

## Introduction

Per First Steps legislation (Section 52-152-70 (A)), each First Steps Partnership Board shall bring the community together to identify the area needs related to the goals of First Steps, develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs, and then develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan while integrating service delivery where possible. The partnership board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the partnership's comprehensive strategic plan, which shall include direct service provision, contracting for service provision, and organization and management of volunteer programs. In addition, each partnership's comprehensive plan shall include the following core functions:

- a) service as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
- b) service as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families; and
- c) support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board.

Needs and Resources Assessment: Each local First Steps partnership undergoes a community needs and resources assessment process every three years, in consultation with its local board, staff, clients and partners. A description of this process can be found online at <http://scfirststeps.com/fy-17-needs-and-resources-assessment/>.

Alignment to State First Steps Priorities: Each local First Steps partnership is a non-profit organization created in legislation in support of the statewide First Steps initiative, which is governed by a state board of trustees and supported by the State Office of First Steps. Each local plan aligns with the priorities of the South Carolina First Steps Strategic Plan, **Vision 2020** (<http://scfirststeps.com/resources-and-state-reporting/>). These priorities are:

- Increase access to quality early childhood programs and resources
- Enhance leadership development and capacity building
- Strengthen interagency accountability and public-private collaboration

Support for First Steps Legislative Goals: The strategic goals of this comprehensive plan support one or more goals of the First Steps initiative, as defined in state legislation (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c152.php>):

1. “Provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
2. Increase comprehensive services so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
3. Promote high-quality preschool programs that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
4. Provide services so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
5. Mobilize communities to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.”

Promotion of South Carolina’s Definition of School Readiness: The goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan promote one or more descriptions of school readiness (Ready Children, Ready Families and Caregivers, Ready Schools and Educators, Ready Communities) as defined in South Carolina’s Profile of the Ready Kindergartner (<http://www.ican.sc>), adopted in 2015 by the South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees and the South Carolina Board of Education as the state’s readiness benchmarks.

# South Carolina's School Readiness Description

## (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner)

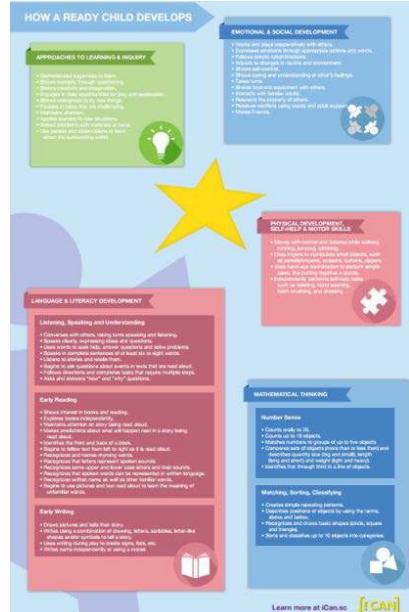
### 1 Ready Children

- 1A Approaches to Learning & Inquiry (10)
- 1B Emotional & Social Development (12)
- 1C Physical Development, Self-Help & Motor Skills (4)
- 1D Language & Literacy Development (24)
  - Listening, Speaking and Understanding (8)
  - Early Reading (12)
  - Early Writing (4)
- 1E Mathematical Thinking (9)
  - Number Sense (5)
  - Matching, Sorting, Classifying (4)

### 2 Ready Families and Caregivers

*Ready Kindergartners have the foundation of family and caregivers who:*

- 2A Provide safe and loving home environments in which children can grow and develop optimally.
- 2B Ensure that their children's pediatric health and dental needs are regularly addressed.
- 2C Create "language rich" homes in which conversation and written literacy are modeled daily.
- 2D Ensure that their young children receive adequate rest and a healthy diet.
- 2E Expose young children to regular and varied learning experiences in and out of the home.



Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochure

### 3 Ready Schools and Educators

*Schools and educators for the Ready Kindergartner:*

- 3A Understand that each child develops on a unique timeline.
- 3B Are prepared to meet the unique, individual needs of all students.
- 3C Are highly knowledgeable in both child development and the progression of early learning.
- 3D Provide the social, emotional and academic supports needed to advance their students abilities.
- 3E Create emotionally safe and nurturing environments that are free of stress.
- 3F Are equipped to support the needs of their students' parents and caregivers.

