



The Reverend Susan Blackburn Heath  
South Carolina LARCUM  
c/o The Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina  
1115 Marion Street Columbia, SC 29201

October 27, 2015

Dear Reverend Heath,

We are writing you jointly to share news of an important collaboration between South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness and the South Carolina Department of Education – and to invite the partnership of LARCUM.

As you may be aware, Act 287 of 2014 (First Steps' recent reauthorization) established South Carolina's first-ever legal definition of school readiness:

*"School readiness' means the level of child development necessary to ensure early school success as measured in the following domains: physical health and motor skills; emotional and social competence; language and literacy development; and mathematical thinking and cognitive skills. School readiness is supported by the knowledge and practices of families, caregivers, healthcare providers, educators, and communities. "*  
- Section 59-152-25

Recognizing that this concise definition was insufficient to depict the concept to the public, the act also charged the First Steps Board of Trustees and State Board of Education to work in collaboration to craft a family-friendly *description of kindergarten readiness* to include not only the characteristics of the ready five-year-old, but the characteristics of ready schools, educators, families/caregivers and communities.

Our respective boards and staff have worked with key stakeholders over a period of months to craft the attached consensus document adopted as final by both the First Steps Board of Trustees and State Board of Education on Wednesday, October 14, 2015.

In association with this work, First Steps plans a joint distribution of this document designed to coincide with a school readiness public awareness campaign called "I Can" - which will highlight not only the skills and characteristics of the ready child (*"I can recognize the letters in my name"*) but also the critical roles we each play in preparing South Carolina's children for school success (*"I can read to my child every day"*).

**Before its printing and public distribution, we wanted to invite you to consider whether LARCUM might wish to join us as a co-signer of the description of kindergarten readiness. As with the current Profile of the SC Graduate, it is our hope to see this document used and endorsed widely as a consensus statement to the citizens of South Carolina – and are happy to add as many co-signers as possible.**

Ideally, we will print a first run of the document within the coming month to six weeks, but will also maintain an electronic version to which we can continually add new endorsers. We hope you will consider reviewing this work and lending the support of LARCUM.

Please let us know if you have any questions or if you would like a formal presentation of this material. We look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your longstanding collaboration.

Respectfully,



Ken Wingate, Chairman  
SC First Steps Board of Trustees



Molly Spearman  
State Superintendent of Education