

**South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees**  
**January 27, 2016 -- 1 p.m.**  
**Brookland Baptist Conference Center**

**A g e n d a**

1. **Call to Order/Quorum Call**
2. **Welcome/Introductions**
3. **Approval of Minutes of December 3, 2015 Annual Meeting**
4. **Chairman's Report** – Ken Wingate
  - a. New Trustee: Kathryn Burkhalter (Finance and Administration Committee)
  - b. New Committee Chairs: Jennifer McConnell (Program and Grants)  
Alexia Newman (Strategic Planning and Evaluation)
5. **Committee Reports:**
  - A. Legislative Committee – *Senator Mike Fair, Chair*
    - a. First Steps Reauthorization (Information Only)
  - B. Finance and Administration – *Judith Aughtry, Chair*
    - a. Charleston County First Steps Waiver Request (Action Item)  
***Motion: Approve the waiver request of Charleston County First Steps for the remainder of FY16, requiring dual signature of invoices exceeding \$2,000. Staff will monitor and evaluate this process.***
    - b. Finance Report (Information Only)
    - c. Update on State Budget Request (Information Only)
  - C. Program and Grants – *Jennifer McConnell, Chair*
    - a. New Partnership Strategies (Action Item)  
***Motion: The committee recommends approval of new strategy requests from Dorchester (1) and Florence (3) Counties.***
    - b. County Partnership FY16 Conditional Approvals (Information Only)
    - d. Update on FY17 Accountability Standards (Information Only)
  - D. Strategic Planning and Evaluation – *Alexia Newman, Chair*
    - a. Strategic Planning Next Steps (Information Only)
  - E. Executive Committee – Ken Wingate, Chair
    - a. Committee Update (Information Only)
6. **Interim Director's Report** – *Julia-Ellen Davis*
  - a. BabyNet Report to General Assembly
  - b. EOC 4K Evaluation
  - c. Early Head Start Update
  - d. [I CAN] Update
7. **Old Business:**
  - a. Early Head Start Governance Council (Action Item)  
***Motion 1: Approve proposed revisions to the Early Head Start Governance Council Charter, contingent on Region IV review.***  
***Motion 2: Approve the proposed slate of Early Head Start Governance Council members as proposed by the Executive Committee. Legal Counsel will be provided by the agency as necessary. A Head Start parent nominee will be brought forward at a later date.***
  - b. Discussion of Early Childhood Common Agenda and whether or not SCFS wants to endorse
8. **Closing Remarks** – *Ken Wingate*



South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness  
Annual Meeting  
December 3, 2015

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Members Present (20):**

Ken Wingate, Chair  
Julie Hussey, Vice Chair  
Lisa Van Riper, Secretary  
Senator Mike Fair  
Rep. Jerry Govan  
Superintendent Molly Spearman  
Roger Pryor  
Dr. Beverly Buscemi  
Susan Alford  
Rick Noble  
Tim Holt  
Julia-Ellen Davis  
Mary Lynn Diggs  
Alexia Newman  
Sue Williams  
Judith Aughtry  
Walter Fleming  
Jennifer McConnell  
Dr. Amy Williams  
Christian Soura

**Members Absent (5):**

Senator Gerald Malloy  
Rep. Rita Allison  
Katherine Heigel  
Tracy Lamb  
Evelyn Patterson

**Others Present:**

Susan DeVenny  
Dr. Dan Wuori  
Mark Barnes  
Debbie Robertson  
Samantha Ingram  
Ginger Ryall  
Deborah Padgett  
Carletta Isreal  
Kristie Musick  
LaMyra Sanders  
Craig King

Martha Strickland  
Jim Riddle  
Lisa Dial  
Dr. Cassandra Johnson  
Dorothy Priester  
Rosemary Wilson  
Megan Branham

### **Welcome and Introductions, Quorum Call and Adoption of Minutes**

Mr. Wingate called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm, noted the presence of a quorum and reminded those in attendance that the meeting was being held in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act. **Upon a motion by Ms. Aughtry and a second by Mr. Pryor the Board unanimously adopted the meeting agenda.**

**Mr. Noble noted a correction to the draft November 2, 2015 minutes, requesting that he be reflected as having abstained from the Board's vote to adopt an Early Head Start Governance Council Charter. Upon a motion by Ms. Hussey and a second by Ms. McConnell the Board unanimously adopted the meeting minutes of November 2, 2015 as amended.**

### **Annual Report**

Dr. Wuori provided an overview of the agency's 2015 Annual Report, noting the presence of individual pages dedicated to each local partnership and highlighting selected data points.

### **Strategic Plan**

Ms. Van Riper provided an overview of the Board's draft Vision 2020 Strategic Planning document, reviewing the Board's process and changes made since the November meeting. Ms. Van Riper introduced the report's three strategic themes and their seven associated priorities:

1. Increase access to quality early childhood programs and resources.
  - a. Further expand access to high-quality early care, education, and early literacy services, particularly in the Abbeville plaintiff districts.
  - b. Enhance comprehensive services to children 0-5 and the families/caregivers who support them, recognizing families as the first and best teachers of their children.
  - c. Increase understanding of school readiness domains and assessment, and "what works" to help young children succeed. Make information easily accessible in all communities and for all families.
2. Enhance leadership development and capacity building.
  - a. Build state and local capacity by strengthening interagency collaboration, public-private partnerships, strengthening technical assistance and leadership development for early childhood partners statewide.
  - b. Enhance systems of support for local partnerships, BabyNet providers, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships and 4K families.
3. Strengthen interagency accountability and public-private collaboration.
  - a. Examine and strengthen early childhood transitions for children among SC's early childhood system partners to ensure continuity of care and healthy development.
  - b. Develop a system of shared, interagency accountability (state and local, public and private) by developing a shared data system, an inventory of services to children 0-5, and an interagency children's budget.

Ms. Van Riper noted that the Board's work over the coming months will be to operationalize the plan's themes and priorities. Ms. Hussey thanked Ms. Van Riper and the Strategic Planning and

Evaluation Committee for their hard work, noting that the plan will guide the Board as it considers the next steps in the agency's work. Mr. Wingate expressed his excitement that the plan would provide an opportunity to incorporate the priorities of each First Steps partner agency.

After discussion Mr. Wingate called for a vote on the recommendation of the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee. The Board unanimously adopted the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan.

### **Director's Report**

Ms. DeVenny expressed her thanks to all Trustees and staff participating in the summer 2015 site visits, noting that the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan was meaningfully informed by the priorities of local partnerships.

Ms. DeVenny thanked Susan Alford of the SC Department of Social Services for the agencies' recent collaborative work. She noted both the work of an interagency child care work team and DSS' recent assistance in the procurement of technology for First Steps' 4K classrooms.

Mr. Barnes provided the Board with an update on the recent BabyNet Think Tank meetings, in which approximately 50 system stakeholders have been working to craft a comprehensive plan to address the interagency system's longstanding history of underperformance. An associated report will be submitted to the SC General Assembly by January 1, 2016 along with a prioritized budget request. Mr. Barnes reviewed recent improvements to the BabyNet data and payment systems, and noted recent increases in the program's caseload and rapidly rising service costs. He reviewed plans to deploy 23 new FTE positions.

Ms. DeVenny noted that the meeting would be her last after a 16-year tenure as both a founding trustee (4 years) and Director (12 years). Effective December 16, 2015, Ms. DeVenny will assume the role of President at Lancaster's J. Marion Sims Foundation. She offered reflections on the growth of First Steps and pledged her ongoing support as a volunteer for the agency.

Mr. Wingate thanked Ms. DeVenny for her leadership and recognized Ms. Davis, who will assume the role of Interim Director on December 16, 2015. He noted that he, Ms. Davis and Dr. Wuori had held a number of planning meetings and expressed confidence in the continuity of all agency operations.

### **Early Childhood Common Agenda**

Ms. DeVenny recognized Ms. Williams of the Children's Trust, who in turn recognized Ms. Megan Branham who provided a brief overview of the Early Childhood Common Agenda. Ms. Branham described the agenda as containing 9 recommendations in two categories: Child Care/Early Childhood Education and Financing/Economic Stability. Ms. Branham explained that the draft Agenda was currently undergoing revision and it was agreed that the Trust would provide the proposed final document to First Steps staff for distribution to the Board in advance of the January 27, 2016 meeting. The Board will have additional discussion of the Agenda at that time.

### **Greenville Early Childhood Event**

Senator Fair called the Board's attention to an upcoming early childhood symposium to be sponsored by the Greenville Children's Hospital and noted the opportunity for First Steps to serve as a co-sponsor at no cost. **After discussion, Senator Fair made a motion to have First Steps co-**

**sponsor of the February 2016 event at no cost to the agency. After a second by Ms. Van Riper, the Board unanimously adopted the motion.**

Mr. Noble requested additional information on the cost of the 2015 Chairmen's Summit and [I Can] campaign. Mr. Barnes and Ms. DeVenny noted that both are being underwritten by private funds and Mr. Barnes agreed to provide additional information in January.

There being no additional business, the Board adjourned at 2:55pm.



To: First Steps State Board of Trustees  
From: Judith Aughtry, Chair, Finance and Administration Committee  
Date: January 27, 2016

**RE: Report from Finance and Administration Committee Meeting – January 25, 2016**

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The Program and Grants Committee met by teleconference on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 and brings forth the following:

1. **ACTION ITEM: CHARLESTON WAIVER REQUEST** - The Finance and Administration Committee reviewed a waiver request from Charleston County First Steps, which has requested to raise its threshold for payment authorizations requiring both the Executive Director and a board member's signature from \$500 to \$2,000. The partnership is a recent Early Head Start Grantee and has a large number of recent invoices over \$500, requiring board members to travel to the local office to countersign. The committee recommends approval of this waiver request for the remainder of FY16 and has directed staff to monitor and evaluate this process.

**MOTION: Approve the waiver request of Charleston County First Steps for the remainder of FY16, requiring dual signature of invoices exceeding \$2,000. Staff will monitor and evaluate this process.**

2. **INFORMATION ITEM: FINANCIAL REPORT** – A copy of the monthly financial report is attached.
3. **INFORMATION ITEM: STATE BUDGET UPDATE** - First Steps had its Ways and Means budget hearing on Tuesday, January 12. A supplemental request reflecting the findings of the BabyNet "Think Tank" was presented. The agency's full, amended request can be viewed at:

<http://1.usa.gov/1PzmwpV>



**To: Finance and Administration Committee**  
**From: Debbie Robertson, Chief Partnership Officer, SC First Steps**  
**Date: January 13, 2016**

**RE: Waiver for second signature requirement for invoices in excess of \$500**

The Chair of the Charleston First Steps Board has requested that we provide a waiver from the current requirement that all invoices in excess of \$500 require both a local staff person and board member's signature. The Chair suggests that a second signature be required only when invoices exceed \$2,000.