### 4 Ready Communities

*Communities that support the Ready Kindergartner:*

- 4A Provide access to the resources necessary to ensure good health and optimal physical, social/emotional and cognitive development.
- 4B Create environments in which children:
  - Can grow and develop in the absence of fear, stress, danger and hunger.
  - Have access to needed pediatric, dental and mental health resources.
  - Spend their days in nurturing, language-rich, and developmentally supportive environments (whether a loving home, a high-quality early education setting or both).
  - Are cared for by loving adults attentive to their physical, emotional and developmental needs.

**Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochures are available from each local First Steps office.**

**Profile of the Ready Kindergartner resources: <http://www.ican.sc/>**

South Carolina's Definition of School Readiness (Section 59-152-25 (G))

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



02/12/2018

To: State Office of First Steps to School Readiness  
From: Beaufort County First Steps Partnership Board  
Re: FY18-20 Comprehensive Plan

In developing Beaufort County First Steps Comprehensive Plan the staff and board reviewed the Priority Goals which were developed in 2017 as well as the latest Needs Assessment conducted by staff, board members and other community partners. The Executive Director, staff and board then conducted self assessments of all programs and gave feedback on how well programs are doing and made suggestions on areas needing improvement. The program self assessments were submitted to State Office In November 2017 for review and input and final copy given to board as part of the approval process.

First Steps Partnership Board received input from the community to identify needs related to the goals of First Steps, develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs, and then develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan to ensure all programs are aligned with legislative goals and state standards. As part of the Comprehensive Plan the board chose to adopt the State Office of First Steps vision, mission and value statements but personalize statements to be used for Beaufort County First Steps Partnership.

The board worked on and reviewed all documents mentioned above and approved all documents noting the need to hire a part-time bilingual Parent Educator to serve the Latino community within the next couple years and to develop a system to track/follow-up with individuals who come into the office seeking assistance but are not receiving direct services through First Steps .

The Comprehensive Plan was approved by Beaufort County First Steps Board on Monday, February, 12, 2018.

Thank you to all who gave so generously of their time to share their insights, perspectives, and experiences in helping to develop Beaufort County First Steps' Comprehensive Plan. We anticipate that changes could be made over the next couple years as needs are identified. We will use this plan as the foundation for implementing any additional programs/services. We welcome opportunities from others to weigh in on the Comprehensive Plan as we continue our work. As a follow-up The Executive Board and the Strategic Planning Committee will continue to meet and review FY19-20 Renewal Plans to ensure it aligns with the Comprehensive Plan and meets the needs of our community.

Once again, we thank everyone involved for their ongoing engagement in the strategic planning process, and for their dedicated service and commitment to Beaufort County First Steps!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Ashley Hutchison".  
Ashley Hutchison, Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Betty Washington".  
Betty Washington, Executive Director

## Vision, Mission, and Values

Source: *Guiding Principles and Best Practices for South Carolina Nonprofits, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Together SC, 2017)  
<http://www.togethersc.org/?page=GPBP>

In order to engage in strategic thinking that steers the organization in a **mission-focused direction**, the local partnership board must clearly define its mission, vision and values and use these statements to guide planning and action.

Mission and vision statements capture the essence of your organization's beliefs and values, and define its place in the world. A **vision statement** explains the overall goal of your organization looking into the future, while the **mission statement** outlines the present plan to realize the vision.

---

### VISION

Communicates the desired future we seek for the community we serve.

**SC First Steps Vision 2020 Vision Statement**

Every child in Beaufort County will be prepared for success in school.

- The partnership board adopts the SC First Steps Vision 2020 vision statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

**Beaufort County First Steps Vision Statement**

Every child in Beaufort County will be prepared for success in school.

---

### MISSION

Describes the purpose that guides everything we do.

**SC First Steps Vision 2020 Mission Statement**

Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps families and caregivers in Beaufort County prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.

- The partnership board adopts the SC First Steps Vision 2020 mission statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

**Beaufort County First Steps Mission Statement**

Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps families and caregivers in Beaufort County prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.

## **VALUES**

Core values and beliefs reflect how our people – and the organization itself – behaves.

### **South Carolina First Steps Vision 2020 Core Values**

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped.

Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children.

The work of supporting families and caregivers is a collaborative effort between state and local stakeholders within the public, private and faith sectors.

School readiness is the result of a child's development in many areas, with each contributing to the child's success.

Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of children and families.

We value, and demonstrate in our collaborative work and advocacy, diverse perspectives in the development of public policy and programs.

