the community (Section 12. Section 59-152-70 (A)(4)(c)). Partnerships are encouraged to expand these meetings to include representatives from partner organizations and other community stakeholders. Activities may include but are not limited to:
  i. Convening of state and community partnerships, local 4K, and First Steps 4K
  ii. Advocating for the well-being of children 0--5 through meeting with legislative members and other local and state entities within the county
  iii. Public forums (i.e. surveys, focus groups, trainings) targeting parents, other community agencies, and/or school districts and teachers
- Goals and objectives for the partnership's role as a community convener, as determined by the partnership board and Executive Director. Progress reports documenting the success of convener activities should be made available to the partnership board and the public at least quarterly.
- Participation in local/county/regional coalitions, committees etc. of child-serving agencies and organizations

Supporting State Level Priorities

Effective July 1, 2016, the local partnership shall support the state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(c)). These priorities shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and must include:
- Increasing community awareness, education and outreach for programs and activities based on school readiness benchmarks as established by the State Board (Section 1. Section 59 -152- 32(A((2)), e.g., Profile of the Ready Kindergartner and the South Carolina Early Learning Standards
- Programs and activities based on priorities in the SC First Steps Strategic Plan approved by the state First Steps board and legislative goals of SC First Steps (Section 1. Section 59 -152- 32(A((2))
- Support and collaboration with state First Steps programs, including First Steps 4K programs
- Supporting the implementation of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to include sharing local school district KRA results with stakeholders, including teachers and parents of programs supported with First Steps funds (Section 1. Section 59 -152-33(D))
- Other state level priorities as determined by the State Board
- Utilizing First Five county level log-ins to identify potential clients and generate recruitment plans to increase enrollment for First Steps programs
- Encouraging families to utilize First Five SC to access publicly funded resources that promote the well-being of children

Mobilizing Local Communities

The local partnership board and staff shall participate in and document efforts to mobilize communities (all stakeholder groups including but not limited to: families, community leaders, businesses, faith-based organizations, civic organizations, elected officials and government agencies, health care entities, school personnel and other early childhood agencies/organizations) to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed (Section 8. Section 59-152-30(5)). Community action may include but is not limited to: developing and distributing public education materials that promote the

partnership's mission, available programs, and community resources; and sponsoring and/or co-sponsoring community events that promote school readiness.

3. Community Education and Outreach Plan
   - The local partnership board shall develop an annual Community Education and Outreach Plan to raise awareness, knowledge, engagement, participation and support for early childhood programs and services, including First Steps and in support of required Core Functions Partnerships shall engage in online and social media and to have a social media policy as a part of their plan.
   - Plan components include:
     i. Increasing awareness and engagement of target audiences in supporting early childhood programs and the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner
     ii. Supporting the partnership's core function as a local portal
     iii. Supporting the partnership's core function as a community convener
     iv. Supporting the partnership's core function to address one or more state-level school readiness priorities
     v. Increasing the knowledge and skills, and/or changing behaviors of target audiences in one or more areas of school readiness, child development best practices, etc. Refer to the Community Education and Outreach Plan Template for additional strategies/activities and examples
     vi. Outreach to target audiences to increase their participation in programs and services supporting children 0-5 and their families
     vii. Designating a point of contact to access lead information for potentially eligible families from First Five SC
     viii. Increasing financial and other support for early childhood programs and services
     ix. Engaging target audiences in working to improve community performance on school readiness benchmarks (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, Palmetto Basics) and/or the state's readiness assessment
   - Maintain data collection records on Core Function and Community Education/Outreach activities. SC First Steps will provide a template for annual reporting of Core Function outputs. Cases Data entry may be required if Core Function activities are to include ongoing services to children and families.
4. The local partnership board shall update its community Needs and Resources Assessment every three years, in accordance with First Steps legislation (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A (5)) as a basis for community-wide planning efforts to support at-risk children and the partnership's Comprehensive Plan. This document shall be submitted to SCFS by December 31 of the year in which the previous needs and resources assessment expires.

5. Within the Formula Funding Grant Application and Budget Spending Plan, the partnership must provide information regarding the activities to be funded in support of Core Functions. Local partnerships are to appropriate not more than 12% of state funds for these purposes.

6. Partnerships providing – or seeking to provide - services within another First Steps partnership's designated coverage area are encouraged to communicate and collaborate with the affected partnership(s) and to document these collaborative efforts formally.

Operations

At minimum, the Local Partnership Board and Staff shall:

1. Exercise appropriate operational stewardship by adhering to the practices and procedures outlined in the SC First Steps Legislation (Section 12. Section 59 152 70 (6)), local partnership by- laws, local partnership grant agreement, and SC First Steps Operations Manual.

2. Comply with all contractual and legislative deadlines for submitting documents to the State Office of First Steps, including but not limited to:
   - An Annual Report by October 1 (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(8));
   - An annual Formula Funding Grant Application by the published deadline (Section 13. Section 59- 152-90(B)),
   - A Needs and Resources Assessment every three years (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(5));
   - And A three-year Comprehensive Plan (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(2)).

3. Participate and cooperate fully in all internal and independent evaluations of the First Steps initiative (Section 19. Section 59-125-160(A-C)).

4. Data shall be collected and entered timely in the First Steps Data Collection System for all programs/strategies, according to the First Steps operational guidelines for that strategy. Partnerships must complete program and vendor registration for all funded strategies, enter projected to serve numbers for each strategy, and begin data entry by September 1 of each program year. Partnership and vendor staff are expected to adhere to the standard for timely data submission, which is within 30 days of the date of service except for personal home visits, which are to be entered within 14 days of service.

5. A consent and authorization form must be completed and kept on file for all cases entered into the First Steps Data Collection System. Cases enrolled in programs for more than one year should complete a new consent form annually.

6. SC First Steps reserves the right to view partnership and vendor data in the system at any time, including but not limited to the following data checkpoints: 10 days after Quarter 1 (Oct. 31); 10 days after Quarter 2 (Jan. 31); 10 days after Quarter 3 (April 30); and 10 days after Quarter 4 (July 31). Data will be used to evaluate overall program performance and sustainability.

7. Make every effort to participate in scheduled meetings and teleconferences/webinars with SC First Steps. In the event the partnership executive director is unable to attend, a board member or staff member should attend if possible. Partnerships are responsible for the content presented.

8. Ensure an equitable work environment that is supportive of organizational productivity, diversity, and stability.
   - Partnerships shall adhere to the State Office Hiring Policy, as outlined in the partnership grant agreement.
   - The local partnership board and staff shall not unlawfully discriminate against any person or category of persons for services or employment.
   - The local partnership shall comply will all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding employee discrimination and workplace policies, as outlined in the partnership's annual grant agreement with SC First Steps.
   - The local partnership board and staff shall prohibit preferential treatment and nepotism with regard to hiring, supervision, and promotion. Per the Conflict of Interest Policy, no immediate family member may work under a partnership employee's supervision or chain of command.
   - The partnership shall have human resource policies adopted by the partnership board.
   - Partnerships shall provide to all partnership employees a copy of the partnership's current human resource policies, Whistleblower Policy and the SC First Steps Conflict of Interest policy. It is recommended that these policies be reviewed with staff. It is also recommended that COI and Whistleblower policies be shared with staff of vendor-operated programs.

- The partnership board must approve any salary increase for the partnership director, per the partnership's grant agreement with SCFS.
- The partnership shall abide by the Dual Partnership Employment policy contained in the partnership's grant agreement with SCFS.

9. Partnerships and all its employees, agents, contractors and representatives shall safeguard confidential information and comply with all Confidentiality/Safeguarding Information requirements contained in the partnership's grant agreement with SCFS. Per the partnership grant agreement, partnership employees shall sign annually the Confidentiality Form attached to the partnership grant agreement, and it is recommended that partnership board members and vendor staff also sign a Confidentiality Form annually.

Governance and Oversight

The local partnership board shall:

1. Operate in accordance with local partnership bylaws, the current First Steps legislation, and with all applicable state and federal laws pertaining to non-profit organizations and ensure the partnership board and staff meet all requirements to maintain the partnership's non-profit status with the IRS.

2. Maintain continuous Directors' and Officers' Liability, Comprehensive General Liability (including bodily injury, property damage, personal injury, and sexual abuse and molestation rider), and Workers' Compensation Employee Liability insurance with the corresponding limits of liability listed in the partnership's annual grant agreement.

3. Provide Planning and Oversight
   - Coordinate a collaborative effort at the county or multicounty level to identify area needs related to the First Steps legislative goals, and develop a strategic long-term plan (i.e., Comprehensive Plan) for meeting those needs (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(2)). The partnership's Comprehensive Plan should align with the priorities identified in the state strategic plan adopted by the SC First Steps Board, as well as the state board's adopted readiness benchmarks (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner) and the First Steps legislative goals. Per Section 59-152-70, Comprehensive Plans shall include the three core functions of local partnerships (local portal, community convener, and support for state level priorities). Comprehensive Plans shall be for three years' duration, to align with legislative requirements for updating community needs and resources assessments every three years. Local partnership Comprehensive Plans, as well as any annual updates, are to be posted to the SC First Steps web site by December 1 each year, per First Steps legislation (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(8)). To meet this requirement, future Comprehensive Plans will be due to SC First Steps by November 1 in the year in which the partnership's current plan expires.
   - Oversee program strategies in accordance with SC First Steps Partnership and Operational Guidelines, exercise due diligence when selecting program strategies and, when establishing new program strategies, commit to allowing sufficient time for successful implementation (min. 2 years recommended).

4. Ensure effective board functioning:
   - Meet as a full board at least once every fiscal quarter, with one full board meeting each year designated as the Annual Meeting.
   - Maintain all current approved policies/procedures/standards for conducting meetings and elections and disclosing records comparable to those provided for in the Freedom of Information Act and IRS disclosure requirements.
   - Maintain records of meeting announcements, sign-in sheets and minutes for all full board and committee meetings. Electronic copies of board minutes for the prior fiscal year will be submitted to SCFS, on behalf of the state board, by July 15 (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(7)).
   - Follow the Records Retention Policy/Schedule contained in their grant agreement with SCFS, as well as the retention policy for Corporate Records contained in the partnership by-laws.
   - Review, adopt, and sign an Annual Board Member Agreement that at minimum includes an annually reviewed and adopted:
     a. Conflict of Interest Policy (must align to the policy contained in the partnership's current year grant agreement with SCFS). Prior to every vote taken by the board, members must abstain from voting if the issue being considered would result in a conflict of interest. The abstention must be noted in the minutes of the meeting (Section 11. Section 59-152-60(G)).

b. Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms must be completed annually by all board and staff and kept on file at the local partnership.
c. Confidentiality Form (contained in annual grant agreement).
d. Whistleblower Policy.
e. Attendance Policy outlining minimum board meeting attendance requirements, to include definitions of unexcused and excused absences and no more than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences, per partnership bylaws.