Currently the First Steps Operations Manual (Chapter 10 C.) reads:

*Prepare a payment authorization form if you approve of the invoice (effective December 1, 2002, all invoices in excess of \$500 must have two county designated signatures. These two signatures must be a county office staff person and a board member. The board member should be the Chair, the Vice-Chair, the chair of your finance committee (or your Treasurer, whichever is applicable to your county) or another appropriately designated board member.)*

The state office staff recommends that a waiver process be put in place for those partnerships experiencing large volumes of invoices in excess of \$500 and delays in payment due to the need for board members signatures. The waiver process would include the following:

1. The Board Chair submit a letter of request to the First Steps State Director
2. The waiver would allow an increase for the second signature requirement from the current \$500 to invoices exceeding \$2,000.
3. The waiver would need to be renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year.
4. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of this change, the Regional Finance Manager (RFM) will provide a quarterly report listing the invoices processed that exceeded \$500, to the assigned state office Technical Assistant and state Finance staff for review.
5. The First Steps State Office would evaluate the request and make a recommendation to the Finance Committee of the State Board of Trustees for review and approval.
6. The Local Partnership Board Chair would be notified of the decision.

Attachments: Letter from Charleston Board Chair



December 15, 2015

**CORRECTED COPY**

To whom it may concern:

My name is Lorraine O. Powers and I am Chairman of the Charleston County First Steps Partnership Board. Presently, I have second signature authority for invoices in excess of \$500. I'm requesting a waiver to increase the signature authority for invoices from \$500 to \$2,000. Most invoices received for payment are under \$2,000.

It is an unrealistic expectation to have board members travel to the First Steps office on a daily basis to sign invoices of \$500. This would delay payment of invoices that exceed that amount. Most board members have jobs, or are involved in a variety of other activities. Making a trip to the partnership office on a daily basis or every other day is basically impossible. There are other board members with signature authority, but the fact still remains. The size of our budget requires the partnership to process invoices on a daily basis.

The board has approved our executive director to have no limitations on budget re-allocations and no limitations on contract authorizations for many, many years, but she can't approval an invoice payment authorization over \$500 without a second signature.

Please take this request under serious advisement and grant second signature approval for invoices in excess of \$2,000. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lorraine O. Powers".

Lorraine O. Powers  
Charleston County First Steps  
Board Chairman



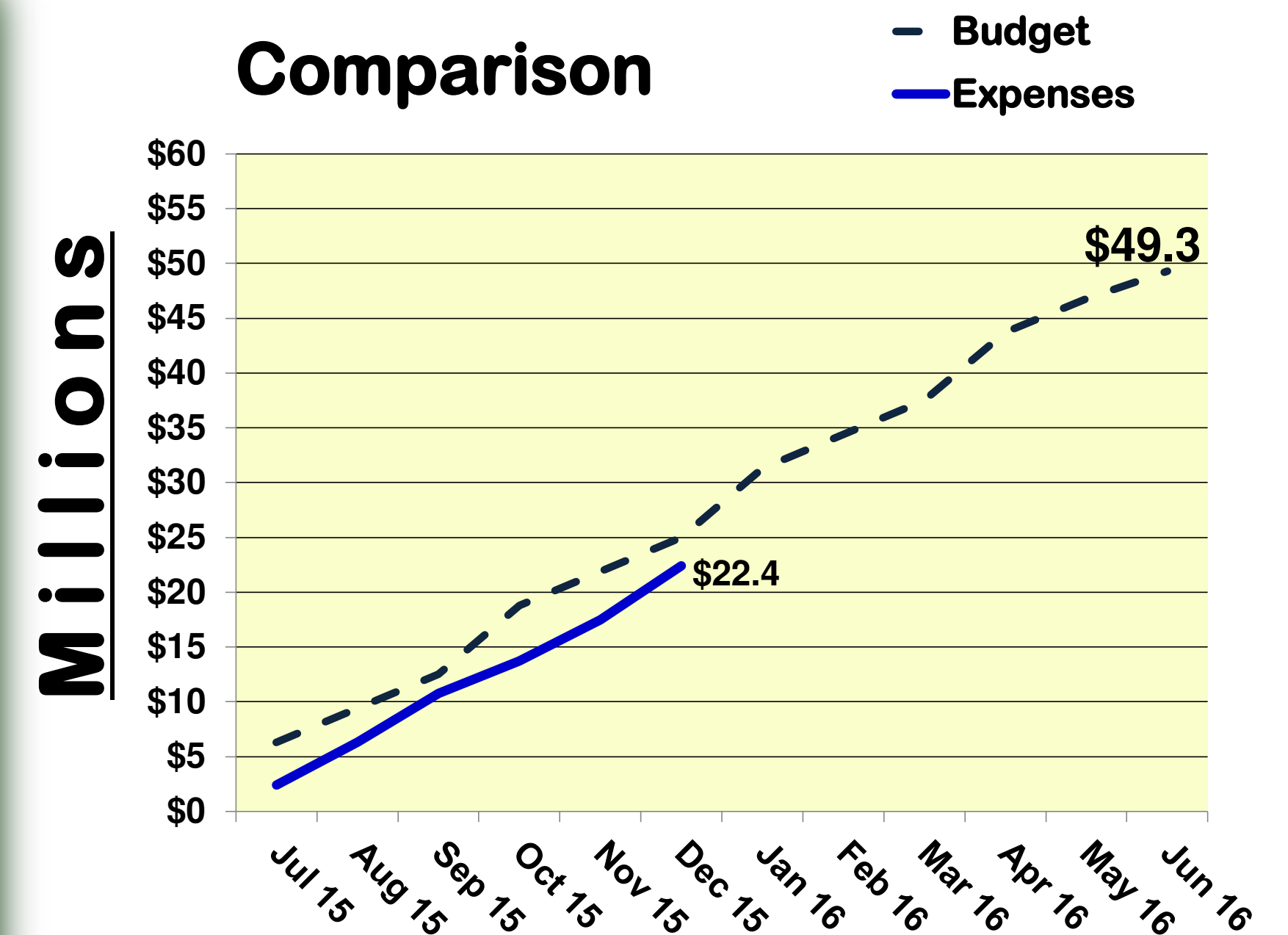
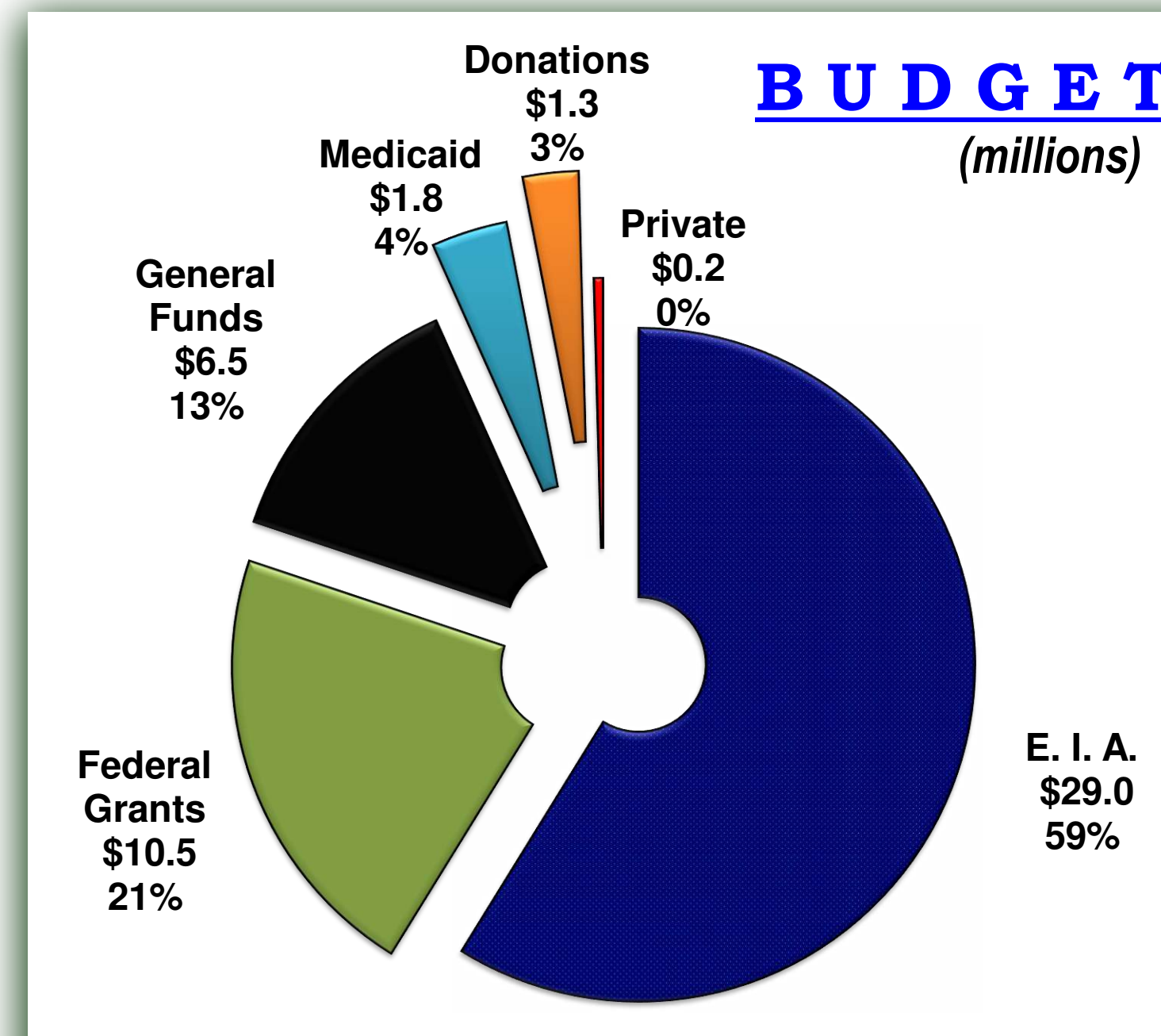


# FY 2016 Financial Status Report

**As of:**  
December 31, 2015

| SPENDING RATES          |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Projected =             | 44% |
| Actual =                | 45% |
| Spending is OVER Budget |     |

## Budgets vs. Expenditures



| PROGRAMS / OPERATIONS     | APPROVED BUDGET<br>Jun 20, 2015 | DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET |                     |                   |                     |                      |                     | CURRENT BUDGET<br>Total | BUDGET CHANGES      | EXPENDITURES         |            | BALANCE             |            |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|
|                           |                                 | E.I.A.                 | Gen. Fund           | Private           | Medicaid            | Federal              | Donations           |                         |                     | Actual               | %          | Amount              | %          |
| LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS (LP)   | \$ 12,693,265                   | \$ 12,693,265          | \$ -                | \$ -              | \$ -                | \$ -                 | \$ -                | \$ 12,693,265           | \$ -                | \$ 9,812,498         | 77%        | \$ 2,880,767        | 23%        |
| LP SUPPORT & TECH. ASST.  | \$ 773,164                      | \$ 1,295,000           | \$ -                | \$ -              | \$ -                | \$ -                 | \$ -                | \$ 1,295,000            | \$ 521,836          | \$ 595,830           | 46%        | \$ 699,170          | 54%        |
| PRIVATE 4-K               | \$ 16,277,864                   | \$ 9,662,864           | \$ 6,510,000        | \$ -              | \$ -                | \$ 212,000           | \$ -                | \$ 16,384,864           | \$ 107,000          | \$ 6,423,550         | 39%        | \$ 9,961,314        | 61%        |
| EARLY HEAD START          | \$ 4,410,825                    | \$ -                   | \$ -                | \$ -              | \$ -                | \$ 4,160,565         | \$ -                | \$ 4,160,565            | \$ (250,260)        | \$ 39,213            | 1%         | \$ 4,121,352        | 99%        |
| BABYNET                   | \$ 11,896,150                   | \$ 4,004,573           | \$ -                | \$ -              | \$ 1,800,000        | \$ 6,091,577         | \$ -                | \$ 11,896,150           | \$ -                | \$ 4,992,242         | 42%        | \$ 6,903,908        | 58%        |
| COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN | \$ 65,000                       | \$ 70,000              | \$ -                | \$ -              | \$ -                | \$ -                 | \$ -                | \$ 70,000               | \$ 5,000            | \$ -                 | 0%         | \$ 70,000           | 100%       |
| POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY   | \$ 3,301,962                    | \$ 1,304,906           | \$ 8,480            | \$ 150,000        | \$ -                | \$ -                 | \$ 1,350,000        | \$ 2,813,386            | \$ (488,576)        | \$ 494,445           | 18%        | \$ 2,318,941        | 82%        |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>       | <b>\$49,418,230</b>             | <b>\$ 29,030,608</b>   | <b>\$ 6,518,480</b> | <b>\$ 150,000</b> | <b>\$ 1,800,000</b> | <b>\$ 10,464,142</b> | <b>\$ 1,350,000</b> | <b>\$ 49,313,230</b>    | <b>\$ (105,000)</b> | <b>\$ 22,357,778</b> | <b>45%</b> | <b>\$26,955,452</b> | <b>55%</b> |

