



Four-Year-Old Kindergarten in SC

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January 22, 2015
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Today's Purpose

- 1) Share First Steps' baseline data from **mClass Circle**, the state's new early literacy assessment.
- 2) Highlight the early literacy needs of **Cherokee County** preschoolers.
- 3) Share data regarding the **long-term achievement** of students enrolled in the state's publicly-private 4K program.

A Brief History of School Readiness Assessment in SC

1977-2001: **Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery** - (Upon First Grade Entry)

2002-2008: **South Carolina Readiness Assessment** - (Yearlong Assessments in 5K and First Grade)

2008: General Assembly **deletes SCRA** as part of the reauthorization of the Education Accountability Act. (Loss of policy- and classroom-level measure.)

Increased Focus on Early Childhood Education

2006-2007: Creation of the **CDEPP 4K Pilot Program**
(37 districts, public and private)

2013-14: Expansion to 17 additional CDEPP districts
(51 total)

2014-2015: * Expansion to 10 more districts *(61 total)*
* Reauthorization of **First Steps** *(Definition of Readiness, Assessment Recommendations...)*
* **SC Read to Succeed Act** *(High stakes at 3rd grade, new literacy supports, new readiness assessment, 4K codified...)*

Read to Succeed - FY15 Appropriations Act

- SC Department of Education to procure an early literacy assessment for use in 2014-2015 **with all publicly-funded 4K and 5K students.**
- Within the first **45 days of school.**
- Designed to **inform instruction** and **measure progress.**
- **Mathematics, Social Emotional Development** and **Physical Development** by 2016-2017.

mCLASS:CIRCLE Overview

mClass Circle is a **computer-administered early literacy assessment** administered to all publicly-funded **4- and 5-year-old kindergartners** in South Carolina.

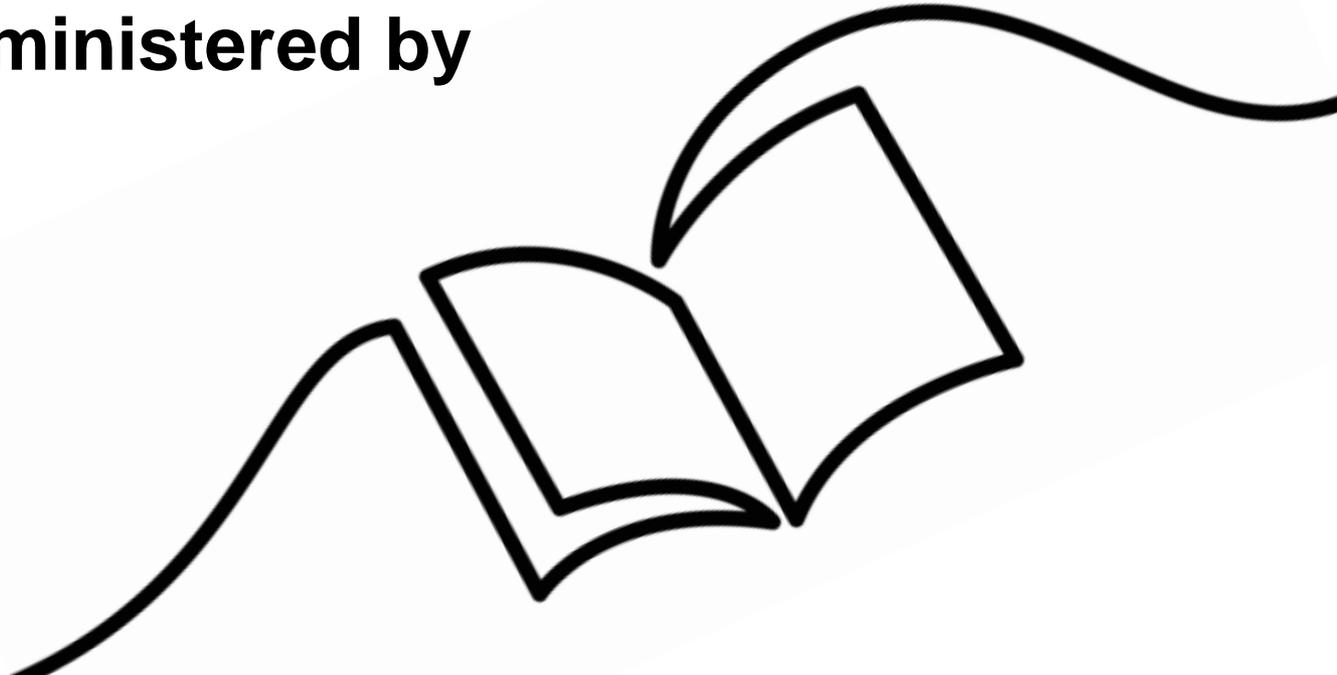


mCLASS:CIRCLE – Fall 2014 Administration

First Steps administered the Circle to **1,818 students enrolled in its private, four-year-old kindergarten programs** in September and October 2014, successfully assessing **more than 99% of enrolled students** within the required 45-day testing window.