5. Practice Ongoing Board Development/New Member Orientation:
   - Use Board Matrix/Planning Documents/Board Evaluation Tools to annually assess the composition and functioning of the board to identify gaps and develop recruitment strategies. Partnership boards must abide by the composition requirements contained in the First Steps legislation (Section 59-152-60(C)(1-3))
   - Hold annual elections for partnership board officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary). Officer terms are for one year. Board chair and vice chair terms cannot exceed 4 years (4 consecutive, one-year terms).
   - Ensure Board Members adhere to a current term on the board not to exceed 8 years (2 consecutive four-year terms) and regularly attend meetings in accordance with local partnership By-Laws.
   - Provide new members a comprehensive board orientation that addresses, at minimum:
     a. First Steps mission/vision, structure, policies/procedures/standards for operation.
     b. Local partnership administrative, financial and planning documents, including a summary of current program strategies.
     c. Nonprofit Board Member Roles and Responsibilities.
   - Publish board member rosters in the Partnership's Annual Report and ensure they are reported annually to the partnership's legislative delegation and be on file with the Office of First Steps (Section 11. Section 59-152-60(A

Fiscal Accountability

1. The local partnership board and staff shall exercise appropriate fiscal stewardship, including the use of private and non-state funds, by adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in the SC First Steps Legislation (Section 18. Section 59-152-150(A)), local partnership by-laws, local partnership grant agreement, and SC First Steps Operations Manual.

2. The local partnership board and staff shall monitor on an ongoing basis the financial condition of the partnership, to include but not limited to: revenue, expenditures and balances within all strategy areas, budget codes and funding sources. The local partnership board and staff shall comply with requirements for limiting administrative expenditures to at or below the rate established by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees. The maximum administrative rate for local partnerships, set by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees effective July 1, 2017, is 13% of expenditures of state funds allocated to the local partnership by SC First Steps.

3. The local partnership board and staff shall comply with fiscal policies set by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees for state funding of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs, per First Steps legislative requirements.

4. The local partnership board and staff shall ensure that funds granted to the partnership by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees are spent in a timely manner in service to children pre-birth to school entry within the partnership's service area. Partnerships shall monitor their formula allocated budget and expenditures closely to estimate the partnership's projected carry forward budget and submit a plan for how carry forward will be used in the next fiscal year as part of the partnership's board-approved Formula Funding grant application. The SC First Steps Finance Office will certify and notify partnerships of all prior fiscal year available carry forward budgets between October 1st and October 15th. Each partnership must submit budget reallocation requests to OFS before December 31 to add all carry forward to its Budget Spending Plan. Partnerships whose certified carry forward amount is 15% or more than its original formula allocated budget, OR have changed their use of carry forward funds since their last approved budget change, must submit updated board minutes reflecting these changes.
   - For the first year, Partnerships whose certified carry forward budget exceeds 15% of the prior fiscal year's formula allocated budget will receive a corrective action plan AND must submit written justification to their SC First Steps Program Officer with a plan to be approved by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees (Program and Grants Committee) to reduce their amount of carry forward budget to under 15% for the next fiscal year.
   - For the second consecutive fiscal year, Partnerships whose carry forward budget exceeds 15% will remain under corrective action plan AND will be subject to potential withholding of their excess carry forward funds at the discretion of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees.

5. The local partnership staff should process vendor invoices for payments upon receipt, obtain board member signature according to the SC First Steps Operations Manual and immediately forward to the contracted finance manager for payment. Fees and/or penalties due to late payments are unacceptable and will be captured in a separate model code and monitored by SC First Steps Finance staff.

6. The local partnership board and staff shall exercise appropriate stewardship and due care in the selection, implementation, and monitoring of all contractors and the administration of all contracts. It is the partnership's responsibility to ensure contractors comply will all programmatic and financial requirements contained in the partnership and program guidelines, partnership grant agreement with SC First Steps, and the SC First Steps Operations Manual.

7. Financial reports should be presented at all local partnership board meetings.

8. The local partnership board and staff should review internal financial controls annually.

9. The local partnership board and staff shall adhere to the fiscal calendar deadlines outlined in the SC First Steps Operations Manual. In summary, funds must be obligated by June 30, invoices and reallocations submitted by July 31, and documentation of in-kind match submitted by July 31.Local partnerships must adhere to the SC First Steps written financial year-end closing process. Books will be closed on August 15 and any changes after then will be

applied to the next fiscal year.

10. Local partnerships shall submit a 12-week time allocation study for executive directors and staff with shared costs across programs, administration, and core services by April 15 on an annual basis.

11. The local partnership board and staff shall respond in a timely manner to all requests from the contracted finance manager. The contracted finance manager shall support local partnerships' financial operations as outlined in its contract with SC First Steps.

12. A financial audit shall be conducted annually to include implementing a corrective action plan to address issues, concerns, or recommendations in the identified area of partnerships activities as called for in the audit. The local partnership board and staff shall respond in a timely manner to requests from the independent contracted auditors. The auditor shall periodically conduct on-site visits to the local partnership to test internal procedures and controls.

13. For equipment or furnishing costing $1,000 or more, the partnership shall implement controls and procedures contained in its partnership grant agreement (13: Title to Equipment). This equipment and furnishing must be coded-classified in accordance with the SC First Steps Operations Manual, Chapter 5, Model Titles and Codes, Equipment and Furnishing – Purchased, code 5401.

Core Functions

1. A First Steps Partnership Board shall, among its other powers and duties:
   - coordinate a collaborative effort at the county or multicounty level which will bring the community together to identify the area needs related to the goals of First Steps to School Readiness; develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs; develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan; and integrate service delivery where possible; and
   - coordinate and oversee the implementation of the comprehensive strategic plan including, but not limited to, direct service provision, contracting for service provision, and organization and management of volunteer programs.

2. Effective July 1, 2016, each partnership's comprehensive plan shall include the following core functions:
   - service as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
   - service as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families;
   - support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board;
   - community mobilization;
   - needs assessment every 3 years; and
   - collect information and submit an annual report by October first to the First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees, and otherwise participate in the annual review and the three-year evaluation of operations and programs. Before December 1, 2017, and annually before December first thereafter, the Office of South Carolina First Steps shall publish each local partnership's comprehensive plan and annual report on the office's website. Reports must include, but not be limited to:
     i. determination of the current level and data pertaining to the delivery and effectiveness of services for young children and their families, including the numbers of preschool children and their families served;
     ii. strategic goals for increased availability, accessibility, quality, and efficiency of activities and services for young children and their families which will enable children to reach school ready to succeed; monitoring of progress toward strategic goals;
     iii. report on implementation activities;
     iv. recommendations for changes to the strategic plan which may include new areas of implementation;
     v. evaluation and report of program effectiveness and client satisfaction before, during, and after the implementation of the strategic plan, where available; and
     vi. estimation of cost savings attributable to increased efficiency and effectiveness of delivery of services to young children and their families, where available.

Core Function Categories

Local Portal Activities

Effective July 1, 2016, the local partnership **shall serve as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children** (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(4)(a)). These services shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and include, at minimum:

- **Accessibility** Dedicated physical space within the partnership's county and with appropriate signage that is accessible to the public and clients they serve. Additionally, this official Local Partnership address must have a set weekly schedule and publicized hours. The Local Partnership shall adhere to publicized office hours.
- **Responsiveness to requests for assistance** Phone access must be available during regular business hours each week that includes voice mail and the capability to receive and return messages (phone, text, email, etc.) in a timely manner.
- **Referrals** Activities must include, but are not limited to:
  i. Maintaining an up-to-date inventory of available programs and services for referring families. An up-to-date list of community resources should be available to clients, community partners, and the state office of First Steps at all times; including, providing local/regional resource directories (print and/or online) of local partnerships programs/services and community resources.
  ii. Sharing information about the First Five SC portal with families and receiving applications and referrals from

First Five SC portal.

iii. Partnership staff and volunteers who provide these services shall possess the requisite knowledge of and relationships with providers to connect families.

iv. Making referrals by phone, online resources, and/or social media for children 0-5 and families not enrolled in First Steps services

v. Connecting to services and programs not provided by First Steps *(E.g. Benefit Bank; Medicaid; Parent and Family Resource Center; Federal & State Emergency Aid; Disaster Assistance); etc.)*

- **Developmental Screenings** Provide developmental screenings to prioritize family's needs and referrals for children 0-5 and families not enrolled in First Steps services

Community Convener

As a component of community mobilization, starting July 1, 2016, local partnerships shall serve as a **community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families** (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(4)(b)). This function shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and include, at minimum:

- The partnership board should identify one or more unmet needs impacting preschool children and their families from: their most recent Needs and Resources Assessment; and/or school readiness priorities outlined in the SC First Steps Board's Strategic Plan.
- The partnership leading or serving as a collaborating partner in establishing and coordinating a community-wide effort to address the identified need(s), with the active involvement of partnership board members and staff.
- Local Team Meetings: it is recommended that the local partnership convene, at least annually, a meeting between partnership staff and a member of the SCFS local partnership Program Officer team, including (if applicable) representatives from state First Steps programs located within the partnership's service area, for the purpose of improving coordination and collaboration across state and local First Steps programs and with other programs and services in the community (Section 12. Section 59-152-70 (A)(4)(c)). Partnerships are encouraged to expand these meetings to include representatives from partner organizations and other community stakeholders. Activities may include but are not limited to:
  i. Convening of state and community partnerships, local 4K, and First Steps 4K
  ii. Advocating for the well-being of children 0--5 through meeting with legislative members and other local and state entities within the county
  iii. Public forums (i.e. surveys, focus groups, trainings) targeting parents, other community agencies, and/or school districts and teachers
- Goals and objectives for the partnership's role as a community convener, as determined by the partnership board and Executive Director. Progress reports documenting the success of convener activities should be made available to the partnership board and the public at least quarterly.
- Participation in local/county/regional coalitions, committees etc. of child-serving agencies and organizations

Supporting State Level Priorities

Effective July 1, 2016, the local partnership shall support the state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A)(c)). These priorities shall be represented in the partnership's Comprehensive Plan and must include:

- Increasing community awareness, education and outreach for programs and activities based on school readiness benchmarks as established by the State Board (Section 1. Section 59 -152- 32(A((2)), e.g., Profile of the Ready Kindergartner and the South Carolina Early Learning Standards
- Programs and activities based on priorities in the SC First Steps Strategic Plan approved by the state First Steps board and legislative goals of SC First Steps (Section 1. Section 59 -152- 32(A((2))
- Support and collaboration with state First Steps programs, including First Steps 4K programs
- Supporting the implementation of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) to include sharing local school district KRA results with stakeholders, including teachers and parents of programs supported with First Steps funds (Section 1. Section 59 -152-33(D))
- Other state level priorities as determined by the State Board
- Utilizing First Five county level log-ins to identify potential clients and generate recruitment plans to increase enrollment for First Steps programs
- Encouraging families to utilize First Five SC to access publicly funded resources that promote the well-being of children

Mobilizing Local Communities

The local partnership board and staff shall participate in and document efforts to mobilize communities (all stakeholder groups including but not limited to: families, community leaders, businesses, faith-based organizations, civic

organizations, elected officials and government agencies, health care entities, school personnel and other early childhood agencies/organizations) to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed (Section 8. Section 59-152-30(5)). Community action may include but is not limited to: developing and distributing public education materials that promote the partnership's mission, available programs, and community resources; and sponsoring and/or co-sponsoring community events that promote school readiness.