To achieve desired results, services must be high-quality and grounded in strong evidence. First Steps operates within a culture of accountability.

- The partnership board adopts the SC First Steps Vision 2020 core values for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

### **Beaufort County First Steps Core Values**

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped.

Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children.

The work of supporting families and caregivers is a collaborative effort between state and local stakeholders within the public, private and faith sectors.

School readiness is the result of a child's development in many areas, with each contributing to the child's success.

Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of children and families.

We value, and demonstrate in our collaborative work and advocacy, diverse perspectives in the development of public policy and programs.

To achieve desired results, services must be high-quality and grounded in strong evidence. First Steps operates within a culture of accountability.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic goals set the direction for how the organization intends to implement its mission and address the needs of its focus population(s) for the duration of the plan.

#	<b>Beaufort County First Steps Strategic Goals, 2018-2020</b>	<b>FS Legislative Goal(s) Addressed</b> (abbreviate as Goal 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Profile of the Ready Kindergartner Benchmark(s) Addressed</b> (abbreviate as 1A, 2B, etc.)
1	To increase the reach of Beaufort County First Steps program services for children and families throughout the community.	1, 2, 3,4, 5	1 A-E 2 A-E 3 A-D 4 A&B
2	To identify and recruit board members who are committed to the mission and vision of the organization.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2 A, B, C & F 4 A&B
3	To increase the presence of the Beaufort County First Steps Partnership and services in the community as a local portal for early childhood services as measured by connections made to referral agencies and by tracking the number of clients making use of local resources.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1 A-E 2 A-D 4 A&B
4	Continued efforts of being a Community Convener to ensure all programs funded through Beaufort County First Steps are working collaboratively toward a common goal; services to families and children.	3, 4, 5	2 A-D 4 A&B
5	To locate additional resources to meet the needs of at risk children and families served in our community.	2,3,4	1 A-E 2 A-E 3 A-D 4 A & B

# Beaufort County First Steps Partnership

## 2018-2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Organized by the partnership's current and proposed programs and services, as well as the core functions common to all First Steps partnerships (serving as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to services; serving as a community convener in support of the needs of preschool children and their families; and supporting state readiness priorities).

<b>Local Portal</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b> Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b> Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration			
Increase access to services provided by Beaufort County First Steps and collaborating agencies.	1,2,3,4,5	Documentation of increase in numbers served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attend and take part in community events to share information about First Steps offering</li><li>▪ Participate in Universal Staffing</li><li>▪ Serve on Beaufort Early Child Coalition</li><li>▪ Presence at Sheldon Township Meetings</li></ul>
Strengthen interagency accountability and collaboration by continually making use of community resources such as Charity Tracker and SC Thrive to refer families for additional services.	1,2,3,4,5	Reporting system from Charity Tracker and SC Thrive to show number applications completed and/or agency referrals made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ First Steps staff to keep certification with Charity Tracker to access additional resources for families</li><li>▪ First Steps staff will assist families in completing on-line application to receive such benefits such as SNAP, Medicare, Medicaid and assist with filing taxes at no cost.</li></ul>
Beaufort County First Steps objective is to build capacity to enhance all program offering	1,2,3,4,5,	Documentation of number of events attended, number of informational materials distributed, # individuals follow-up after referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attend community events and disseminate information about the programs offered through First Steps</li><li>▪ Continue to collaborate with Born to Read to share information about First Steps programs.</li></ul>

## Community Education and Outreach

Beaufort County First Steps will increase understanding in the community of school readiness domains and assessment, and “what works” to help young children succeed, and will make information easily accessible in all communities and for all families. (State Priority: SCFS Strategic Plan)