### NOTES:

#### 1) Local Partnerships:

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

#### 2) Federal grants are multi-year and cross State Fiscal Years

#### 3) LP Support & Technical Assistance

- Regional finance managers (RFM).....accounting firms
- Accounting software network support & data housing
- Programmatic data housing & network support
- Workers' compensation insurance coverage
- External programmatic evaluation
- Financial audits --- annually

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

- Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors
- OFS program staff (salaries & fringe benefits)
- Operations cost
- Travel cost to LPs
- Lease (cost allocation of office rent)

#### 4) \$105K Transfer to the Education Oversight Committee for Private 4K Evaluation Costs

PREPARED BY: Russ Brown



# FY 16 DONATIONS

| DATE REC'D   | AMOUNT       | DONOR                         | USE          | PURPOSE / COMMENTS                               |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Jul 29, 2015 | \$ 15,000.00 | Physicians' Charity           | Restricted   | Reading materials in pediatricians waiting rooms |
| Aug 19, 2015 | \$ 180.00    | TRUiST Connect                | Unrestricted | General use                                      |
| Sep 23, 2015 | \$ 1,230.00  | Head Start Collaboration      | Restricted   | Parenting Keynote Speaker                        |
| Oct 28, 2015 | \$ 1,000.00  | Kaplan Early Learning Company | Restricted   | 2015 Chairmen's Summit on Early Childhood        |
| Nov 9, 2015  | \$ 210.00    | TRUiST Connect                | Unrestricted | General use                                      |
| Nov 30, 2015 | \$ 1,000.00  | Furman University             | Restricted   | Parents As Teachers (PAT)                        |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |
|              |              |                               |              |  |

**TOTAL     \$ 18,620.00**

**NOTES:**

- 1) *TRUiST Connect is a Washington, DC based firm focused on corporate social responsibility and employee giving campaign processing. In March 2014 TRUiST Connect was acquired by a Reston, VA based company named FrontStream Payments, Inc.*



To: First Steps State Board of Trustees  
From: Jennifer McConnell, Chair, Program and Grants Committee  
Date: January 27, 2016

**RE: Report from Program and Grants Committee Meeting – January 25, 2016**

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The Program and Grants Committee met by teleconference on Monday, January 25, 2016 and brings forth the following:

1. **ACTION ITEM: NEW STRATEGIES** - The Program and Grants Committee reviewed budget reallocation requests and recommends to the State Board for approval new programs in Dorchester (1) and Florence (3) as per the attached chart. In addition changes in the budgets of Fairfield and Greenville are provided for information only.

**MOTION: The committee recommends approval of new strategy requests from Dorchester (1) and Florence (3) Counties.**

2. **INFORMATION ITEM: UPDATE ON CONDITIONAL APPROVALS** - Technical Assistance Staff provided an update regarding those partnerships receiving Conditional Approvals attached to their Grant Agreements. Those Local Partnerships who have not yet attained compliance with the program standards in question or have not made sufficient progress on their corrective action plan, will be receiving a memo from the Chair of the Program and Grants Committee notifying them that they have until February 29<sup>th</sup> to come into compliance. Their progress will be reviewed at the next Program and Grants Committee meeting and if necessary the Committee will bring a recommendation for further action to the State Board. The detailed staff status report is attached.
3. **INFORMATION ITEM: UPDATE ON FY 16 PARTNERSHIP AND PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS** - State office technical assistance staff is compiling suggested changes to the FY 16 Accountability Standards from Local Partnership executive directors and staff, as well as state office program managers and senior staff. The Draft Standards will be posted on the First Step website for review and comment from February 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>. Proposed revisions will be brought to the program and grants committee for review and discussion at their next meeting. FY 17 Standards are scheduled to be approved by the State Board of Trustees at their March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.





**First Steps County Partnerships**  
**FY 2016 Reallocation of Budgets 15% and Greater**  
**JANUARY 2016**

The Programs and Grants Committee respectfully submits to the Board of Trustees the following counties' requests for the allocation of budgets and/or the re-allocation of budgets where the reduction is greater than 15% of the TOTAL program/strategy. The counties' requests for the allocation/reallocation of PUBLIC (state & EIA appropriated) and/or PRIVATE (state-level) AND Federal (TANF) budgets/funds are presented to the Board of Trustees for information only and/or need approval. (*The SC First Steps Chief Program Officer has reviewed and preliminarily approved these budget adjustments.*)

| COUNTY PARTNERSHIP | FUNDING SOURCE | FROM PROGRAMS AND AMOUNTS | TO PROGRAMS AND AMOUNTS | JUSTIFICATION |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|

**RE-ALLOCATIONS ( Information Only )**

|                  |                |   |  |  |
|------------------|----------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Fairfield</b> | Fund 55 and 20 | 909-2 - Early Identification and Referral<br>Fund 55- \$10,026 + Fund 20 - \$720 = \$10,746 - Total to be reallocated | 201-2 Parents As Teachers, 406-2 Countdown to Kindergarten, 601-2 Child Care Quality Enhancement | The Fairfield Board has decided to suspend their Early Identification Program due to lack of staff time and resources to properly implement. These funds will be distributed to the 3 other programs they deliver. |
|------------------|----------------|---|--|--|

**NEW ALLOCATION OF PENDING FUNDS ( P&G Committee Approval Required )**

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

**NEW STRATEGIES ( B.O.T. Approval Required )**

|                   |         |   |                                    |  |
|-------------------|---------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Dorchester</b> | Fund 56 | Carry-forward: \$5000                   | 7031: Scholarships                 | In making the decision to implement Child Care Scholarships, DCFS decided to link them to building self-sufficiency for at risk families, in particular: 1. Young mothers looking to enter the workforce and needing to build a resume that will allow them to get a job that will both pay for child care tuition and bring in income. Entry level jobs often don't allow for this but employment equals experience which equals, over time, increased pay leading to greater self-sufficiency. 2. Parenting Teens sometimes are faced with the decision of how to remain in school and care for their child. Providing child care for these teens will support them completing school with a diploma thus setting the stage for greater family self-sufficiency. |
| <b>Florence</b>   | Fund 56 | Carry-forward: \$10,231                 | 905-0 - Home-based health services | Florence First Steps will be contracting with Pee Dee Healthy Start to provide an integrated, comprehensive home-health visitation program for families of children ages 0 to 5. The program will work to enhance parenting skills using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire at regular intervals to assess children in their natural environments and educate parents about how they can assist their child in the key developmental domains of communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal-social.  |
| <b>Florence</b>   | Fund 56 | Carry-forward: \$20,000                 | 206-1 - Parent Child Home (PCH)    | Florence First Steps will use carry forward funds to support PCH services by contracting with Florence School District 3. This program is also being funded in Florence School Districts 4 and 5.  |
| <b>Florence</b>   | Fund 55 | 206-1 Parent Child Home (PCH): \$20,000 | 201-1 Parents as Teachers (PAT)    | In October the Florence 1 school district elected to change their parenting curriculum from PCH to PAT - the contract with Florence First Steps has been adjusted to reflect this change in curriculum and the PAT program is now being implemented and monitored as per program requirements.   |

**NEW STRATEGIES (Information Only)**

|                   |         |  |   |  |
|-------------------|---------|--|---|--|
| <b>Greenville</b> | Fund 20 | \$250,000 to \$400,000<br>Private funds not currently budgeted | 701: Child Care Resource and Referral (note- Board is deciding whether to run program in-house or contract with another entity) | Greenville First Steps will begin implementing a pilot project for a Shared Service Network for child care providers in partnership with the Institute for Child Success and the Department of Social Services. The network will offer: online training system, share buying power portal and an "ask the expert" resource room. The project will last 18 months and cross fiscal years. |
|-------------------|---------|--|---|--|



## **Status Report on Local Partnership Conditional Approvals for FY 16 Grant Agreements**

**Prepared by: Debbie Robertson, Chief Partnership Officer**

Beginning in 2008, the First Steps On-Line Data Collection System began collecting client level and detailed program implementation data for those programs of greatest investment. This ability to uniformly track program performance enabled the review of the annual County Partnership Renewal Plans (i.e. grant requests) based on program performance the prior year. Program Standards are adopted by the State Board each year that outline the requirements for quality program implementation. It is the activities outlined in these standards that the data system is designed to track. By 2010, a Renewal Plan review process was established that utilized “Conditional Approval Codes” – allowing the review and approval by program strategy rather than for the County Renewal Plan as a whole. This facilitated approval of Renewal Plans so that successful programs could continue as in prior years and those programs needing further attention and technical assistance could be targeted.

The South Carolina First Steps Partnership and Program Accountability Standards delineate specific performance expectations and requirements for partnerships. As a result of performance deficits during FY15, 12 County Partnerships received “Conditional Approvals” for FY 16. One county suspended operation of their strategy early in the fiscal year. The concerns and a specific set of corrective actions were provided to the other 11 county partnerships as part of the FY 16 Grant Agreement. All of the County Partnerships except Sumter have submitted corrective action plans as part of their “Priority Goals for FY 16”.

As of the end of the second quarter the following counties are in compliance with their corrective action plan:

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| Kershaw    | Jasper   |
| Dorchester | Marlboro |
| Greenville | York     |

State Technical Assistance staff members are continuing to work with following counties to complete the goals set forth for the corrective action plans they have submitted:

|         |          |
|---------|----------|
| Chester | Lee      |
| Marion  | Barnwell |

Despite repeated attempts to contact the Sumter Executive Director regarding the need for a corrective action plan, the state office has yet to receive one. In addition, they are not meeting the data entry requirements for developmental screenings in their Scholarship and Parents as Teachers programs – which is what they were cited for in their renewal review. The proposed next step is to provide information about all incomplete or missing data and documents for Sumter First Steps to the local board chair as well as the ED, with a deadline of February 29 for: 1) submitting all past due data and documents, including a corrective action plan for the partnership's two Conditional Approvals; and 2) demonstrating significant progress toward resolving all Conditional Approvals. Also inform the partnership board chair and ED that the Program and Grants Committee will review the partnership's compliance with these requirements at its next meeting and may recommend action by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees if the partnership does not meet this deadline.