3. Community Education and Outreach Plan

- The local partnership board shall develop an annual Community Education and Outreach Plan to raise awareness, knowledge, engagement, participation and support for early childhood programs and services, including First Steps and in support of required Core Functions Partnerships shall engage in online and social media and to have a social media policy as a part of their plan.
- Plan components include:
    i. Increasing awareness and engagement of target audiences in supporting early childhood programs and the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner
    ii. Supporting the partnership's core function as a local portal
    iii. Supporting the partnership's core function as a community convener
    iv. Supporting the partnership's core function to address one or more state-level school readiness priorities
    v. Increasing the knowledge and skills, and/or changing behaviors of target audiences in one or more areas of school readiness, child development best practices, etc. Refer to the Community Education and Outreach Plan Template for additional strategies/activities and examples
    vi. Outreach to target audiences to increase their participation in programs and services supporting children 0-5 and their families
    vii. Designating a point of contact to access lead information for potentially eligible families from First Five SC
    viii. Increasing financial and other support for early childhood programs and services
    ix. Engaging target audiences in working to improve community performance on school readiness benchmarks (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, Palmetto Basics) and/or the state's readiness assessment
- Maintain data collection records on Core Function and Community Education/Outreach activities. SC First Steps will provide a template for annual reporting of Core Function outputs. Cases Data entry may be required if Core Function activities are to include ongoing services to children and families.

4. The local partnership board shall update its community Needs and Resources Assessment every three years, in accordance with First Steps legislation (Section 12. Section 59-152-70(A (5)) as a basis for community-wide planning efforts to support at-risk children and the partnership's Comprehensive Plan. This document shall be submitted to SCFS by December 31 of the year in which the previous needs and resources assessment expires.

5. Within the Formula Funding Grant Application and Budget Spending Plan, the partnership must provide information regarding the activities to be funded in support of Core Functions. Local partnerships are to appropriate not more than 12% of state funds for these purposes.

6. Partnerships providing – or seeking to provide - services within another First Steps partnership's designated coverage area are required to communicate and collaborate with the affected partnership(s) and to document these collaborative efforts formally.

General Program Guidelines

1. Implement program strategies in accordance with SC First Steps Partnership and Program Guidelines, exercise due diligence when selecting program strategies and, when establishing new program strategies, commit to allowing sufficient time for successful implementation (min. 2 years recommended).

2. Program strategies, including those funded by private and non-state funds, must support one or more First Steps goals (Section 13. Section 59-152-90(C)(c); Section 18. Section 59-152-150(C)) and address unmet needs identified in the partnership's needs and resource assessment and Comprehensive Plan. Partnership funds granted by the SC First Steps Board must comply with provisions for use of grant funds contained in the First Steps legislation (Section 14. Section 59-152-100(A)).

3. Program strategies must utilize the SC First Steps to School Readiness benchmarks and objectives (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner) (Section 13. Section 59-152-90(C)(b)).

4. At least 75% of state funds appropriated for programs must be used by the local partnership for "evidence-based" programs. Not more than 25% of state funds appropriated for programs to a local partnership may be used for "evidence-informed" programs (Section 14. Section 59-152-100(B)). Per First Steps legislation, this provision is based upon the list of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs adopted by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees, posted to the SC First Steps web site.

5. Program strategies must be adequately resourced (staff, funding).

6. Partnerships must closely monitor program vendors/contractors to ensure compliance with operational guidelines. Partnerships should review contract provisions and the scope of work each year to ensure all program model components and operational guidelines are addressed. Vendor contracts for program strategies shall include as an attachment, the applicable current year's First Steps program guidelines for that strategy.

7. State funds appropriated for Partnership services are intended for use within the geographical boundaries of each individual partnership. Partnership strategies may - on a limited basis and with approval by the partnership's board - serve clients not geographically located within the partnership's service area if strong justification exists for such services to be provided. Examples include but are not limited to: high-risk families living just outside the county but within close proximity to partnership programs; and child care providers not located within the county but serving a substantial number of high-risk children from the partnership's service area. In such cases, partnership staff are required to inform, coordinate, and collaborate with the local First Steps partnership in which the client is located.

8. Partnership executive directors and staff must ensure complete and accurate data is collected to measure program results and client satisfaction, including accurate and complete data entered in the First Steps Data Collection System as required.

9. Program strategies using local district resources within a school district must be conducted only with approval of the district's board of trustees (Section 14. Section 59-152-100(D)).

10. Partnership staff and volunteers who work directly with children shall be subject to SLED checks prior to hiring. Contractors must be able to provide this documentation upon request.

11. Per the partnership's grant agreement with SC First Steps, partnerships are responsible for reporting suspected child abuse, neglect or dependency, as defined and required by applicable law.

12. Partnerships shall keep a waiting list of all program applicants who cannot be served due to the program's reaching its service capacity.

FIRST STEPS
SOUTH CAROLINA

Projected

Local Partnership Budget

State Formula Funding FY23

First Steps Dollars by the Numbers
Fiscal Year 2023

$14,435,225

State Funds Allocated to First Steps Local Partnerships 2022-2023

$6,187,575

Total Projected Investment in SC First Steps High Intensity Programs

Percentage of State Funds Budgeted for High Intensity Programs

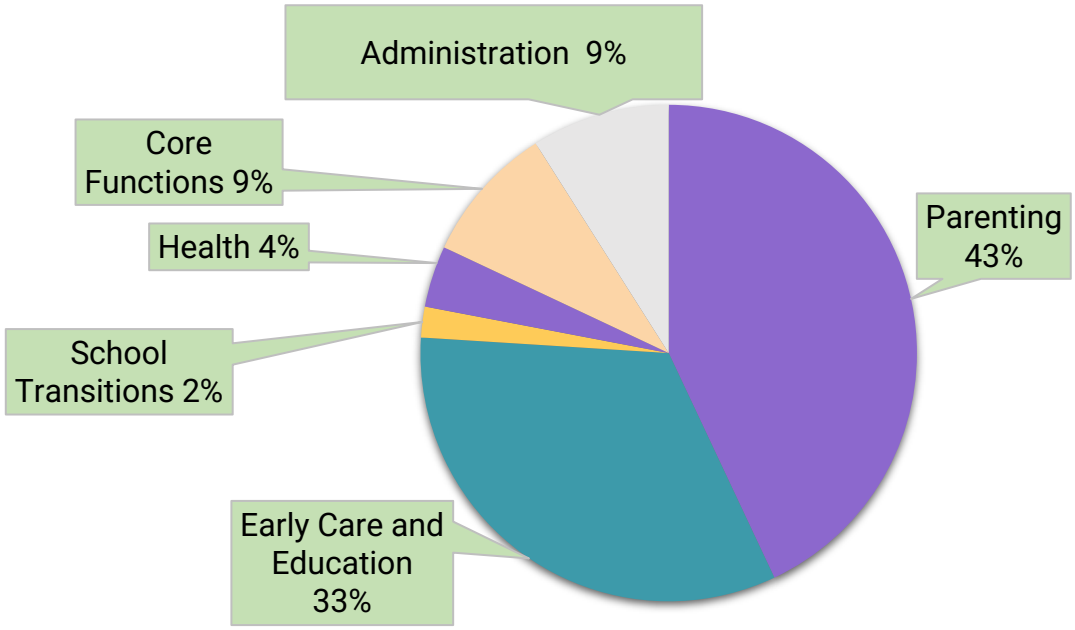
43%

$38,247,644

Total Projected Investment leveraged through state funds, federal dollars, private funds, and in-kind donations by 46 Local Partnerships as of May 2022

FY23 Investments by Program Type
Highlights of FY23 Projected Budget

Percentage of Investments by Program Type



Investments by Program Type

Category	Investment
Parenting	$6,054,151
Early Care and Education	$4,742,829
School Transitions	$300,154
Health	$549,829
Core Function	$1,272,612
Administration	$1,303,071

Top Programs
Highlights of FY23 Projected Budget

Top Programs by Dollar Amount

Top Programs 5 by Dollar Amount		
Category	**Program**	**Investment**
Parenting	Parents as Teachers	$3,849,560
Early Care and Education	Quality Enhancement	$1,650,357
	Child Care Training	$1,403,151
	Child Care Scholarships	$973,310
Parenting	Nurturing Parenting	$583,274

High Intensity Programs by Dollar Amount

Top Programs 5 High Intensity Programs by Dollar Amount			
Category	**Program**	**Investment**	**Number of Participating Partnerships**
Parenting	Parents as Teachers	$3,849,560	29
	Nurturing Parenting	$583,274	10
	Triple P Level 4	$433,485	3
	Countdown to Kindergarten	$277,876	19
	Nurse Family Partnership	$266,790	5

Projected to Serve
Fiscal Year 2023

Projected to Serve for FY23
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

35,462

Projected to Serve for FY23 High Intensity Programs

5,819

Projected to Serve by Program Type
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

Projected to Serve for Parenting Programs
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

25,705

Projected to Serve for Early Care and Education Programs
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

1,770

Projected to Serve for School Transition Programs
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