mCLASS:CIRCLE – Fall 2014 Administration

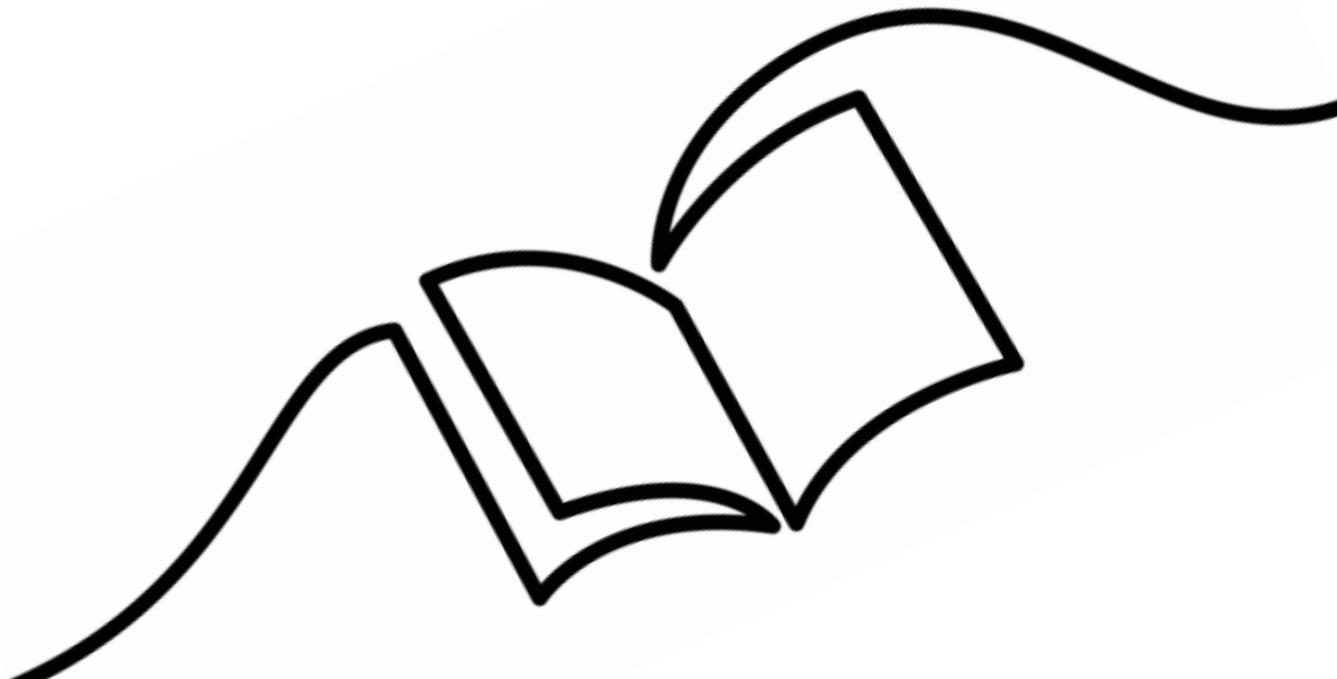
438 Cherokee County four-year-olds were assessed, with 416 of these students enrolled in the **Cherokee County School District** and 22 students enrolled in private, four-year-old kindergarten classrooms administered by **SC First Steps.**



mCLASS:CIRCLE – Fall 2014 Administration

THE RESULTS:

The *baseline data* to follow reflects **competencies of 2014-2015 4K students** *at the time of enrollment.*



SCORING

Emerging (indicated by red on reports): Children who score in the Emerging range need further intensive instruction with these skills or concepts. The most effective ways to assist these children are through small-group and/or individual instruction.

Proficient (indicated by green on reports): Children in this category show an adequate level of mastery with the skills/concepts *at the time of test administration*. As with most skills, these children would continue to benefit from small-group instruction.

LETTER NAMING

This timed test assesses the number of upper/lower case letters the child can identify.

Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to correctly name at least 9 (for children 4.0-4.5 years of age) or 11 (4.5+ years of age) letters shown in 60 seconds.