To: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees  
From: Julia-Ellen C. Davis, Interim Director  
Date: January 27, 2016  
Re: Director's Report January 2016

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2015 was a great year for SC First Steps, with a new strategic plan, the receipt of federal Early Head Start funding, expansions of private sector 4K, and the delivery of high-quality partnership services in each of South Carolina's 46 counties. I want to thank Susan DeVenny and our staff for their tireless work to meet the mandates of the agency's 2014 reauthorization legislation. I began as Interim Director on December 16, 2015 and have been hard at work with state and local staff to ensure that our 2016 is just as successful.

### **Legislative Update**

It's been a busy time at the State House, with First Steps participating in a number of scheduled hearings in December and January. First Steps leaders testified before the House Legislative Oversight Committee's Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee on both December 11, 2015 and January 14, 2016. As you may recall, the House Oversight Process is one in which each state agency will be involved on a seven year cycle. At this time we anticipate at least two additional meetings before the Subcommittee wraps its work on First Steps and makes recommendations to the full committee. We have been delighted with the opportunity to work with this committed group from the SC House of Representatives Subcommittee members (Chairman James Smith, Representative Gary Clary, Representative Joe Jefferson, and Representative Tommy Stringer).

First Steps presented its FY17 Budget request before the Ways and Means Committee's Public Education and Special Schools Subcommittee on Tuesday, January 12 and returned on Tuesday, January 26 to review education provisos. We will make a supplemental presentation on BabyNet to the Healthcare Subcommittee in early February.

As you know, 2016 is a reauthorization year for First Steps. On January 13, Governor Haley unveiled an education agenda that would include dividing the programs of SC First Steps across three other agencies. House and Senate lawmakers, meanwhile, are preparing to file reauthorization language to extend the reforms enacted in Act 287 of 2014. We are eager to discuss all of these proposals with policy makers, and are thrilled that early childhood education will be a major topic of discussion during the 2016 legislative session.

### **Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Update**

We have issued contracts to child care partners in each of our twelve Early Head Start counties and after center renovations will begin enrolling 254 infants and toddlers. These contracts cover 32 classrooms in 15 child care center within Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Saluda and York Counties.

Rebecca Brown, our Early Head Start Director, has worked with a contractor to evaluate each partner site in order to establish the costs of needed renovations which will be addressed using start-up funds. All sites that require renovation were visited the week of January 19.

Applications are currently under review for the EHS Fiscal Manager, with interviews to take place in early February. On January 29, postings will close at <http://scfirststeps.com/employment-opportunities> for the grant's Health Coordinator, the ERSEA/Family Service Manager, two Education Coordinators and a Program Assistant.

Staff continue to participate in weekly conference calls with our EHS start up consultants and regular calls with the state's other First Steps EHS-CCP grantees to discuss progress and challenges.

Staff met with the new Region IV Manager Bob Bialas on December 17 to discuss progress to date and to review previous requests for an updated notice of award and to discuss the Board's proposed EHS Governance Council. A Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) email was received from Region IV to confirm the revised funded enrollment (254) and a revised Notice of Award is being processed by the regional office.

Other accomplishments in January include the following:

- Completed a recent revision of the decision-making and milestone timetable from Nov. 2015 – July 2016.
- Updated a Training and Technical Assistance Plan (T/TA) for EHS staff and Child Care Partnership (CCP) staff.
- Developed legal CCP contract language with agreement timeframes for Phase 1 (start-up) and Phase 2 (full enrollment).

The children will begin to be served in Spring 2016 with full enrollment by the federal deadline of July 2016.

### **[I CAN] Campaign**

The [I CAN] campaign, which informs and educates the public about the benchmarks of kindergarten readiness is spreading around the state, with nine privately-funded billboards now positioned in prime locations across the state, including I-26, I-20 and US378 near Columbia, I26 near Clinton, I85 near Gaffney, I95 near Walterboro, and US52 near Darlington. For the next few weeks, these messages will feature [I CAN] statements from children, describing readiness across the major domains of readiness: language and literacy; approaches to learning and inquiry; physical development, self-help and motor skills; emotional and social development; and mathematical thinking. A written staff update, containing these billboard graphics is attached.

In addition to these billboards, [I CAN] messages are appearing online at [www.ican.sc](http://www.ican.sc) and on social media. These messages will be available to local partnerships in banner, Instagram, and newspaper ad formats. Local partnership Facebook pages are "liking and sharing" [I CAN] posts, with several partnerships launching their own [I CAN] campaigns locally. Some great examples include: Pickens County First Steps' *I CAN Be Ready for School Blog*: <http://www.pickenscountyfirststeps.org/blog/> and the Richland County First Steps *I CAN Slide Show*: <http://www.rcfirststeps.org/whats-the-deal-with-i-can>.

Since the campaign's launch, local partnerships have collected hundreds of [I CAN] statements from parents, educators, and civic, faith and business leaders in communities across the state. In the next few weeks, the statements from adults will be featured on the [I CAN] billboards, website, social media and local media outlets via county partnerships.

### **First Steps 4K**

Part One of the Education Oversight Committee's 2016 4K Report was released on January 15. Private 4K students' early literacy results on Circle were superior in 4K and roughly equivalent in 5K (Circle). (A copy of the Executive Summary is contained in your Board packet today.) Private providers received a significant amount of training and technical assistance in supporting the early literacy initiative. They reported being better prepared to administer the Circle assessment, as they used the results to meaningfully inform instruction, administered the Circle more often (mid-year and year-end), and used the data to inform parents. Part II of the Education Oversight Committee 4K Report will focus on 2015-2016 assessment data.

January began with all 4K Coordinators participating in a week's training towards reliability on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. This tool will continually raise quality in our classrooms through reflection, assessment, monitoring, coaching, and mentoring. The strong emphasis in this new version of ECERS is on teacher/student interactions, which will support our program goals to raise quality.

Our 4K Coordinators provided training on January 14 for 36 teachers who did not attend the 4K Academy 2105. January 15 was a state wide professional development day for 238 Lead Teachers and Assistants. Our objectives were devoted to supporting curriculum, standards, assessment, and the social-emotional domain. Our next professional development day is March 11 and it will be held regionally with an emphasis on individualizing and connecting student assessment data with standards and growth.



More than 2,600 Student Unique Identifiers have been assigned to students in 201 classrooms at 178 centers. Recruitment is underway for new providers in 2016-2017. Current centers have received the 2016-2017 Student Application and new students are being registered.

### **BabyNet Update**

After months of work by a diverse “BabyNet Think Tank” comprised by roughly 50 interagency and community partners, First Steps published a comprehensive report to the General Assembly on December 30. (A copy of the Executive Summary is contained in your Board packet today.) This report lays out a blueprint for bringing the interagency BabyNet system into federal compliance and contains an accompanying budget request, which First Steps has presented to the House Ways and Means Committee as the collective recommendation of the group. We are grateful to Governor Haley for including a \$3M expansion in BabyNet service funds and \$750K for establishing a statewide Eligibility and Evaluation Team contract in her Executive Budget.

18 new positions are in the interview process for the local BabyNet Intake Offices; this includes new locations for some offices based on analysis of location of children referred to the system in FFY 2014. 5 additional positions are in process of posting within the State Office.

The interagency BabyNet Program Managers is currently reviewing and revising current BabyNet Policies and Procedures in advance of the FFY 2016 federal grant application.

### **State Office Facility Updates**

Discussions are in process with our landlord for to have First Steps’ offices on both floors painted. During this time, some offices will be moved to facilitate co-location of specific program staff, which have (in some cases) been placed in offices based on availability, rather than function.

Renovation is complete for the Early Head Start offices on the second floor. Cubicles will be added to large areas such as the large conference on the first floor and the Early Head Start space.



**Ensuring Quality Services for Infants and Toddlers with  
Disabilities and their Families within the BabyNet Early  
Intervention System:**

**An Analysis of Current and Needed Resources**

Prepared by South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness

Pursuant to Proviso 1.96 of the General Appropriations Act for FY2016

December 30, 2015

**Proviso 1.96.** (SDE: First Steps Accountability) Based on the need for stated intervention by the US Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSEP) in implementing Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Office of First Steps to School Readiness must meet federal compliance for the Part C program. Additionally, the Office of First Steps to School Readiness shall report to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and the Governor the specific steps, timeline and progress made in improving meeting compliance standards its performance for those indicators with which the office was scored as being low performing. The report must include a statement regarding whether the additional employees authorized by this act are sufficient for compliance. The report shall also include any correspondence from the US Department of Education concerning the progress made on federal compliance with OSEP state standards. The report must be submitted no later than December 31, 2015. From the funds appropriated for BabyNet, the Office of First Steps to School Readiness may expend the funds necessary to meet the requirements of this proviso.

## **Executive Summary**

BabyNet is South Carolina's interagency, early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays. Enabled under Part C of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, BabyNet provides early childhood special education services to the families of eligible children, designed to prepare each for school success.

The program is funded with a combination of state appropriations and federal grant funds, with current partners including SC First Steps (which serves as the state's designated "lead agency" and oversees local system point of entry offices), the SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, the SC School for the Deaf and the Blind, the SC Department of Health and Human Services, and hundreds of contracted service providers across the state.

Since the program's inception under the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control in 1991, South Carolina's BabyNet program has struggled to comply with strict federal guidelines around the program's operation, becoming the first state in the nation to enter into a federal compliance agreement with the United States Department of Education in 2003. Citing the program's challenged performance and inappropriate placement (BabyNet continues to be misidentified as a health program by many SC stakeholders), Governor Mark Sanford designated SC First Steps to School Readiness as the program's new lead agency in January of 2010.

At the time of its transfer, the program was insolvent (relying on one time federal funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to pay its rapidly rising service costs) and had recently been cited by the SC State Auditor as failing to maintain a system of general supervision. As a support to the new lead agency, lawmakers requested a retrospective review by

the SC Legislative Audit Council, designed to identify areas for improvement within the struggling system.

Since 2010 First Steps – working in near weekly collaboration with national technical assistance resources – has made significant strides toward bringing the BabyNet system into federal compliance, implementing the LAC’s recommendations to the agency, reestablishing the grant’s required system of general supervision, adding efficiency and accountability measures which successfully reversed the substantial fiscal deficits inherited from DHEC in both January of 2010 and July of 2011 (when all remaining front-line BabyNet employees were transferred to First Steps), improving monitoring and supervision of service providers, creating a detailed interagency financial reporting structure, and replacing the system’s outdated data system with one capable of collecting key data required by the federal government.

Despite significant progress, structural weaknesses in the state’s Part C program design and insufficient resources have continued to prevent the BabyNet system from meeting federal expectations. As noted by the LAC in 2011, South Carolina is the only state in the nation in which the state appropriations do not flow exclusively through the program’s lead agency, weakening its required “single line of authority” and limiting First Steps’ ability to redirect cost savings to other areas of need within the program.