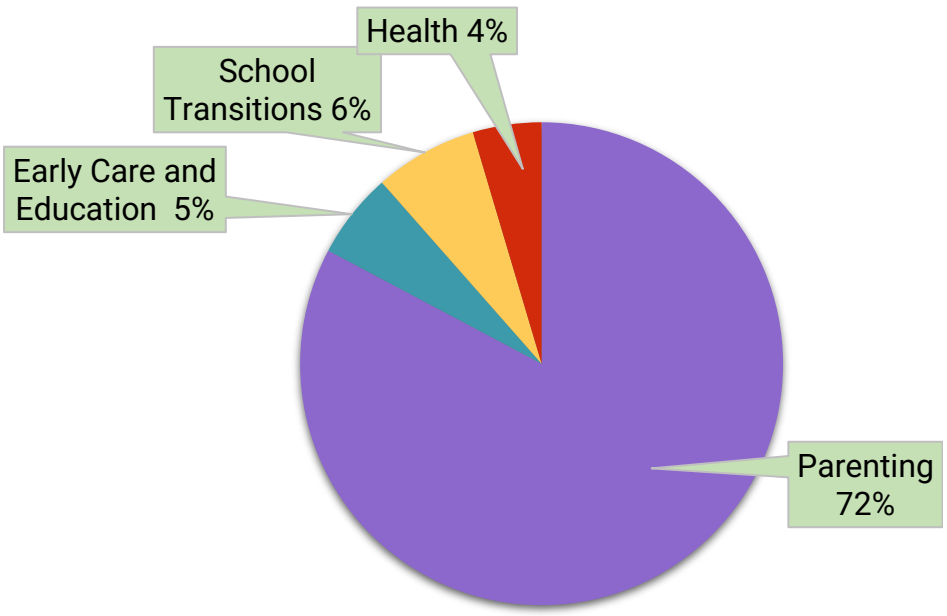
2,069

Projected to Serve for Health Programs
Adults, Providers, Families, & Children

1,496

Top Programs – Projected to Serve
Highlights of FY23 Projected Budget

Distribution of Projected to Serve by Program Type



Top Programs by Projected to Serve

Top Programs 5 by Projected to Serve		
Category	**Program**	**Projected to Serve**
Parenting	Dolly Parton Imagination Library	10,055
Parenting	Reach Out and Read	10,000
Early Care and Education	Child Care Training	2,153
School Transitions	Countdown to Kindergarten	1,862
Parenting	Parents as Teachers	1,271

High Intensity Programs by Projected to Serve

Top Programs 5 High Intensity Programs by Projected to Serve			
Category	**Program**	**Projected to Serve**	**Number of Participating Partnerships**
Parenting	Countdown to Kindergarten	1,862	25
	Parents as Teachers	1,271	29
	Early Head Start	673	6
	Nurse Family Partnership	592	8
	Nurturing Parenting	392	14

Summary of Projected FY23 Budget* by County

Abbeville County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $249,923
Anticipated Match: 25.0%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$9225	4.6%	$22,326	11.2%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$31551	15.8%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$133,585	
Childcare Training and Professional Development	$34,864	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$168,449	84.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	40	

Aiken County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $431,622 **Total Budget:** $525,954
Anticipated Match: 21.9%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$31,847	7.4%	$31,096	7.2%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$62,943	14.6%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$100,043	
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	$6,000	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$39,542	
Childcare Quality Enhancements	$64,627	
Childcare Training and Professional Development	$29,533	
Scholarship Initiatives	$128,934	
Healthy Families	$0	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$368,679	85.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	80	

Allendale County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $232,001

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Anticipated Match: 16.0%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$18,358	9.2%	$13,739	6.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$32,097	16.1%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$81,020	
Enhance Early Education	$41,332	
Early Identification and Referrals	$45,551	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$167,903	83.9%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	30	

Anderson County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $411,437 **Total Budget:** $535,061
Anticipated Match: 23.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$21,288	6.3%	$27,589	6.6%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$48,877	12.9%

Programs:

Triple P	$240,928	
Raising a Reader (Enhanced)	$41,867	
Early Education for Under 4	$0	
Half Day 4K	$67,403	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$12,362	
Nurse Family Partnership	$0	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$362,560	87.1%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	211	

Bamberg County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $336,130
Anticipated Match: 68.1%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$16,822.00	8.4%	$22,079	11.0%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$38,901	19.4%

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Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$105,636	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$27,894	
Child Care Scholarships	$27,569	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$161,099	80.6%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	41	

Barnwell County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $808,715
Anticipated Match: 264.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$23,245	11.6%	$12,295	6.1%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$35,540	17.7%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$87,602	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$0	
Early Head Start	$27,368	
Childcare Quality Enhancement	$18,457	
Childcare Training and Professional Development	$19,858	
Scholarship Initiatives	$11,174	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$164,460	82.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	453	

Beaufort County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $397,677 **Total Budget:** $543,343
Anticipated Match: 36.6%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$27,749	7.0%	$31,624	8.0%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$59,373	15.0%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$115,385
Reach Out and Read	$5,000
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$128,208
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$49,561
Early Intervention and Referral	$40,150

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Total Programmatic Funds^:	$338,304	85.0%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	532	

Berkeley County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $492,401 **Total Budget:** $919,075
Anticipated Match: 15.03%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$60,273	11.41%	$56,307	10.66%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$116,580	22.07%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$179,180	
Nurturing Parenting	$10,743	
Kindergarten	$0	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$54,719	
Child Care Training & Professional Dev	$33,610	
Scholarship Initiatives	$17,875	
Early Identification and Referral	$79,694	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$375,821	77.93%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	223	

Calhoun County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $311,096
Anticipated Match: 32.5%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$23,234	11.6%	$20,329.00	10.2%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$43,563	21.8%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$132,380	
Imagination Library	$2,003	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$22,054	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$156,437	78.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	260	

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Charleston County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $703,986 **Total Budget:** $1,196,816
Anticipated Match: 15.0%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$83,206	11.8%	$76,205	10.8%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$159,411	22.6%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$361,977	
Other Literacy (Trident Literacy & Raising a Reader)	$62,052	
Child Care Quality Enhancement Grants	$80,246	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$40,300	
Early Head Start	$-	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$544,575	77.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	334	

Cherokee County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $658,728
Anticipated Match: 212.85%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$18,233	9.1%	$19,277	9.6%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$37,510	18.7%

Programs:

Imagination Library	$24,000	
Talk To ME Cherokee Initiative & Outreach	$72,813	
Child Care Training & Professional Dev.	$65,677	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$0	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$162,490	81.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	2,602	

Chester County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $232,594
Anticipated Match: 16.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$20,987	10.5%	$18,187	9.1%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$39,174	19.6%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$22,896	
Childcare Training & Professional Development	$50,381	
Parents as Teachers	$87,549	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$160,826	80.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	67	

Chesterfield County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $750,262
Anticipated Match: 275.1%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$20,865	10.4%	$8,543.00	4.3%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$29,408.00	14.7%

Programs:

Compass Point 4K	$114,565.00	
3K	$39,734	
Parent Child Plus	$16,293	
Imagination Library (Dolly Parton)	$-	
Nurse Family Partnership	$-	
Nutrition Program	$-	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$170,592.00	85.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	198	

Clarendon County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $396,117
Anticipated Match: 37.1%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$15,072	7.5%	$17,572	8.8%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$32,644	16.3%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$102,829
Imagination Library	$7,426
Countdown to Kindergarten	$32,189

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
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Childcare Training & Professional Development	$24,912	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$167,356	83.7%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	395	

Colleton County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $404,666
Anticipated Match: 36.4%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$10,059	5.0%	$9,852	4.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$19,911	10.0%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$121,129	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$2,925	
Childcare Training	$14,295	
Scholarship Initiatives	$41,740	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$180,089	90.0%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	206	

Darlington County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $204,420 **Total Budget:** $467,465
Anticipated Match: 127.49%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$21,447	10.49%	$15,163	7.42%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$36,610	17.91%

Programs:

Parents As Teachers	$84,045	
Mother Read/Father Read	$21,392	
Reach Out and Read	$25,500	
Strengthening Families	$0	
CTK	$13,857	
Public Health	$7,210	
Health & Human Services	$15806	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$167,810	82.09%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1146	

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Dillon County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $405,262
Anticipated Match: 94.1%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$20,839	10.4%	$16,186	8.1%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$37,025	18.5%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$66,304
Raising a Reader	$22,673
Quality Enhancement	$51,375
Child Care Training and Professional Development	$22,623

Total Programmatic Funds^:	$162,975	81.5%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	187	

Dorchester County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $290,468 **Total Budget:** $509,093
Anticipated Match: 39.1%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$34,316	11.8%	$26,961	9.3%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$61,277	21.1%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$152,180
Nurturing Parenting	$0
Quality Enhancement	$50,667
Child Care Training & Prof. Dev.	$19,772
Scholarships	$6,572
Early Identification and Referral	$0

Total Programmatic Funds^:	$229,191	78.9%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	158	

Edgefield County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $340,379
Anticipated Match: 58.7%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$19,672	9.5%	$13,944	6.7%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$33,616	16.2%

Programs:

Imagination Library	$4,182	
Nurse Family Partnership	$26,182	
Nurturing Parenting	$12,414	
Early Childhood Education	$43,682	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$25,914	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$11,914	
Child Care Scholarships	$40,914	
Countdown to 4K	$1,182	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$166,384	83.8%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	349	

Fairfield County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $351,169
Anticipated Match: 23.9%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$26,353	12.2%	$10,990	6.7%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$37,343	18.9%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$65,992	
Other Family Literacy (1000 Books Before Kindergarten)	$12,549	
Imagination Library	$6,587	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$20,926	
Scholarship Initiatives	$33,971	
Quality Enhancement	$22,632	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$162,657	81.1%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	465	

Florence County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $371,925 **Total Budget:** $602,854
Anticipated Match: 69.7%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$34,966	9.4%	$42,892	11.5%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$77,858	20.9%

Programs:

Parent Child - Home	$42,193	
Childcare Quality Enhancements	$90,968	
Childcare Training and Professional Dev.	$88,436	
Scholarship Initiative	$68,473	
Endowed Scholarships Initiatives	$3,997	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$294,067	79.1%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	205	

Georgetown County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $252,447
Anticipated Match: 47.7%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$16,104	8.1%	$20,489	10.2%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$36,593	18.3%

Programs:

Triple P	$20,166	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$39,947	
Child Care Scholarships	$103,294	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$163,407	81.7%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	77	

Greenville County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $1,030,000 **Total Budget:** $3,138,438
Anticipated Match: 204.7%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$109,557	10.6%	$94,215	9.1%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$203,772	19.8%

Programs:

Nurse Family Partnership	$100,000
Family Connects	$150,000
Nurturing Parenting	$50,000
3k Enhancement	$45,000
Child Care Training & Prof. Dev.	$207,281