LETTER NAMING



SCFS: 42% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 26% PROFICIENT

VOCABULARY

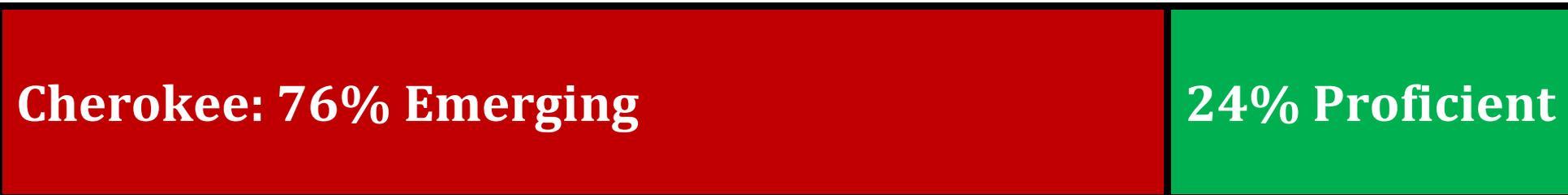
In this timed test students are shown pictures of objects and asked to provide the names of each.

Baseline proficiency reflects an ability to correctly name 17 (for children 4.0-4.5 years of age) or 21 (4.5+ years of age) items in 60 seconds.

VOCABULARY



SCFS: 36% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 24% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

“Phonological awareness” is a set of listening skills related to the child’s **ability to distinguish and manipulate the component sounds** of spoken language.

An important and reliable predictor of reading success.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS COMPOSITE

Circle's Phonological Awareness Composite is **aggregated measure of seven sub-tests**, each of which measures an important aspect of phonological awareness.

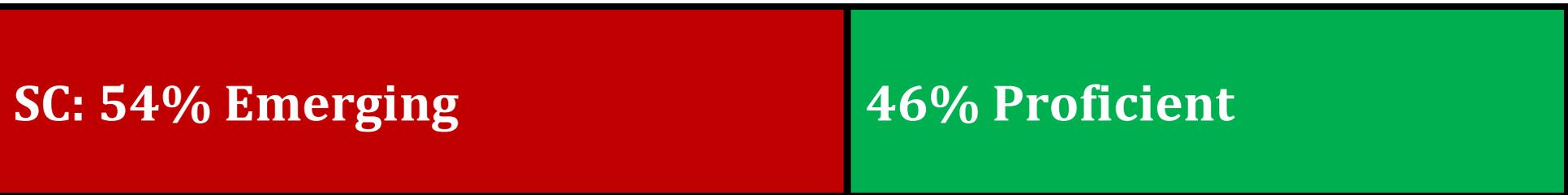
**PHONOLOGICAL
AWARENESS
COMPOSITE**

THE SUB-TESTS

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: LISTENING

The listening subtest assesses the child's ability to selectively focus on an individual sound. (Teacher speaks two words, child determines whether the words are "the same" – e.g. one word repeated twice or two different words.) Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to respond correctly to 5 of 5 items.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: LISTENING



SCFS: 46% PROFICIENT

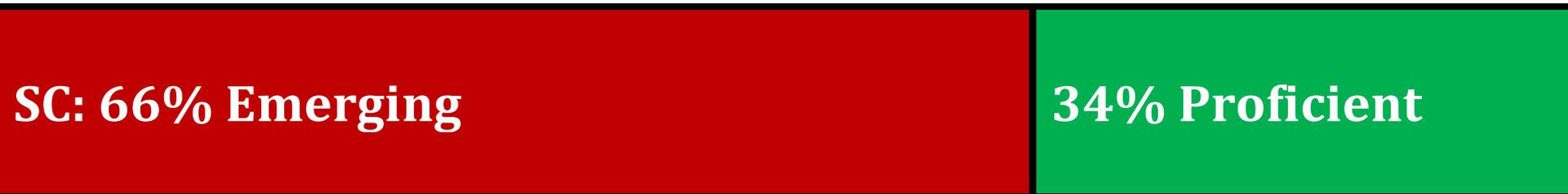


Cherokee: 52% PROFICIENT

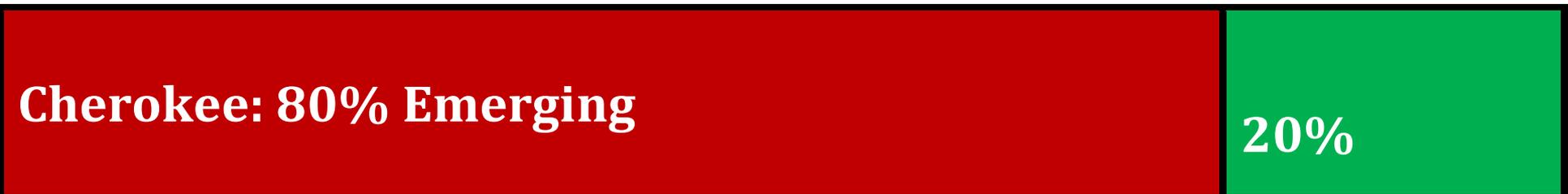
PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: RHYMING 1

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability to determine whether two words spoken words rhyme. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to correctly distinguish on at least 7 of 9 questions.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: RHYMING 1