One longstanding compliance challenge for the state has been the federal government’s requirement that all eligible children proceed from initial referral, through an eligibility evaluation of the child and family, to the development of a formal Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP, the infant-toddler equivalent of the K-12 system’s Individualized Education Plan or IEP) within 45 days from initial contact. With a small frontline staff charged with processing

roughly 10,000 client referrals annually, the state has been perpetually challenged in its efforts to meet this compliance deadline.

Help is on the way, however. With the support of the General Assembly – which appropriated \$1.1 million and 23 new FTEs to the effort during FY16 – First Steps is currently deploying new staff across the state designed to address this concern. Additionally, a diverse, interagency “BabyNet Think Tank” has been at work over recent months to analyze the system’s current weaknesses and address potential solutions.

This report lays out their findings and prioritizes the targeted, additional resources First Steps and system stakeholders believe will be necessary to ensure the BabyNet system earns a federal designation of “meets requirements” for the first time in its 25 year history. **Among its key recommendations (and associated resources requested) are:**

- Creation of both online and toll-free resources designed to support families and other stakeholders in providing timely and accurate BabyNet referrals.
- Creation of new “Evaluation and Assessment” teams designed to eliminate provider conflict of interest within the IFSP development process and support the lead agency in meeting new federal requirements that individuals representing at least two professional disciplines participate in the IFSP team.
- The establishment of stand-alone (contracted) service coordination resources, allowing BabyNet intake offices to focus exclusively on their duties within the 45 day intake window.
- Expanding service provision within rural and outlying areas via mileage reimbursements for providers travelling more than 30 miles round trip.
- Conducting a comprehensive BabyNet cost study.

- Full seating of a robust and effective State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), as an advisory support to the lead agency.
- Identifying additional resources to address rising, interagency service costs without further limiting eligibility.
- Establishment of 7 new BabyNet system positions (FTEs) designed to support families and ensure federal compliance.

| <b>Prioritized Recommendation:</b>   | <b>Request</b>  |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <b>Additional BabyNet service funds</b>, designed to prevent eligibility restrictions amidst rising service costs and more efficient 45-day intake process, which First Steps projects will speed (and thus prolong) the delivery of early intervention services to eligible children by up to one month.</p> <p>a. Additional service funds to address both rising costs and prolonged service delivery to infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays. <b>\$2,094,560</b></p> <p>b. Recurring funds to support DDSN (via contract) in the delivery of early intervention services to non-Medicaid children: <b>\$400,000</b></p> <p>c. Increased service funds designed to support DDSN contract, premised on a 1/12 increase in service costs as a result of more efficient 45 day intake process:<br/> DDSN: <b>\$692,000</b> (12% of FY15 Non-Federal BabyNet Funds of \$5.77M)</p> | \$3,186,560   |
| <p>2. <b>Statewide Eligibility and Assessment (E&amp;A) Team</b>, designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish independent, initial IFSP teams (eliminating potential conflicts of interest)</li> <li>• Meet federal requirements regarding the need for at least two separate disciplines to participate in IFSP development</li> <li>• Resolve interagency concerns over billing prior to plan development</li> </ul>   | \$750,000   |
| <p>3. Conduct a comprehensive, <b>BabyNet cost study</b> designed to identify efficiencies and potential savings.</p>  | \$150,000 (one time)  |
| <p>4. <b>Contracted service coordination.</b> (Separate SPOE intake and service coordination functions, allowing local BabyNet offices to focus on intake, eligibility and 45-day compliance, while establishing system contracts for dedicated service coordination.)</p>   | \$1,250,000   |
| <p>5. <b>Address rural provider shortages</b> through the provision of mileage above 30 miles round trip.</p>  | \$300,000<br>(566,000 mi/year @ .53/mi)                               |
| <p>6. <b>Centralize BabyNet referrals</b> through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The addition of a public referral portal within web-based BRIDGES data system, and</li> <li>• The establishment and staffing of a dedicated, toll-free referral hotline (technology and 2 FTE positions within the Office of SC First Steps).</li> </ul>   | \$100,000 (2 FTEs)  |
| <p>7. Establishment of BabyNet positions designed to support families and providers and ensure federal compliance (7 FTEs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service to neonatal intensive care units (3)</li> <li>• Provider Recruitment, Education and Training Specialist (1)</li> <li>• Coaching for Quality Services (SSIP - 1)</li> <li>• Training and Technical Assistance (2)</li> </ul>   | \$462,000 (7 FTEs)  |
| <p>8. BRIDGES and BabyNet website Enhancements</p>   | \$350,000 (one time)  |
| <b>Total Request:</b>  | <b>\$6,048,560 (recurring, 9 FTEs)</b><br><b>\$500,000 (one time)</b> |



FY 2014-15 & 2015-16

# Evaluation of State-Funded Full-Day 4K

## Part I



**SC EDUCATION  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**



PO Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building | Columbia SC 29211 | [WWW.SCEOC.ORG](http://WWW.SCEOC.ORG)

## Executive Summary

The General Assembly first created and funded the Child Development Education Pilot Program by a budget proviso in Fiscal Year 2006-07. In 2014 the General Assembly codified the program in Act 284 and renamed it the South Carolina Child Early Reading Development and Education Program. For purposes of this report, the program is referred to as CDEP or state-funded full-day four-year-old kindergarten. CDEP provides full-day early childhood education for at-risk children who are four-year-olds by September 1. The definition of 'at-risk' is eligibility for the free or reduced-price federal lunch program and/or Medicaid. Both public schools and private childcare centers licensed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) may participate in the program and serve eligible children. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) oversees implementation of CDEP in public schools and South Carolina Office of First Steps to School Readiness (First Steps) oversees implementation in private childcare settings.

Over time, the General Assembly has tasked the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) with an annual evaluation of CDEP and has asked recurring questions every year. In response, the EOC undertakes its annual evaluation with a strong focus on programmatic impact, quality and growth. The 2015-16 CDEP evaluation will be composed of two separate reports, Parts I and II.<sup>1</sup> Both Parts I and II of the evaluation address the following fundamental questions:

- Does CDEP impact young children's learning and their readiness for kindergarten?
- What components constitute high-quality four-year-old kindergarten? What does quality look like and how can it be measured? What is the status of quality in CDEP?
- Is CDEP expanding statewide? Are more at-risk four-year-olds being served by formal early childhood education programs?

The EOC partnered with University of South Carolina education researchers to consider 4K and 5K assessment processes and teacher-child interaction. The USC team also provided critical analysis of student-level data. The Institute for Child Success provided additional research support in the consideration of other states' perspective on 4K quality and state 4K evaluation practices.

## Impact

The General Assembly funded in Fiscal Year 2014-15 and Fiscal Year 2015-16 early literacy assessments for children entering state-funded 4K programs in public schools and private centers and for children entering 5K. However, because the actual assessments administered were different in these school years, determining the impact of CDEP on kindergarten readiness in the area of early language and literacy development cannot be fully determined. Instead, the EOC can only report on the actual results of the assessments.

**If the state is to understand the impact of CDEP on kindergarten readiness and use the results of the assessments for targeted language and literacy instruction, then the state needs to employ consistent assessments over time.**

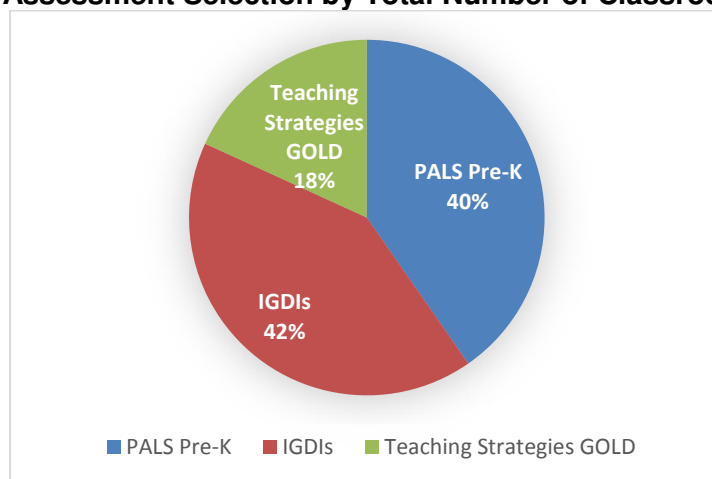
<sup>1</sup> The EOC anticipates preliminary 2015-16 student assessment data will not be available until Spring 2016 and end-of-year data will not be available until Summer 2016. Analysis of 4K and 5K student assessment data for the 2015-16 school year will be addressed in Part II of this evaluation report, which will be finalized later in 2016.

During the 2014-15 school year, the CIRCLE assessment results documented:

- 5K students scored higher than 4K students at the beginning of the school year;
- Children enrolled in full-day 4K in private centers scored higher on the CIRCLE assessment in the fall of 2014 than did children enrolled in public schools; however, when analyzing the results of the CIRCLE assessment of students in 5K who were in CDEP in 2013-14, children who attended private child care centers in CDEP performed roughly equivalent to children who attended public schools in CDEP.
- Overall, African-American 4K and 5K children scored higher than White and Hispanic/Latino children on Letter Naming. While African-American and White children in 4K scored similarly on Phonological Awareness, White children scored higher than their African American peers on Phonological Awareness in 5K.

In 2015-16, districts selected one of three procured 4K assessments: Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS Pre-K), Teaching Strategies Gold or Individual Growth and Development Indicators of Early Literacy (IGDIs-EL). DRA 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition was selected for 5K language and literacy assessment. A significant majority of 4K students are assessed with a direct test; PALS Pre-K and IGDIs-EL account for 40 and 42 percent of classroom assessment, respectively.

**Figure 1**  
**District 4K Assessment Selection by Total Number of Classrooms, 2015-16**



Fall 2015 student-level assessment data will not be available until the Spring 2016. Assuming student-level assessment data are available, the EOC plans to report student-level data for the beginning- and end-of-year in 2016. The four early childhood assessments selected are individualized and standardized. They provide some reliable, valid information that supports their use to assess young children's literacy skills. There are similarities among three of the four assessments, including categories of progress derived from their testing information. The categories can be used to determine young children's language and literacy needs. Three of the four tests (PALS Pre-K, IGDIs-EL and DRA 2) are direct tests, and all four assessments may be

used for instructional planning in language and literacy and to measure child growth. However, the four tests have differences that make comparisons across assessments inadvisable.

**The collection, analysis and retrieval of timely and accurate data are needed to assess the quality of CDEP, as well as the progress of young children toward kindergarten readiness.**

The first step toward timely and accurate data is the development of a longitudinal early childhood education (ECE) data system that is securely linked across sectors. It would minimize the duplication of child records, rectifying a common problem of miscounting children, especially the more transient children receiving state or federal dollars for early care. Linking across programs would additionally reduce the need to assess children if they change programs, freeing up practitioner time to focus on that child's individual learning needs. It also would allow for a child's developmental screenings and assessments, as well as kindergarten entry data, to be timely and accurate, informing teachers and school staff to any additional needed supports. States that have these linkages are able to track child-level data over time, generating reports that demonstrate long-term impacts of different ECE programs with regard to a child's kindergarten and third grade school outcome data. In addition, these states are able to expand the linkages to other sectors, possibly linking a child's education data to health and social services data, providing comprehensive information on all services that a child receives and allowing practitioners to identify the need for any additional services.

The Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC) supports state policymakers' development and use of coordinated state ECE data systems to improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes. Agency partners in the ECDC include the Council of Chief State School Officers, National Governors Association and National Conference of State Legislators and Child Trends.

For a strong, coordinated state ECE data system, the Early Childhood Data Collaborative recommends 10 fundamental elements, which include:

- A unique statewide child identifier
- Child-level demographics and program participation information
- Child-level developmental data
- Linkages from child-level data to K-12 and other relevant data systems (immunizations, developmental screenings, etc.)
- Unique provider-level identifiers to link children and the ECE workforce
- ECE workforce-level identifiers to link to provider and child information
- Provider structural and quality information
- ECE workforce demographic, educational, and professional development data
- A state governing body for managing data collection, analysis, and use
- Transparent privacy policies and practices<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Early Childhood Data Collaborative. (2014). *2013 State of States' Early Childhood Data System*. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative. Available at: <http://www.ecedata.org/files/2013%20State%20of%20States'%20Early%20Childhood%20Data%20Systems.pdf>.

Any data system must protect the privacy of students, family, and program staff. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative notes that, at a minimum, any data system must comply with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); additional state laws may apply, depending on the data in question.<sup>3</sup> As a result, many states identify a data governance entity to oversee their data system. Thirty-two states have a designated data governance entity to guide the development and use of their longitudinal data system; these entities oversee strategic planning, data sharing across agencies, and “ensure appropriate, secure use of data.”<sup>4</sup>

## Quality

During the last several decades, programs for prekindergarten children (e.g., Head Start Programs, 4-year-old prekindergartens, private preschools) have expanded greatly across the United States. Over 1.3 million children are enrolled in state-funded prekindergartens, over 822,000 children in Head Start Programs, and over 425,000 children in special education preschool programs.<sup>5</sup> In South Carolina, approximately 51 percent of all at-risk four-year-olds are served in a formal ECE program, including Head Start, ABC Vouchers, CDEP or a local school district program.

As early childhood program capacities have grown, educators have become especially interested in the relationship of quality in early childhood programs and child outcomes, especially in language and literacy, math, and social emotional development.<sup>6</sup> Systematic reviews of program quality and child outcomes have revealed higher associations with language and literacy, math, and social emotional child outcomes. Nevertheless, the changes in child outcomes are mostly small with most partial correlations less than .10 a small effect size.<sup>7</sup>

The quality of four-year-old kindergarten is generally assessed utilizing both process and structural quality measures. As noted by the Institute for Child Success, both are essential to an early childhood experience that addresses the needs of the whole child and fosters learning across multiple domains.<sup>8</sup> High process quality includes meaningful teacher-child interactions and other factors that are considered to be the most significant determinants of children's academic outcomes in a program. Structural quality measures, such as teacher qualifications, support the establishment of high quality conditions but do not guarantee high quality alone. Both North Carolina and Georgia evaluate process quality as part of their state pre-kindergarten evaluations.

**To capture CDEP's actual impact in improving young children's kindergarten readiness, the current review of CDEP would need to be expanded to consider process and structural quality as well as child outcomes.**

For the 2015-16 CDEP evaluation, EOC staff addressed one component of process quality (teacher-child interaction) and one component of structural quality (teacher qualifications). Research also points to the significant role interactions between a teacher and a young child

<sup>3</sup> Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Early Childhood Data Collaborative, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Barnett, Carolan, Squires, Clarke Brown, & Horowitz, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> For an edited volume on early childhood program quality issues see Zaslow, Martinez-Beck, Tout, & Halle, 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Burchinal, Kainz, & Cai, 2011

<sup>8</sup> These five domains are specified in Acts 284 and 284: physical well-being, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language development and numeracy skills.

have in enhancing learning, and South Carolina educators also echo the importance. In partnership with the University of South Carolina, the EOC sponsored a survey of 4K educators to gain insight from the education frontline about 4K quality. Over 95 percent of respondents ranked teacher-child interaction as “highly important” to 4K classroom quality.

The EOC Early Childhood Work Group convened in December 2015 to discuss early childhood educators’ perspective on 4K Quality and survey results. Four assessments of teacher-child instructional interactions were reviewed: Teacher Pyramid Observational Tool, Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, and Classroom Assessment Scoring System. Small-scale pilot implementation of some of these assessments is likely under the 2015-16 Community Block Grant for Education Pilot Program and will provide valuable information about implementation and ongoing costs and assessment utility for improving 4K instruction and children’s readiness for kindergarten.

Nationally, teacher qualifications are considered a crucial component to the structural quality of a pre-kindergarten program. Both the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children include teachers’ educational attainment and professional development participation in their prioritization of features of quality in pre-kindergarten. Overall, the educational attainment, salary and instructional experience of CDEP public school teachers are higher than CDEP teachers in private child care centers. Turnover in the private center environment is significant, with 42 percent of teachers in their first year of teaching at their current center. In contrast, public school teachers have been working at their current school for almost nine years on average. The average annual CDEP public school teacher salary is almost three times higher than the average annual CDEP private center teacher salary. However, it is particularly important to note that South Carolina does not meet NIEER’s recommendation of requiring a Bachelor’s degree for all lead teachers in public and non-public settings.

## Growth

There are approximately 40,755 four-year-olds living in poverty in South Carolina. About 51 percent, or 20,667, are receiving early learning instruction through CDEP, Head Start, or the ABC Voucher Program. In the public school districts that are currently eligible for and participating in CDEP, 6,622 four-year-olds in poverty are not enrolled in these full-day, state or federally funded early learning programs.<sup>9</sup>

**Approximately 51 percent of all South Carolina four-year-olds living in poverty are currently being served in a formal early childhood education program. In districts that have participated for more than one year in CDEP, 83 percent of four-year-olds living in poverty are being served in a program.**

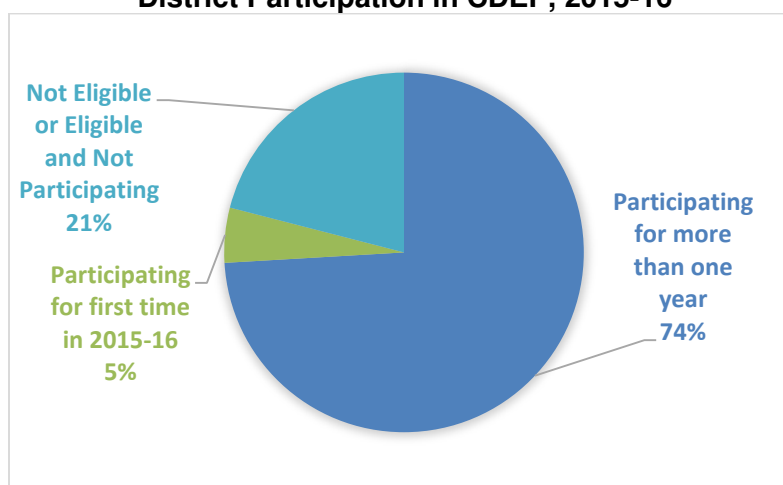
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<sup>9</sup> Some of these children might be served in a half-day or full-day 4K program in a public school not participating in CDEP, while others may be enrolled in private childcare. State-level data are not collected.

**Table 1**  
**At-Risk Four-Year-Olds Served in CDEP, Head Start or ABC Voucher Programs, 2015-16**

| District Status  | Number of Districts | Total Number of 4-Year-Olds | Number of 4-Year-Olds Served | Number of 4-Year-Olds NOT Served | Percent of Children Served |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Participating for more than one year in CDEP           | 60                  | 23,465                      | 17,093                       | 6,372                            | 83                         |
| Participating for first time in 2015-16 in CDEP        | 4                   | 1,071                       | 821                          | 250                              | 4                          |
| Not Eligible or Eligible and Not Participating in CDEP | 17                  | 16,219                      | 2,753                        | 13,466                           | 13                         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>81</b>           | <b>40,755</b>               | <b>20,667</b>                | <b>20,088</b>                    | <b>100</b>                 |

**Figure 2**  
**District Participation in CDEP, 2015-16**



Total enrollment in CDEP during the 2015-16 school year is approximately 13,643 to 13,771 students. Based on this estimation, a significant majority of all CDEP students (85 percent) is served in public school CDEP classrooms. The remaining 15 percent is served in private center CDEP classrooms. The EOC estimates that 11,578 to 11,707 students are enrolled currently in 570 public school CDEP classrooms, generally representing a five percent increase in public school CDEP enrollment.<sup>10</sup> From 2014-15 to 2015-16, private center student enrollment increased by 11 percent to 2,065 students.

Potential carry forward of funds allocated for CDEP from Fiscal Year 2015-16 to Fiscal Year 2016-17 is \$8.3 million. SCDE accounts for 63 percent, or \$5.2 million of the carry forward. SCDE carry forward includes: (1) estimated CDEP per pupil allocations for districts who became CDEP-eligible in 2015-16 but decided not to participate and (2) Fiscal Year 2014-15 carry

<sup>10</sup> As of January 12, 2016, the EOC had not received student unique identifier numbers (SUNS) for 4K students enrolled in CDEP public school classrooms. The EOC utilized CDEP payments to districts from EIA and General Fund subfunds to calculate enrollment estimates by district, resulting in a statewide total of 11,706 students. Using the estimated number of CDEP students in 2014-15, the EOC estimated 11,578 students were enrolled in CDEP public school classrooms.



forward funds from First Steps. For Fiscal Year 2016-17, SCDE has budgeted three additional activities that were not included in the 2015-16 budget: a summer training institute (\$300,000), replacement materials for existing classrooms (\$1.3 million) and professional development funding (\$563,000).<sup>11</sup>

**Since last year, total CDEP student enrollment has expanded a modest seven percent and total available finding increased three percent. Program expenditures increased 15 percent.**

|                                    | 2014-15      | Projected<br>2015-16 |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Student Enrollment</b>          | 12,825       | 13,771               |
| <b>Total Available Funds</b>       | \$74,326,957 | \$76,618,658         |
| <b>Program Expenditures</b>        | \$58,314,747 | \$68,285,283         |
| <b>Program Carry Forward Funds</b> | \$16,012,210 | \$8,333,375          |

Since 2010-11, the instructional reimbursement rate of \$4,218 for a CDEP-participating student has not increased. During the Great Recession, when state revenues declined, the instructional rate in CDEP was not reduced. However, since Fiscal Year 2010-11, the rate also has not increased. Rather than allocating additional funds to public and private providers to replace instructional supplies and materials through another funding source, the General Assembly should consider increasing the per pupil reimbursement. Below are some options for increasing the per student instructional rate, all of which equate to an increase of \$85 to \$105 per student to support instruction:

- (1) A 2.5 percent increase, which is the current inflation factor estimated for the base student cost of EFA in Fiscal Year 2016-17,
- (2) A 2.2 percent increase, which is the original budgeted inflation factor for the current fiscal year 2015-16, or
- (3) A 2.0 percent increase which is the average annual increase in the EFA inflation factor over the past five years.

**Rather than allocating additional funds to public and private providers to replace instructional supplies, materials and equipment, the General Assembly should consider increasing the instructional rate by \$85 to \$105 per student, resulting in a total cost of \$1.2 to \$1.4 million.**

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<sup>11</sup> Classroom supply allocation for each existing classroom is \$2,500. Professional development allocation for each classroom is \$1,000.