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Triple P	$208,947	
Imagination Library	$35,000	
Reach Out and Read	$30,000	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$826,228	80.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	8,470	

Greenwood County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $249,954 **Total Budget:** $290,805
Anticipated Match: 16.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$11,524	4.6%	$10,100	4.0%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$21,624	8.7%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$131,705	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$96,625	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$228,330	91.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	60	

Hampton County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $238,987
Anticipated Match: 14.9%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$20,353	10.2%	$17,067	8.5%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$37,420	18.7%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$100,669	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$3,418	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$17,849	
Child Care Scholarships	$40,644	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$162,580	81.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	99	

Horry County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $687,925 **Total Budget:** $751,229

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Anticipated Match: 9.2%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$59,888	8.7%	$78,433	11.4%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$138,321	20.1%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$165,961	
Raising A Reader	$26,008	
Ready4K	$23,306	
Early Education Art Program	$17,874	
FF-After School Program	$20,384	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$62,617	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$122,886	
WIC Collaboration	$9,302	
PASOS	$101,266	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$549,604	79.9%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	**890**	

Jasper County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $314,967
Anticipated Match: 37.2%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$13,470	5.9%	$9,915	4.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$23,385	10.8%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$127,954	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$0	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$10,093	
Child Care Scholarship	$5,795	
Early Identification and Referral	$32,773	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$176,615	89.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	522	

Kershaw County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $242,177
Anticipated Match: 15.2%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$18,426	8.8%	$22,587	10.8%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$41,013	19.6%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$77,565	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$36,736	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$16,102	
Raising a Reader	$28,584	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$158,987	80.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	59	

Lancaster County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $3,041,872
Anticipated Match: 1,246.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$11,870	5.9%	$9,552	4.8%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$21,422	10.7%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$13,526	
Imagination Library (Dolly Parton)	$37,972	
Incredible Years Parenting	$43,199	
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership	$0	
Scholarship Initiatives	$15,399	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$20,628	
Nutrition Programs (Backpack Feeding)	$11,132	
Early Identification and Referral	$36,722	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$178,578	89.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	3,012	

Laurens County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $235,500
Anticipated Match: 17.8%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$20,546	10.3%	$18,244	9.1%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$38,790	19.4%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$86,493	
Childcare Training & Professional Dev.	$12,239	
Scholarship Initiatives	$51,487	
Reach Out and Read	$10,991	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$161,210	80.6%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1,855	

Lee County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $1,186,898
Anticipated Match: 150.8%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$10,559	6.3%	$19,616	9.5%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$30,175	15.8%

Programs:

Early Steps	$83,547	
Parent Training (Blue Print Parent Café)	$889	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$674	
Childcare Training & Professional Dev.	$20,067	
Scholarship Initiatives	$64,143	
Community Education	$504	
DES	$0	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$169,825	84.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	353	

Lexington County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $594,362 **Total Budget:** $1,417,412
Match: 116.46%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$55,360	9.31%	$53,854	9.06%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$109,214	18.37%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$433,305
Countdown to Kindergarten	$15,290
BOOST	$0

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Childcare Training and Professional Dev.	$36,553	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$485,148	81.63%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	805	

Marion County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $355,228
Anticipated Match: 24.8%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$6,809	3.4%	$23,993	12.0%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$30,802	15.4%

Programs:

Literacy Program	$19,531	
Raising a Reader	$19,531	
Raising a Reader 4K	$12,900	
Childcare Quality Enhancement Grants	$22,895	
Childcare Training & Prof. Dev.	$13,545	
Childcare Scholarship	$80,795	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$169,197	84.6%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	617	

Marlboro County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $313,665
Anticipated Match: 39.6%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$6,835	3.4%	$14,979	7.5%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$21,814	10.9%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$79,048	
Reach Out and Read	$1,400	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$36,644	
Child Care Scholarships SC DSS	$61,094	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$178,186	89.1%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	161	

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

McCormick County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $274,416
Anticipated Match: 37.2%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$23,475	11.7%	$17,812	8.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$41,287	20.6%

Programs:

Library Based Literacy	$4,856	
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	$4,756	
Nurturing Parenting	$52,845	
Early Education Children Under 4	$45,811	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$7,420	
Scholarships	$43,025	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$158,713	79.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	187	

Newberry County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $289,403
Anticipated Match: 27.8%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$21,485	10.7%	$23,748	11.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$45,233	22.6%

Programs:

Parents As Teachers	$80,745	
Library Based Programs	$8,000	
Reach Out and Read	$3,965	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$15,870	
Childcare Quality Enhancement	$29,171	
Childcare Training & Prof. Dev. (In-House)	$17,016	
HIPPY	$0	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$154,767	77.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1,497	

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Oconee County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $260,685
Anticipated Match: 19.0%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$17,759	8.9%	$17,787	8.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$35,546	17.8%

Programs:

Nurse Family Partnership	$64,183	
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	$18,226	
Child Care Training & Professional Development	$19,888	
Child Care Scholarship	$58,934	
WIC	$3,223	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$164,454	82.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served	1,581	

Orangeburg County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $282,807 **Total Budget:** $361,253
Anticipated Match: 19.30%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$30,065	10.42%	$21,405	8.22%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$51,470	18.64%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$131,637	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$12,639	
Reading Rocks	$16,639	
Childcare Quality Enhancements	$31,237	
Childcare Training Prof. Dev	$25,237	
HIPPY	$11,448	
Raising a Reader	$2,500	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$231,337	81.36%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	263	

Pickens County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $207,514 **Total Budget:** $535,313
Anticipated Match: 161.3%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$21,963	10.6%	$22,847	11.0%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$44,810	21.6%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$106,884	
Imagine Library	$17,394	
Reach Out and Read	$21,426	
Early Steps Identification	$17,000	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$162,704	78.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1,120	

Richland County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $901,424 **Total Budget:** $4,103,746
Anticipated Match: 355.3%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$49,047	5.4%	$65,087	7.2%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$114,134	12.6%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$197,830	
HIPPY	$0	
Early Head Start	$227,642	
Childcare Quality Enhancements	$322,403	
Childcare Training and Professional Dev.	$39,415	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$787,290	87.4%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	404	

Saluda County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $298,162
Anticipated Match: 42%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$21,438	10%	$19,946	9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$41,384	19%

Programs:

Nurturing Parenting	$21,762	

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Enhanced Early Education	$62,074	
Child Care Training and Professional Development	$26,447	
Nurse Family Partnership	$26,452	
Library Based Programs	$21,881	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$158,616	81%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	134	

Spartanburg County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $729,917 **Total Budget:** $6,654,139
Anticipated Match: 579%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$83,721	11.5%	$84,248	11.5%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$167,969	23.0%

Programs:

EHS Programming	$104,442	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	$457,506	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$561,948	77.0%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1,410	

Sumter County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $353,310 **Total Budget:** $573,721
Anticipated Match: 31.5%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$19,959	5.3%	$32,274	8.5%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$52,233	13.8%

Programs:

Parents as Teachers	$179,300	
Imagination Library	$4,000	
Childcare Training and Prof Dev.	$48,105	
Scholarship Initiatives	$69,672	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$301,077	86.2%
Total Projected Numbers Served	370	

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Union County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $320,514
Anticipated Match: 29.2%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$23,112	11.6%	$17,709	8.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$40,821	20.4%

Programs:

Reach Out and Read	$8,857	
Parents as Teachers	$141,183	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$3,832	
Child Care Training and Professional Dev.	$5,307	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$159,179	79.6%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	1,079	

Williamsburg County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $200,000 **Total Budget:** $373,909
Anticipated Match: 35.2%

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$15,369	7.7%	$17,706	8.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$33,075	16.5%

Programs:

Imagination Library	$7,746	
Parents as Teachers	$95,886	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$20,301	
Child Care Training and Professional Dev.	$39,453	
HIPPY	$2,164	
SCPV	$1,375	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$166,925	83,5%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	438	

York County First Steps

Allocated Amount FY23: $448,567 **Total Budget:** $1,646,055
Anticipated Match: 255.1%

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
^All programmatic fund totals and programs expressed by county are solely based on state funds and do not reflect totals or programs supported by additional funding sources

Administrative (13% Max):		**Core Functions (12% Max):**	
$34,850	7.8%	$35,361	7.9%

Total Non-Programmatic Funds (25% Max):	$70,211	15.7%

Programs:		
Parents as Teachers	$143,361	
Childcare Quality Enhancements	$99,979	
Childcare Training & Professional Dev.	$39,924	
Scholarship Initiatives	$22,815	
Countdown to Kindergarten	$22,304	
Nurse Family Partnership	$49,973	
Total Programmatic Funds^:	$378,356	84.3%
Total Projected Numbers Served:	720	

*Predictions are based on state Fund 55 for FY23 and do not include the budgeting of carry-forward funds
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To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Tim Holt, Chairman, Finance and Administration Committee

Date: June 7, 2022

RE: Finance and Administration Report

The Finance and Administration Committee met via Zoom conference call on June 2, 2022, to receive updates from staff. Detailed meeting minutes are attached. The committee is not bringing forward any action items, but we provide 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. It is expected we will not fully expend our budget for the current fiscal year.

Maycomb Capital Proposal Update

We received an update and had a discussion about the presentation from Maycomb Capital related to a pay for success project proposal with SC First Steps. The idea behind the public private partnership is one where the investor would provide capital to provide services for populations in need and would then receive a return on their investment if the project was successful. We received several documents that were provided by Maycomb and had several questions. Mr. Barnes is working to get answers. We will discuss this proposed project in our next meeting in preparation to bring a possible proposal to the Board.

Early Education Foundation

A proposal to create a separate Early Education Foundation is being considered. It would be distinct and separate from SC First Steps and would not be controlled by us. Its mission would be to raise funds for Early Education activities in SC. Their fundraising would be separate from us. There would be an operating agreement between the Foundation and the agency. We are evaluating how that would be set up at this point.

State Budget Update

The Senate Finance Committee approved $3 million in additional recurring state general funds for the READY Program proposed by SC First Steps. The Senate and House are expected to finalize the budget through a Conference Committee in the next couple of weeks.

Local Partnerships

Allocation Model

The Task Force to review the allocation model will meet once the needed data is pulled together. The staff is working on this now.

Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps Update

Mr. Barnes gave us an update on the response to the actions taken recently by the Board of Trustees and the associated Corrective Action Plans for Abbeville and Greenwood County First Steps. The Executive Director in Greenwood County has resigned, and good progress is being made by their Board. They are working closely with our staff. There has been limited response from Abbeville County First Steps.