SCFS: 34% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 20% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: RHYMING 2

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability to independently provide a word that rhymes with a prompt. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability correctly provide at least 3 rhyming words given five prompts.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: RHYMING 2



SCFS: 22% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 12% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: ALLITERATION

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability to identify whether two spoken words begin with the same sound. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to correctly distinguish at least 6 of 7 items.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: ALLITERATION



SCFS: 20% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 6% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: WORDS IN A SENTENCE

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability identify the number of words in a short sentence. Students use counting toys, sliding one item forward for each word spoken. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability correctly identify the number of words in at least 4 of 5 sentences.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: WORDS IN A SENTENCE



SCFS: 38% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 16% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: SYLLABICATION

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability to separate a spoken word into syllables. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to correctly clap/count syllables in at least 6 of 7 words provided.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: SYLLABICATION



SCFS: 35% PROFICIENT

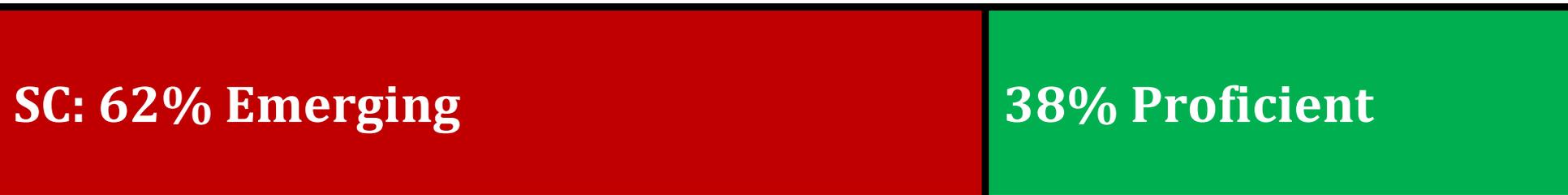


Cherokee: 9% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: ONSET-RIME

This untimed subtest assesses the child's ability to blend two parts of a word together when provided by the teacher. (e.g. "mmm" + "om" = mom) Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects an ability to correctly blend at least 3 of 5 examples provided.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS: ONSET-RIME



SCFS: 38% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 17% PROFICIENT

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS COMPOSITE

Circle's phonological awareness composite summarizes the results of the seven PA subtests. Baseline proficiency in 4K reflects the accumulation of at least 11 (4.0-4.5 years of age) or 14 (4.5+ years of age) points across these seven subtests.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS COMPOSITE



SCFS: 94% PROFICIENT



Cherokee: 92% PROFICIENT

In Summary:

- South Carolina's low-income four-year-olds are presenting for enrollment **with deficiencies in key early literacy skills.**
- In particular, **a weakness in vocabulary is noted**, with only 36% of SCFS students meeting beginning of the year expectations. 24% were proficient in Cherokee County.
- This is **consistent with well-established national data** suggesting gaps in the language exposure of low income children.

EOC Achievement Analysis 2015:

All SC Students				CDEPP Students		Low-Income Students in CDEPP Districts	
Academic Year	Grade	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
COHORT 1 (4K in 2006-07)							
2010-11	3	80	71	74 +5%	60 +4%	69	56
2011-12	4	79	79	72 +6%	68 +2%	66	66
2012-13	5	82	77	77 +5%	71 +7%	72	64
2013-14	6	70	69	61 +7% Gap reduced by 43.75%	61 +5% Gap reduced by 38.46%	54	56

EOC Achievement Analysis 2015:

All SC Students				CDEPP Students		Low-Income Students in CDEPP Districts	
Academic Year	Grade	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
COHORT 2 (4K in 2007-08)							
2011-12	3	81	73	76 +6%	65 +7%	70	58
2012-13	4	79	80	73 +7%	73 +7%	66	66
2013-14	5	80	76	74 +7%	68 +8%	67	60
COHORT 3 (4K in 2008-09)							
2012-13	3	83	70	78 +6%	59 +6%	72	53
2013-14	4	76	75	67 +4%	64 +5%	63	59
COHORT 4 (4K in 2009-10)							
2013-14	3	79	72	73 +7%	60 +3%	66	57

In Summary:

- South Carolina preschoolers enrolled in the state's public-private 4K expansion are demonstrating **consistently stronger academic achievement** than a comparison group of low-income peers **through 6th grade**.
- At sixth grade, students enrolled in 4K had closed **43.7% of the English Language Arts performance gap** between comparable, non-participants and all SC students. This figure was **38.4% in Mathematics**.

What's Next:

- **Instruction:** mClass Circle is designed to assist teachers in identifying and addressing specific early literacy needs.
- **Community Planning:** Need to work within local communities to stress the importance of language and literacy development from birth to four. This is the combined work of families, preschool providers, the faith community and a host of other stakeholders.