# Profile of the Ready Kindergartner

## The Ready Five-Year-Old...

has developed the skills and abilities necessary to achieve at age-appropriate levels. He/she is physically, socially, & emotionally prepared to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience.

## Ready Families/Caregivers...

provide safe, loving, and stimulating environments in which children can grow and develop optimally, while ensuring that pediatric health and dental needs are regularly addressed.

## Ready Communities...

provide the resources necessary to ensure optimal development. They create environments in which young children can grow and learn in the absence of fear, stress, danger and hunger.

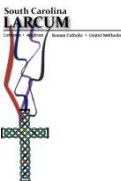


## Ready Schools and Educators...

understand that each child develops on a unique timeline and are prepared to meet the individual needs of all students through high-quality, developmentally appropriate instruction.



33



To view the full profile, visit <http://ican.sc>





# Campaign Update

1/26/16

[I CAN] is First Steps' public awareness campaign in accordance with state law (Act 287), in which First Steps is charged with informing and educating the public about the benchmarks of kindergarten readiness for children and how achieving school readiness has its foundations in the efforts of families, educators, and communities.

These benchmarks were adopted by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees and the SC Board of Education in October 2015 as the **Profile of the Ready Kindergartner**. Both the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner and the [I CAN] campaign were announced at a press conference during the state board's annual meeting December 3.

## Online/Social Media

The campaign maintains an active social media via Facebook and Twitter, as well as its website [www.ican.sc](http://www.ican.sc). Local partnership Facebook pages like and share [I CAN] posts, with several partnerships launching their own [I CAN] local campaigns. Some great examples include:

Pickens County First Steps I CAN be ready for school Blog: <http://www.pickenscountyfirststeps.org/blog/>

Richland County First Steps I CAN slide show: <http://www.rcfirststeps.org/whats-the-deal-with-i-can/>

## Children's [I CAN] Messages

Using private funds, the [I CAN] campaign has leased nine billboards to date in prime locations across the state, including I26, I20 and US378 near Columbia, I26 near Clinton, I85 near Gaffney, I95 near Walterboro, and US52 near Darlington. For the next few weeks, these billboards are featuring [I CAN] statements from children, describing readiness across the major domains of readiness: language and literacy; approaches to learning and inquiry; physical development, self-help and motor skills; emotional and social development; and mathematical thinking.

In addition to billboards, these messages will be used on the [I CAN] web site and social media, and have been made available to local partnerships in banner, Instagram, and newspaper ad formats.

The designs include:



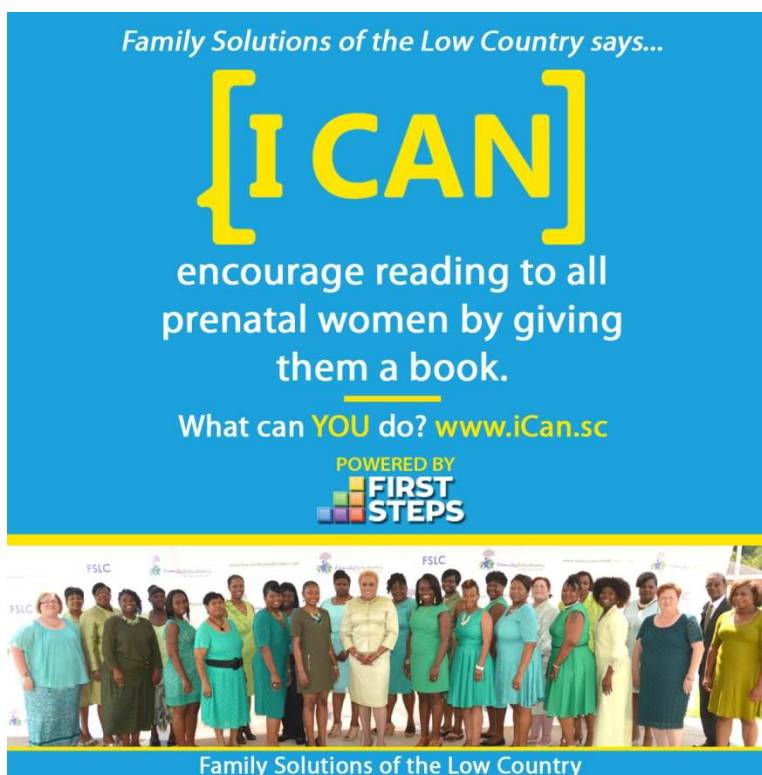
## [I CAN} statements from local communities

Since the campaign's launch, local partnerships have been busy collecting [I CAN] statements from parents, educators, and civic, faith and business leaders in communities across the state. Hundreds have been submitted to date, with more coming in daily. (It's not too late to submit yours!)

The [www.ican.sc](http://www.ican.sc) web site will soon have a commitment page for visitors to enter their own [I CAN] pledges.

These statements will be featured on the [I CAN] website and social media, and locally via county partnerships. First Steps is currently soliciting [I CAN] statements from high-profile community leaders that will run for four weeks on the same billboards currently featuring the [I CAN] child messages.

A few examples:



# **SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

## **Charter for Early Head Start Governance Council**

- I. The Council will be called the **Early Head Start Governance Council (herein, COUNCIL)**. The COUNCIL is authorized by the **South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees**, (herein GOVERNING BODY), to serve at its direction to assist in fulfilling the Early Head Start governance and regulatory responsibilities pursuant to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Act.

## **II. PURPOSES**

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The *Early Head Start Governance Council*, as established and authorized by the *First Steps Board of Trustees*, shall provide detailed oversight for all required aspects of Early Head Start governance, including program, policy development, and fiscal oversight, and shall make keep informed and elevate high level recommendations to the Governing Body for needed actions.

The EHS Governance Council responsibilities shall include –

- Provide detailed oversight of the program and fiscal operations of the Early Head Start program on behalf of the Governing Board and present/elevate only major concerns, issues or recommendations pertaining to program, personnel and fiscal to the Governing Board.
- Review and approve proposed routine policies related to the fiscal, program and governance of the Early Head Start program.
- Ensure Early Head Start program is operated in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and participate in appropriate training to carry out these responsibilities. .
- Work with the Policy Council to vet and resolve potential conflicts or compliance issues prior to presentation to Governing Board as specified in the Internal Dispute Resolution Policy (Impasse Policy)
- Work as appointed by the EHS Governance Council Chairperson on appointed ad hoc committees to hear and help resolve community complaints, as per the Community Complaints Policy.
- Work with Policy Council to evaluate and approve all applications for funding and amendments to applications” for the Early Head Start program.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

### **III. RELATIONSHIP OF COUNCIL TO EDUCATIONAL GOVERNING BOARD**

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Any and all responsibilities delegated to the Governance Council are subject to final determination by the Governing Board at their discretion. All actions of the Governance Council shall be routinely provided to the Governing Body on the consent agenda with the exception of major important decisions requiring the Governing Body's action.

### **IV. MEMBERSHIP AND TERM**

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The *EHS Governance Council* will be comprised of a minimum of 5 of the following members:

- The Chairperson of the First Steps Board of Trustees or his/her designee selected from the Governing Board. This member will serve as the Chair of the Council.
- One (1) member from the First Steps *Finance and Administration Committee* (will not be the same person as the Chair) with a "background and expertise in fiscal management or accounting;
- One (1) member, professional or parent advocate with background and expertise in early childhood education and development
- One (1) member who is a licensed attorney familiar with issues that come before the governing body.
- Up to six members chosen by the First Steps Board of Trustees from the larger First Steps and/or the at-large community, preferably members with the following professional experience or background:
  - Law
  - Minority Health issues
  - Parent Engagement
  - Accounting
  - Parent or Grandparent of a Child Enrolled in EHS

In the event that the "required" individuals are not available to serve as member[s] of the Governing Council, the Governing Body shall secure consultant[s], or another individual with relevant expertise, with the qualifications described [above], who shall work directly with the governing body.



## **SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

Membership will be prohibited for any staff members from the First Steps State Office or from any contracted EHS agencies. Nominations for Council membership will be made and approved by the First Steps Executive Committee as vacancies arise. Terms of membership will be renewed annually with a three year maximum length of service. A Chair will be annually appointed by the Chair of the First Steps Board of Trustees. The Chair may serve in this role for a one year term with option for two year tenure.

### **V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

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Chairperson: The Governance Council will be chaired by the Chairperson of the Governing Board, or by his/her designee from among the First Steps Board of Trustees.

Vice Chairperson: Will act on behalf of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence. Vice Chairperson shall be appointed annually by the Chairperson from among the committee members, and may serve in this capacity for up to two years.

### **VI. PROCEDURAL RULES**

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Meetings: The EHS Governance Council will meet a minimum of 6 times a year and more often as the need arises, in order to fulfill their shared governance responsibility with the EHS Policy Council.

Quorum and Voting: A quorum shall consist of at least fifty percent (50%) of voting members present at a meeting. A simple majority shall constitute a deciding vote for or against a proposed motion.

Minutes: Minutes of each meeting will be kept as assigned by the EHS Governance Council Chairperson. Copies will be provided to the Governing Board, local administrator(s), instructors, and committee membership within two weeks after a meeting. A consent agenda report will be routinely prepared for the Board of Trustees approving the actions of the Governance Council as well as any major action item agenda requiring the vote of the Board of Trustees (See also "Recommendations and Reports").

Non-Federal Match: As part of the requirement to provide 20% non-federal match for the Early Head Start Funding, attendance at all meetings will be recorded and reported as a contribution toward non-federal match.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

**Recommendations and Reports:** High-level Council recommendations and reports will be submitted in writing to the Governing Board. Documents will include both suggested action, justification for suggestions, possible adverse impact (if applicable) and budgetary impact (if applicable). All recommendations presented to the Governing Board for action shall be submitted as a written Resolution. Resolutions, as approved to be submitted to the Governing Body by the EHS Governance Council shall be prepared by the Executive Director of South Carolina First Steps (Director) or his/her designee and presented by the EHS Governance Chair to the Governing Board. The Director will present Resolutions to the Governing Board in the Chairperson's absence.

**Dismissal:** Members who are absent without an excused absence from four successive meetings per year will be considered to have resigned their seat. The committee will move to fill the position. An absence shall be considered excused as long as member communicates that they will be absent prior to the actual meeting.

**Public Communication and Announcements:** While members are expected and encouraged to discuss the Early Head Start Program within the community, members shall not report opinions expressed in meetings, nor shall they report independently on committee action.

**Review of Charter:** This Charter shall be reviewed and reassessed annually, in conjunction with the Governance Procedure. Any proposed changes shall be presented to the Governing Board for approval.



## SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

### Charter for Early Head Start Governance Council

- I. The Council will be called the **Early Head Start Governance Council** ([herein, COUNCIL](#)). The [COUNCIL](#) is authorized by the **South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees**, (~~herein aka GOVERNING BODY~~) ~~Governing Body~~, to and will serve at ~~its the pleasure direction of the governing body~~ to assist in fulfilling the [Early Head Start governance and regulatory responsibilities pursuant to the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Act](#).

#### II. PURPOSES

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The *Early Head Start Governance Council*, as established and authorized by the *First Steps Board of Trustees*, shall provide detailed oversight for all required aspects of Early Head Start governance, including program, policy development, and fiscal oversight, and shall make [keep informed and elevate high level](#) recommendations to the Governing Body for needed actions.