Minutes from Finance and Administration Committee Meeting (Zoom)

June 2, 2022

Members present: Tim Holt, Chairman, Jacque Curtin, David Morley

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 Tim Holt at 10:03 am.

Mr. Holt requested Mr. Barnes to provide the updates as listed on the agenda.

Mr. Barnes provided the following updates.

First Steps State Office Updates

1. 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 and that it will take a little while to achieve full statewide implementation, especially now as the child-care centers are struggling to find staff to teach in the classrooms. We will be below our budget in expenditures for the year. 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. He mentioned that the fundraising event netted out more than $50,000, that will be split evenly among the Local Partnerships that are interested and eligible to receive the funds.

2. Maycomb Capital Proposal Update

Maycomb Capital provided a presentation at the last Board of Trustees Meeting that introduced the idea of their participating in a pay for success project with SC First Steps. Dave Morley mentioned he could provide a summary of the project. He mentioned the idea behind the public private partnership is one where the investor would provide capital to provide services for populations in need and would then receive a return on their investment if the project was successful. He talked about some of the history behind projects like this. Mr. Barnes provided an update and several documents to the Committee detailing how the process would work and sharing some information on the actual payment process which includes how the return would be calculated with a successful program, an unsuccessful program, and the expected outcome. He mentioned there would most likely be a third organization involved who would provide a guarantee which would help reduce losses if the program

was not successful. There was general discussion about the process and several questions asked that would require a follow up from Maycomb Capital. Mr. Barnes said he would follow up and provide the information at a later date. He did mention a draft timeline as to when this might come to the Board of Trustees and also mentioned that we might need to have a special called meeting to provide questions and answers for Board Members.

3. Early Education Foundation

Mr. Barnes updated the Committee on a proposal to create a separate Early Education Foundation. The Foundation would be distinct and separate from SC First Steps. It would not be controlled by SC First Steps. Its mission would be to raise funds for Early Education activities in SC. This would allow the organization to provide fundraising activities and use their 501(c)(3) independently from SC First Steps. We would cooperate with them using a operating agreement and they would receive limited support from us. In evaluating this possibility, we would review other agencies who have these foundations and how they work. We would also evaluate what is working well with their structures and what can be improved. We will provide more information on this as the idea is fully vetted.

State Budget Update

Mr. Barnes updated the Committee on the status of the state budget request for next year. The Senate has included $3 Million in recurring funds for the Local Partnerships in their version of the state budget for READY, which includes targeted or competitive grants, and for capacity and infrastructure with some of the funds being available to use for monitoring and support. In addition, they included some proviso changes that would allow us to increase the amounts paid to the 4K providers for transportation, tuition, and class-room start-up funds. The budget is going to the Conference Committee of House and Senate members to work out the differences between the House and the Senate versions of the budget. They will be resolving those differences in the next two weeks.

Legislative Update

Mr. Barnes updated the Committee on the status of two sets of bills that have been introduced in the General Assembly. All bills have been eliminated as this is the second year of the two-year session. Any bills would have to be reintroduced in the new session. Prefiling for that session will start in December. We will work with the General Assembly to reintroduce the bills to provide the Local Partnership staff access to the state retirement system. We may tweak it a little based on feedback from the Local Partnerships. In addition, we will be working with a facilitator to obtain information from the Local Partnerships, and others on what changes need to be made for our upcoming discussions about reauthorization.

Local Partnerships

Update on Allocation Model

As was decided by the Board of Directors, we will be evaluating the current allocation model thru the work of a Task Force. We are now pulling data together to start those discussions. As soon as the data is collected, we will schedule the first meeting. We expect to complete this work by December.

Update on Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps Partnerships

First Steps State Office staff has provided the information from the Board of Trustees decisions to the Board Chair and Executive Directors of Abbeville and Greenwood. This included an updated Corrective Action Plan for each. After submitting that information to the Boards, we received information that the Executive Director for Greenwood County First Steps has resigned effective May 31, 2022. We have not received a response from either board related to the Corrective Action Plans. However, Derek Cromwell, Chief Partnership Officer, and his staff have been in regular communications with the Greenwood Board offering support and assistance and they have been very open to us providing assistance. We expect a formal response from the two Boards prior to the June 15 deadline.

4K Program

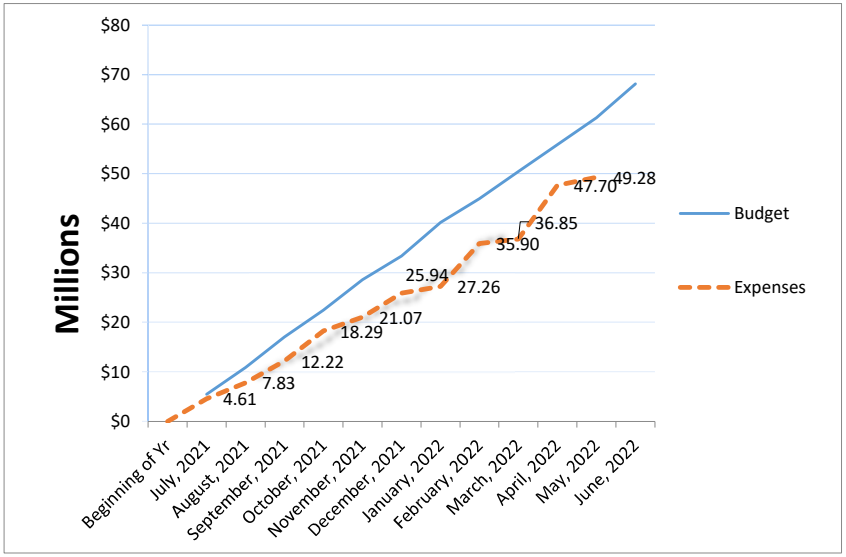
Staff gave an update on the program's status. This included an update on the statewide expansion efforts.

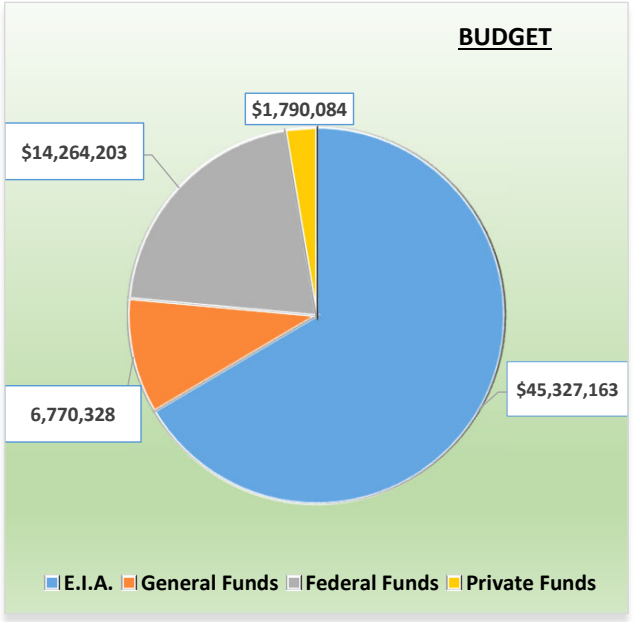
With no further business to discuss, Mr. Holt adjourned the meeting at 11:06 am.

FY 2022

As of
May 31, 2022

Spending Rates	
Projected	92%
Actual	72%





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	14,420,803	14,425	2,025,313	798,010	$ 1,227,303			-	16,460,541	15,218,813	$ 1,241,728
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT & TECH ASST.	2,896,900	2,305,607	591,293	3,385,280		$ 3,385,280	198,393	143,383	55,010	6,480,573	2,448,990	$ 4,031,583
PRIVATE 4-K	32,014,655	24,636,011	7,378,644	5,307,914		5,307,914			-	37,322,569	24,636,011	$ 12,686,558
EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL	193,500	40,444	153,056	2,531,685	3,665,614	(1,133,929)	130,000		130,000	2,855,185	3,706,058	$ (850,873)
AMERICORPS				326,703	237,236	89,467			-	326,703	237,236	$ 89,467
POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY	2,557,208	1,760,880	796,328	687,308		687,308	1,461,691	1,270,084	191,607	4,706,207	3,030,964	$ 1,675,243
GRAND TOTAL:	52,097,491	43,163,744	8,933,747	14,264,203	4,700,860	9,563,343	1,790,084	1,413,467	376,617	68,151,778	49,278,071	$ 18,873,707

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
68,151,778	

3)LP Support & Technical Assistance

a. Contracted accounting firm(Manley Garvin, LLC)
b. Accounting Software network support & Data Housing
c. Programmatic data housing & network support

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
	14,264,203

3) LP Support & Technical Assistance (cont.)

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 Kindergarden 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 May 31, 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 10, 2022	$ 15,500	Enterprise Holdings	Unrestricted	SC 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
Oct 28, 2021	$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley 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	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Dec 21, 2021	$ 80	Blackbaud Giving Foundation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 27, 2022	$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County 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	Betty 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	Davida 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 and Debbie Robertson	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 25, 2022	$ 1,000	Lourie Consulting Inc.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Jan 27, 2022	$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
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 Stratergies	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 9, 2022	$ 1,000	Scott & Co.-Don Mobley	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 9, 2022	$ 1,000	Brian & Beth Moore	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 15, 2022	$ 1,000	Riley Pope & Laney	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 24, 2022	$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Mar 1, 2022	$ 3,000	First Citizens Bank and Trust Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 1, 2022	$ 3,000	First Citizens Bank and Trust Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 1, 2022	$ 1,000	Pollock Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 3, 2022	$ 1,000	Brookland Baptist Church	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 8, 2022	$ 1,000	Synovus	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 8, 2022	$ 200	SCADA-Senator Johnson	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Mar 10, 2022	$ 3,000	First Citizens Bank and Trust Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 10, 2022	$ 5,000	Capital Waste Services	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 11, 2022	$ 2,500	Rhodes Branding	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 16, 2022	$ 1,000	Kaplan Early Learning	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 23, 2022	$ 200	SCADA-Rep. Russell Ott Calhoun County	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Mar 23, 2022	$ 200	SCADA-Rep. Raye Felder York County	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Mar 24, 2022	$ 100	Audrey McClary-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 25, 2022	$ 10	Beth Shelton Brooks-NFG	Restricted	Newberry County First Steps
Apr 12, 2022	$ 2,500	Mitchell Business Management	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 11, 2022	$ 100	Marilyn Artz	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Apr 11, 2022	$ 25	Calvin Whitmire	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Apr 11, 2022	$ 243	Craig Teller	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Apr 12, 2022	$ 40	Network for Good	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Apr 12, 2022	$ 3,000	First Citizens Bank and Trust Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 12, 2022	$ 5,000	37 Gears	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 13, 2022	$ 100	Charles and Martha Strickland	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 2, 2022	$ 250	Ada Janet T Setzler	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 11, 2022	$ 6,200	Eventbrite	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 19, 2022	$ 3,500	Fidelity Charitable-Morley Family Fund	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 19, 2022	$ 5,000	The Boeing Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 150	Vest Diversified Consultant Svcs. LLC-NFG	Unrestricted	To Give a Child a Book-Literacy
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Little Promise Learning Center-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 30	Kristina Chandler-NFG	Unrestricted	To Give a Child a Book-Literacy
May 23, 2022	$ 5	Ty Dow-NFG	Unrestricted	Literacy Programs
May 23, 2022	$ 5	Emily Winston-NFG	Unrestricted	Literacy Programs
May 23, 2022	$ 150	Richard Family-NFG	Unrestricted	Literacy Programs
May 23, 2022	$ 150	Andrew McClam-NFG	Unrestricted	Literacy Programs
May 23, 2022	$ 50	Robert Atkinson-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 50	Betty Gardiner-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Robert Lominack-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 250	Elizabeth Petit-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Jamal Middleton-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 50	Ryan Shinn-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 50	Kate Roach-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 50	Dominique Taylor-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 500	Andrew McClam-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 25	Sonia England-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 150	Rhodes Bailey-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Amy Nicholas-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Rosemary Patterson-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 100	Tricia Ryel Richter-NFG	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 23, 2022	$ 100	The House of Smiles-NFG	Restricted	Berkeley County FS
May 23, 2022	$ 130	Columbia Craft	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 24, 2022	$ 803	Dominik & Georgia Mjartan	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
	$ 109,945			

To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Senator Gerald Malloy

Date: June 16, 2022

RE: Legislative Committee Report

FY 2022-23 Budget – Updates

On May 11, 2022 the House received the Senate version of the budget and amended it further. The budget bill was later ordered to a conference committee as the two chambers could not agree on a version. The Senate appointed Senators Harvey Peeler, Nikki Setzler, and Senate President Thomas Alexander and the House appointed Representatives Gary Simrill, Todd Rutherford, and Speaker of the House G. Murrell Smith.

- Status: The budget is currently being negotiated amongst the Conference Committee.

Sine Die Resolution

The South Carolina General Assembly adjourned sine die on May 12, 2022. Before adjourning, the Senate and House passed S. 1325, the Sine Die Resolution. Under this, the General Assembly will reconvene on June 15-17 and again on June 28-20 to take up the following:

- The budget and other related appropriations bills;
- Vetoes by the Governor;
- Conference reports; and
- Redistricting bills.

Between July 1 and November 13, the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House may call the General Assembly back into session to address any of the matters listed above, as well as any legislation in response to a Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

Legislative Session – Updates

S. 11 – Paid Family Leave for State Employees

- This Act will provide state employees who welcome a new child via birth or adoption with six weeks of paid leave for primary caregivers, and two weeks for secondary caregivers. In addition, state employees who foster a child will receive two weeks of paid leave.
- ✓ Signed by Governor and will go into effect on October 1, 2022

S. 1115 and H. 5186 – First steps; designate it as an agency instead of initiative

- These bills would designate South Carolina First Steps as a state agency, to be headed by a director who is appointed by the Governor, would eliminate the local partnerships as they currently exist and all provisions related to funding for local partnerships, and would create 14 new, regional offices each with regional directors and staff.
- Status: Neither bill passed this Session.

S. 1170 and H. 5111 – Local Partnership Board Governance

- These bills would create a set number of members for the Local Partnership Boards and would require more than half of the members be appointed by elected officials.
- Status: Neither bill passed this Session.

To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Georgia Mjartan

Date: June 16, 2022

RE: Executive Director's Report

Reauthorization: 4 Years of Progress

4 years since reauthorization, First Steps has significantly increased the scope and scale of our programs and services provided to families by First Steps Local Partnerships.

- +25.6% increase in children directly served by First Steps Local Partnerships
- +49.9% increase in teachers and directors directly served by First Steps Local Partnerships
- Nearly doubled the number of evidence-based program models available to South Carolina families with young children through First Steps Local Partnerships, from 12 to 22.

Data compares the most recent completed fiscal year (FY2021) with the last fiscal year before reauthorization (FY2018).

First Steps 4K

- 4K Enrollment and Capacity
  - 2021-22 School Year (comparisons with previous year)
    - 3,343 students served through Day 180 (29% increase)
    - 265 total providers approved (22% increase)
      - 167 (63%) rated B or above in ABC Quality
      - 152 (57%) providing extended day and extended year service option
  - 2022-23 School Year (as of June 7, 2022)
    - 1,741 students approved to enroll (4% increase over June 11, 2021)
    - 251 total providers approved to date (5% decrease)
    - 17 new providers and 19 new classrooms offering First Steps 4K
- 4K + Siblings (as of June 8, 2022), New in 2021 – 2022 School Year (no comparison data)
  - 1,723 children have been approved for a 4K+Siblings voucher
    - 1,405 (81.5%) have successfully connected with a child care provider

Your Voice Matters - Continuous Quality Improvement through Client Engagement

With funding and support from Listen4Good, SC First Steps has completed 10 feedback loops on First Steps 4K, Parents as Teachers, Child Care Quality Enhancement, and Quality Counts with 2,368 individual survey responses from clients ranging from teachers, childcare directors, and families. Listen4Good funding ends June 30, 2022. SC First Steps is committed to continuing this type of qualitative evaluation.

Most recent fully closed loop was with teachers and directors receiving Child Care Quality Enhancement or Quality Counts services through seven Local Partnerships. The report and response are included.

First Steps Awards Targeted and Competitive Grants to Expand Programs

- Local Partnerships
  - Healthy Steps, $1,341,088
  - Countdown to Kindergarten & Countdown to 4K, $882,393
  - Core Functions, $44,000
  - Enhanced Core Functions Pilot – Family Cafés, $81,000
  - AmeriCorps Parent Educators – 14 positions and $77,000
  - AmeriCorps Family and Community Engagement – 18 positions
  - Parenting Program Expansion Awards, $484,754
  - Parents as Teachers Affiliate Support, $77,170
  - Parents as Teachers - Supporting Care Providers through Personal Visits, $30,700
  - Child Care Technical Assistance Expansion, $225,000
  - PASOs Connections for Child Development, $262,240

- First Steps 4K
  - Language and Literacy Boost, $390,685
  - Workforce Recruitment and Retention Stipends, $121,450

- Community Partners
  - Countdown to Kindergarten Community Partner Awards, $103,142

First Steps Continues to Seek Grants to Expand Programs and Capacity

AmeriCorps (renewal): $316,710

- 38 part-time opportunities across the state serving with Local First Steps Partnerships and at the South Carolina First Steps office in Columbia.
- Two service positions, HIPPY Parent Educator & Family and Community Engagement, complete activities ranging from providing one-on-one support for parents to hosting outreach events about school readiness and local early childhood services.
- First Steps AmeriCorps provides 2 stipends per month ranging from $204.28 to $588.90.
- AmeriCorps members receive the Segal Education Award to pay down student loan debt or cover upcoming tuition costs. The award ranges from $1,718.25 to $4,546.50, and it is based on the number of hours completed during the 8 to 10 months of service.
- Service Site Locations will be released on **June 20, 2022.**
- Application for members to apply is now open for the year beginning in August 2022.

AmeriCorps VISTA (concept paper)

- The VISTA project will seek to increase the scale, reach, efficiency, and effectiveness of First Steps programs in local communities, in particular underserved and rural communities, and expects to benefit at least 25 of the 46 First Steps partnership organizations by increasing financial resources and clients served.
- Six VISTA members will contribute to the goals of the project by performing sustainable activities within communications, fundraising, nonprofit governance, national service and volunteer programs, and community partnership development over the course of the next five years.

Fundraising

- A night to Celebrate Community *met all goals* and was a very well-received inaugural event
- FY2022 Year to Date: Fundraising Actual vs. Goals vs. Previous Year Comparison
- Development Officer will start mid-August 2022

Social Impact Investment in Local Partnerships

- Have continued meetings with Maycomb Capital
- Analyzing suitable evidence-based program models for inclusion
- Financial modeling
- Board committees involved: Executive, Finance & Admin., Strategic Planning & Evaluation

HR & Operations

- SC First Steps have the following new staff members:
    - Amanda Bailey, 4K Coach
    - Amira Hulwe, Communications Intern
    - Sophia Wurster, Communications Intern

- Currently, the organization has the following vacancies:
    - Local Partnership Fiscal Manager
    - Local Partnership Program Officer
    - 4K Interns

- COVID-19: Mask wearing is optional for visitors and staff. Masks are available to all staff and visitors.

FIRST STEPS SOUTH CAROLINA

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Quality Enhancement/Quality Counts Teacher Engagement Survey | December 2021

Survey Administration

The Quality Enhancement/Quality Counts (QE/QC) Teacher Engagement Survey was administered online from November 8th to December 1st, 2021 to QE/QC Teachers and Teacher Assistants who participated in the QE/QC program from July 1st, 2019 to the present. The Executive Directors of local partnerships participating in the QE/QC program sent an email with the survey link to their Teachers and Teacher Assistants. A reminder email was sent from the Executive Directors to their staff on November 15th, 2021. There were 101 responses from teachers representing 7 counties across the state (Spartanburg, Beaufort, Dorchester, York, Charleston, Edgefield, Kershaw).

59%
would highly recommend QE/QC programs to other child care providers in their county

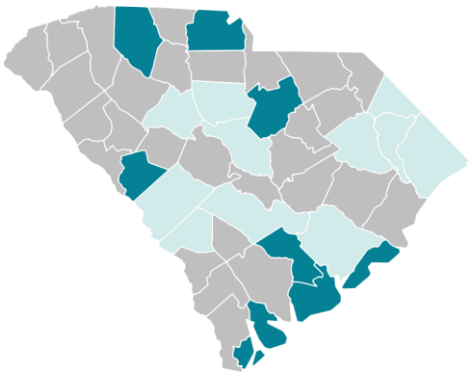


Figure 1. Map of Survey Respondents by County. The dark teal represents those counties who participated in the survey. The light teal represents those counties who were invited to participate, but did not participate in the survey.