The EHS Governance Council responsibilities shall include –

- [Provide detailed oversight of the program and fiscal operations of the Early Head Start program on behalf of the Governing Board and present/-elevate only major concerns, issues or recommendations pertaining to program, personnel and fiscal to the Governing Board.](#)
- Review and [approve](#) ~~vet all~~ proposed [routine](#) policies ~~and procedures~~ related to the fiscal, program and governance of the Early Head Start program ~~prior to presentation to Governing Board for approval.~~
- [Ensure Early Head Start program is operated in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and participate in appropriate training to Decarry out these responsibilities. velop a solid understanding of federal Head Start/ Early Head Start regulations and requirements related to the operation and governance of the Early Head Start program.](#)
- Work with the Policy Council to vet and [resolve](#) ~~work through~~ potential conflicts or compliance issues prior to presentation to Governing Board as specified in the Internal Dispute Resolution Policy (Impasse Policy)
- [Work as appointed by the EHS Governance Council Chairperson on appointed ad hoc committees to hear and help resolve community complaints, as per the Community Complaints Policy.](#)
- [Work with Policy Council to evaluate and approve all applications for funding and amendments to applications” for the Early Head Start program.](#)

## SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

- ~~Provide detailed oversight of the program and fiscal operations of the Early Head Start program on behalf of the Governing Board and present related concerns, issues or recommendations to the Governing Board.~~

### III. RELATIONSHIP OF COUNCIL TO EDUCATIONAL GOVERNING BOARD

~~It is the role and sole prerogative of the Governing Board. Any and all responsibilities delegated to the Governance Council are subject to final determination by the Governing Board at their discretion. All actions of the Governance Council shall be routinely provided to the Governing Body on the consent agenda with the exception of major important decisions requiring the Governing Body's action. to enact policy. The EHS Governance Council shall provide their expertise to assist in the detailed development, review, and preparation of policies for approval by the Governing Board.~~

### IV. MEMBERSHIP AND TERM

The *EHS Governance Council* will be comprised of a minimum of 5 of the following ing members:

- The Chair person of the First Steps Board of Trustees or his/her designee selected from the Governing Board. This member will serve as the Chair of the Council.
- One (1) member from the First Steps *Finance and Administration Committee* (will not be the same person as the Chair) with a "background and expertise in fiscal management or accounting;
- One (1) member, professional or parent advocate with background and expertise in early childhood education and development ~~for children with disabilities and~~
- One (1) member who is a licensed attorney familiar with issues that come before the governing body.
- Up to six members chosen by the First Steps Board of Trustees from the larger First Steps and/or the at-large community, preferably members with the following professional experience or background:
  - ~~Early Childhood Education~~ Professional or parent advocate for children with disabilities
  - Law
  - Minority Health issues
  - Parent Engagement

**Comment [LD1]:** More accurate statement aligned with Head Start Act

## SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

- Accounting
- Parent or Grandparent of a Child Enrolled in EHS

In the event that the “required” individuals are not available to serve as member[s] of the Governing Council, the Governing Body shall secure consultant[s], or another individual with relevant expertise, with the qualifications described [above], who shall work directly with the governing body.

Membership will be prohibited for any staff members from the First Steps State Office or from any contracted EHS agencies. Nominations for Council membership will be made and approved by the First Steps Executive Committee to the EHS Governance Council as vacancies arise. Terms of membership will be renewed annually with a three year maximum length of service. ~~A Chair will be annually appointed by the Chair of the First Steps Board of Trustees. The Chair may serve in this role for a one year term with option for two year tenure.~~

### V. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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Chairperson: The committee Governance Council will ~~have be chaired by the~~ Chairperson of the ~~appointed by the Chair of the~~ Governing Board, or by his/her designee from among the ~~Executive Committee of the~~ First Steps Board of Trustees.

Vice Chairperson: Will act on behalf of the Chairperson in the Chairperson’s absence. Vice Chairperson shall be appointed annually by the Chairperson from among the committee members, and may serve in this capacity for up to two years.

### VI. PROCEDURAL RULES

---

Meetings: The EHS Governance Council will meet a minimum of 6 times a year and more often as the need arises, in order to fulfill their shared governance responsibility with the EHS Policy Council.

Quorum and Voting: A quorum shall consist of at least fifty percent (50%) of voting members present at a meeting. A simple majority shall constitute a deciding vote for or against a proposed motion.

Minutes: Minutes of each meeting will be kept as assigned by the EHS Governance Council Chairperson. Copies will be provided to the Governing Board, local administrator(s), instructors, and committee membership within two weeks after a meeting. A consent agenda report will be routinely prepared for the Board of Trustees approving the actions of the Governance Council as well as any major action item

## **SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS EARLY HEAD START GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

[agenda requiring the vote of the Board of Trustees \(See also “Recommendations and Reports”\).](#)

**Non-Federal Match:** As part of the requirement to provide 20% non-federal match for the Early Head Start Funding, attendance at all meetings will be recorded and reported as a contribution toward non-federal match.

**Recommendations and Reports:** **High-level Council** recommendations and reports will be submitted in writing to the Governing Board. Documents will include both suggested action, justification for suggestions, possible adverse impact (if applicable) and budgetary impact (if applicable). All recommendations presented to the Governing Board for action shall be submitted as a written Resolution. Resolutions, as approved to be submitted to the Governing Body by the EHS Governance Council shall be prepared by the Executive Director of South Carolina First Steps (Director) or his/her designee and presented by the EHS Governance Chair to the Governing Board. The Director will present Resolutions to the Governing Board in the Chairperson’s absence.

**Dismissal:** Members who are absent without an excused absence from four successive meetings per year will be considered to have resigned their seat. The committee will move to fill the position. An absence shall be considered excused as long as member communicates that they will be absent prior to the actual meeting.

**Public Communication and Announcements:** While members are expected and encouraged to discuss the Early Head Start Program within the community, members shall not report opinions expressed in meetings, nor shall they report independently on committee action.

**Review of Charter:** This Charter shall be reviewed and reassessed annually, in conjunction with the Governance Procedure. Any proposed changes shall be presented to the Governing Board for approval.

The ***EHS Governance Council*** will be comprised of the follow members:

- The Chair of the First Steps Board of Trustees or his/her designee. This member will serve as the Chair of the Council. – ROGER PRYOR
- One (1) member from the First Steps *Finance and Administration Committee* (will not be the same person as the Chair) -- WALTER FLEMING
- One (1) member, professional or parent advocate with background and expertise in early childhood education and development and, -- JENNIFER MCCONNELL
- Up to six members chosen by the First Steps Board of Trustees from the larger First Steps and/or the at-large community, preferably members with the following professional experience or background:
  - Professional or Parent Advocate for children with disabilities – CANDI LALONDE
  - Law – ELLEN STILL
  - Minority Health issues – AMY WILLIAMS
  - Parent Engagement – JULIE HUSSEY
  - Accounting – TBD
  - Parent or grandparent of a child enrolled in EHS -- TBD

Membership will be prohibited for any staff members from First Steps or from any contracted EHS agencies. Nominations for membership will be made by the First Steps Executive Council to the EHS Governance Council as vacancies arise. Terms of membership will be renewed annually with three year maximum length of service.

## 2016 Early Childhood Common Agenda

Building a smart, comprehensive early childhood system through effective policy to create a brighter future for young children and their families.

United in support of young children (ages 0-5) and their families, advocates of the Early Childhood Common Agenda propose the following framework for building a smart, comprehensive early childhood system for South Carolina. We acknowledge that children's opportunity for success is largely rooted in the social and economic well-being of their families and communities. Effective policy can counter adverse circumstances through a two-generation approach, equipping both parents and children with the tools they need to thrive. We urge our elected leaders and policymakers to consider this agenda as decisions are made to advance policies impacting young children and their families in order to create a brighter future for the Palmetto State.

### Quality Early Care and Strong Family Supports

Children who receive high-quality preschool services are more likely to enter school prepared for success in academics and throughout their lives.<sup>1</sup> Many families struggle to afford care, however, with an average cost of \$1,181 per month. Fifteen percent of South Carolina parents report their employment is affected by child care issues.<sup>2</sup> This problem is exacerbated for low-income families, who are often forced by limited resources to choose care based on affordability and/or convenience rather than quality.<sup>3</sup>

### Recommendations:

- Increase participation in the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), which includes established quality standards for child care, early care and education providers, by **creating a committee to recommend incentive measures led by the Division of Early Care and Education, Department of Social Services.**
- Improve the safety of children in Family Home Care Facilities by **allocating funds for additional staff to conduct compliance visits.**
- Ensure access to quality child care for families statewide by **sustaining full funding for second year ABC voucher program recipients.**
- Strengthen the quality early care and education system by **modifying membership and responsibilities of the State Advisory Committee on the Regulation of Childcare Facilities.**
- To empower parents with the knowledge of positive parenting practices and resources, **expand voluntary home visiting programs supporting children from prenatal to age five.**

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<sup>1</sup> Espinosa, L. M. (2002). High-quality preschool: Why we need it and what it looks like. National Institute for Early Education Research; Fontaine, N. S., Torre, D. L. & Grafwallner, R. (2006). Effects of quality early care on school readiness skills of children at risk. *Early Child Development and Care*, 176(1), 99-109; Heckman, J. J. (2011). The economics of inequality: The value of early childhood education. *American Educator*, 35(1), 31.

<sup>2</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2014). *Creating Opportunities for Families: A Two-Generation Approach*. Baltimore, MD.

<sup>3</sup> Washington Kids Count. (2009). *The State of Washington's Children: Poverty and the Future of Children and Families in Washington State*. Seattle, WA.

## Economic Stability

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 48.9% of women in South Carolina work full-time, year-round. Mothers who would be unable to continue working with the availability of child care yield an estimated \$1 billion annually in wages and salaries.<sup>4</sup> Quality child care access increasingly affects the lives of working fathers as well, amplifying the impact on the state economy.

### Recommendations:

- To support working families in meeting basic needs, **endorse a state-earned income tax credit (EITC), a refundable tax credit for eligible people who work and have income less than specified amounts.**
- Accurately allocate resources where families need them most by **using South Carolina's Self-Sufficiency Standard to measure cost of living across the state.** The Self-Sufficiency Standard is based on basic-needs, no-frills budgets created for all family types in every county.
- Promote equity and opportunity for all children by **supporting the use of racial impact assessments and production of opportunity impact statements that are applied to policy addressing early care and education.**

Supporting early childhood health, education, and development yields long-term returns on investments and a brighter future for South Carolina. We envision all children ready for school, stronger families, safer communities, significant government cost avoidance, healthy and productive adults, a more competitive workforce and a stronger economy for the Palmetto State.<sup>5</sup>

Funding for this project was provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank AECF for its support, and we acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the foundation.

In addition to the three partner organizations, many organizations from throughout South Carolina have committed their support for the *2016 Early Childhood Common Agenda*. For the most recent list of supporters, please visit [scChildren.org/CommonAgenda](http://scChildren.org/CommonAgenda).

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<sup>4</sup> Institute for Child Success. (2015). The Economic Impact of Early Care and Education in South Carolina. Greenville, SC.

<sup>5</sup> Bartik, T. J. (2011). Investing in kids: Early childhood programs and local economic development. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.