Respondent Demographics

Most survey respondents were 25-34 years (23%) or 55-64 years old (23%) and identified as Black (43%) or white (53%). The sample of QE/QC Teachers had a similar demographic profile compared to the 2018 South Carolina Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce[1]. In the 2018 South Carolina ECE Workforce study, most respondents were female (97%) and identified as white (57%) or Black (40%)[1]. Of the 101 respondents, 28% had earned some college credits in early childhood education, 16% had a high school diploma or GED, and 13% had a two-year degree in early childhood education. Over half of the respondents have more than ten years of experience working in early care and education whereas 6% of respondents have less than one year of experience working in early care and education. When asked about their length of employment at their current child care provider there was considerable variability with nearly half of respondents working at their current provider for over 5 years.

100%
of respondents were females

54%
of respondents have post-secondary education experience in early childhood education

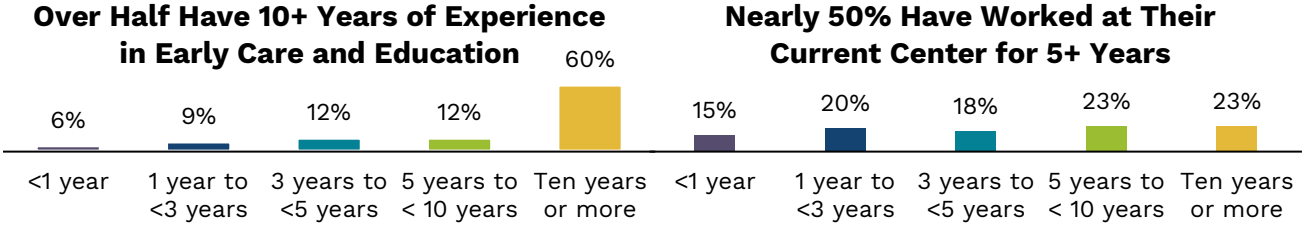


Figure 2. QE/QC Teacher Experience. Missing experience working in early care and education for 12 respondents and length of employment at current child care provider for 13 respondents. One respondent said they were unsure of their experience and length of employment.

QE/QC Program Experience

What is the First Steps QE/QC program good at?

- High-quality education and child care
- Training and guidance for teachers

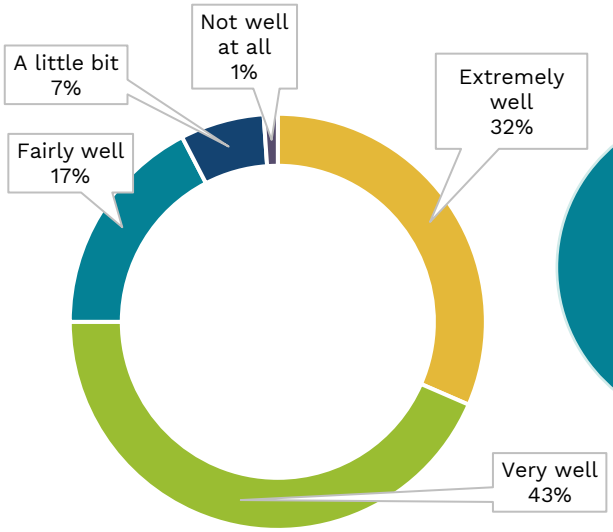
> Quality Counts is good at training teachers to better enhance their teaching skills and to better the classroom environment for children in a preschool or childcare setting.

What could the QE/QC program do better?

- More frequent training and hands-on coaching visits
- More financial support and incentives

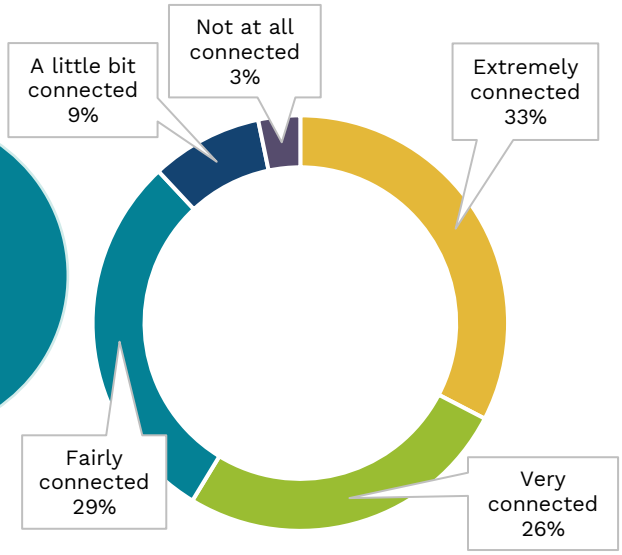
> More frequent on site observations and feedback/praise/ instruction.

75% of Teachers said First Steps' QE/QC Program met their needs very or extremely well



77% said their QE/QC coach ALWAYS treats them with respect

59% of Teachers said they feel very or extremely connected to their coach from the First Steps QE/QC Program



What parts of the First Steps' QE/QC program are most valuable to you?

1

50%
What I learn during coaching sessions

2

50%
The goals identified through the Quality Improvement Planning process

3

49%
Materials or equipment provided by my coach

Additional Needs

If resources were unlimited, what incentive(s) could the First Steps' QE/QC program provide you that would motivate you to stay at your current center or provider?

> "They need to add more financial support to their highly qualified teachers who go above and beyond to help educate the students."

73%
Reward for having met, achieved, or earned a certain level or certification in the early childhood field

67%
Longevity or retention bonuses

53%
Reward or recognition for meeting targets

> "Increase pay wages or provide more incentives for staff."

> "Quality Counts helps provide accurate accessible trainings that help keep early educators educated and informed. Quality Counts helps provide resources and materials to provide the best learning environments for children. Quality Counts excels in providing one on one technical assistance to help improve and p[e]rform."

Because of the First Steps' QE/QC Program, I now...

73%
See an improvement in my classroom environment

67%
Better understand what high-quality childcare looks like

59%
See an improvement in the quality of my teaching

> "Quality Counts is really the foundation of early childhood educators being able to reach their fullest potential! This has been a tough year on everyone and they have been by our sides every step of the way. They have [asked] what can we do, what kind of help do you need, they really care and it shows."

[1]Rao, V., Chen, R., Perkins, K., Sevoyan, M. (2018). Early Childhood Workforce Study Report – 2018. Columbia, SC.

Uplifting and Centering Voices Among Child Care Providers in South Carolina Who Receive Quality Enhancement or Quality Counts

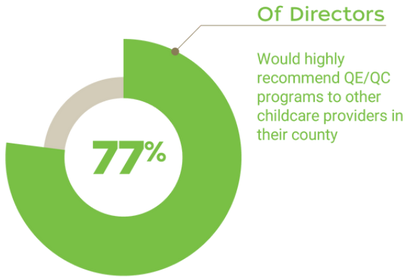
> I'm so glad our center participates in this program.
>
> Director, Spartanburg County

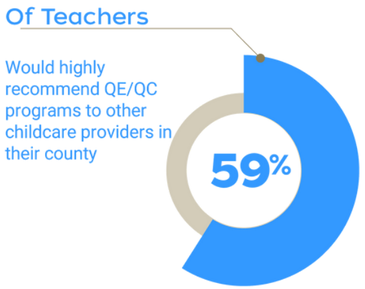
YOUR VOICE MATTERS

FIRST STEPS SOUTH CAROLINA

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT AND QUALITY COUNTS

Quality Enhancement and Quality Counts are child care quality improvement programs using technical assistance, mentoring, training, quality improvement plans, and equipment/materials funds to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children through First Steps local partnerships in 18 counties.





How are we faring?

62% of directors have completed at least some formal training in early childhood education

53% of teachers have completed at least some formal training in early childhood education

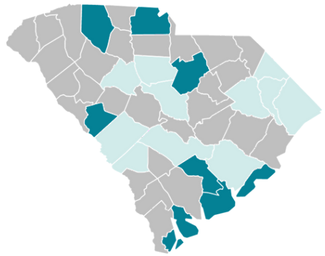
85% of directors feel the Quality Enhancement or Quality Counts program has met their needs extremely or very well

75% of teachers feel the Quality Enhancement or Quality Counts program has met their needs extremely or very well

Number of Respondents: 153

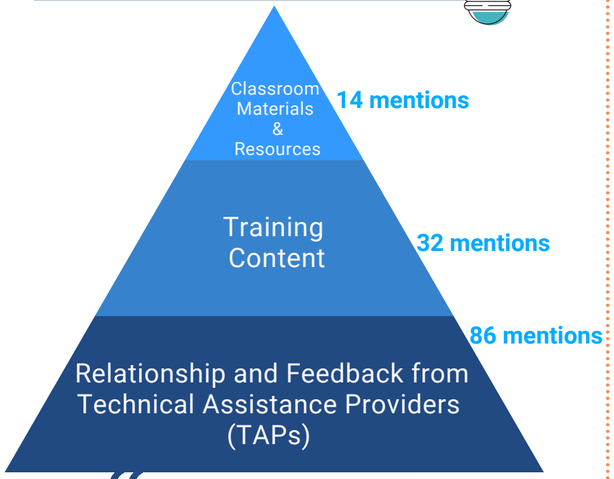
51 Directors & 102 Teachers

Number of Counties: 8



Dark teal represents counties that participated in the survey and light blue represents counties that were invited but did not participate in the survey

Areas of Success

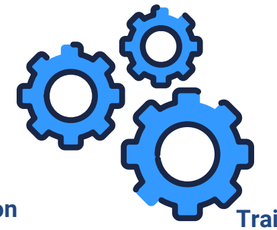


> The First Steps program is good at giving us technical support, provid[ing] us with needed training [and] assist[ing] us with purchasing supplies.
>
> Director, Beaufort County

Areas for Improvement

Communication
9 mentions

More frequent TAP visits
13 mentions

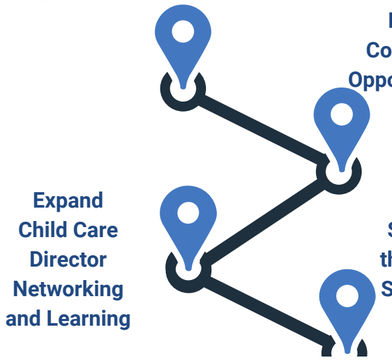


More Training/Professional Development Opportunities
18 mentions

> Weekly updates on what is working and what needs work from the quality coaches. This will have directors support the work of the quality coaches between visits.
>
> Director, Beaufort County

> Continue to work towards providing training courses to meet the needs of the educators.
>
> Director, Dorchester County

Next Steps



> I love all aspects of the program. It helps improve [the] overall quality of the program in which they are helping. The support received from Quality Counts is amazing.
>
> Teacher, Spartanburg County