Objective	In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	Success Metrics Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	Action Items Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration			
To develop, produce and disseminate educational information to promote partnership service offering.	1,3,5	Document the number of folks that express interest in organization from information received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in community events</li> <li>▪ Develop public relations and marketing materials about First Steps programs</li> <li>▪ Develop plan for conducting follow-up with folks calling or stopping by for information i.e. phone call to make sure connection was made.</li> </ul>
Continued participation in community events to reach target audience and recruit families and programs.	1,2,3,4	Documentation of increase in # of families, children, and programs served.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff engagement during community events</li> <li>▪ Disseminate information about First Steps program</li> <li>▪ Recruit families/programs</li> </ul>
Begin the use of social media and webpage for partnership to inform public of service offering.	1,2,3,4,5	Develop online social media presence and track usage to see how many folks make contact as a result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop webpage</li> <li>▪ Begin presence on social media</li> <li>▪ Recruit volunteer or hire staff to make updates to social media and webpage</li> </ul>
Educate and engage local and state policy member and other stakeholders on the impact of Beaufort County First Steps services in the community	1,2,3,4	Increase presence at government, civic, and community forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Share information with public</li> <li>▪ Publicize Partnership Annual report</li> <li>▪ Speak at Community Stakeholders meeting</li> </ul>
Host community additional car seat check-up events to educate public on importance of keeping children safe on highway.	1,2,3,4,5	Successful documentation of car seat check events; more children properly restrained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Steps staff maintains CPS certification</li> <li>▪ Coordinate efforts with Law Enforcement</li> <li>▪ Schedule and advertise car seat check events</li> </ul>

## Mobilizing Communities on Providing Enhanced Services to Support Families and their Young Children

Beaufort County First Steps will serve as a community convener to address the needs of preschool children in the community, in support of state readiness priorities (State Priority: Core Function).

<b>Objective</b>  Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b>  Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b>  Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Collaborate with local, state and other programs to help support First Steps initiatives in developing goals around school readiness for young children.	1,2,3,4,5	Measure success through focus groups geared towards tracking outcomes for school readiness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ First Steps staff to represent at community meetings</li> <li>▪ Share information about other initiatives around the state</li> </ul>
Continued collaboration with Universal Staffing (UST) for home visitation program	1,3,5	Focus group to monitor progress of UST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fund Universal Staffing</li> <li>▪ First Steps presence at UST meetings</li> <li>▪ Seek referrals to expand program offerings</li> </ul>
Maintain strong presence with Beaufort County Early Child Coalition	1,3,3,4	Advisory committees and is an on-going process of defining priorities, supporting specific actions and programs, identifying or developing data sources, and measuring and reporting results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attend scheduled Coalition meetings</li> <li>▪ Identify community resources</li> <li>▪ Develop a plan for optimum child development that is based on research and has measurable indicators.</li> </ul>
Strengthen Interagency accountability to keep children safe on the highways	1,2,3,5	Increased presence from other groups focused on cause Evaluations on progress (#children properly restrained in car seats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct more safety seat checks</li> <li>▪ Work with Children's Trust on safety plans</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with rotary and other service groups for volunteers</li> <li>▪ Maintain connections with law enforcement</li> </ul>
Campaign to raise awareness about the importance of quality early education in a young child's life and motivate everyone to learn, and get involved.	1,2,3,4,5,	Increased attention of early education programs Showing more awareness for quality education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tell successful story of First Steps and other early childhood agencies</li> <li>▪ Speak to rotary, chamber and other civic groups to gain support</li> </ul>

## Strategy Name - Parents As Teachers

**Description:** Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:

- **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly
- **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families
- **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns
- **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed

This strategy provides physical, mental, cognitive, and social & emotional support biweekly or weekly as long as the child is within the age range. Clients are expected to participate in the program anywhere between 1-4 years. Age of child at the beginning of enrollment often indicates the length of time the family is expected to participate. For instance a prenatal mother may be in the program for 4 years whereas a child enrolled in the program at age two may only participate for two years or once they reach kindergarten age.

**Integration:** This strategy is operated in-house and Parent Educators conduct at minimum 2 visits per month with each family. This strategy is integrated with other in-house programs such as childcare training and quality enhancement. Parents are encouraged to take part in early childcare trainings and are given information about childcare programs to include those that are receiving technical assistance from First Steps staff through Quality enhancement initiative. Staff makes referrals to other community partners depending on the needs of the families. For instance the BabyNet Coordinator is housed in the First Steps office, if there is a concern, staff from both agencies work together to make the necessary connections for families needing assistance.

**Collaboration:** This is an in-house strategy and operates solely through the First Steps office. No additional funding or personnel are received from any other sources to financially support this strategy. However, the First Steps Partnership takes part in Universal Staffing and the Beaufort County Early Coalition to ensure services are not duplicated in the county to ensure First Steps meets its requirement of filling service gaps without duplication.

<b>Objective</b>  Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b>  Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b>  Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Increase the number of families and children served per year to 30 by the end of 2020. At least 75% of clients served will be retained in the program for at least 12 months.	1, 3, 5	Retention rates  Document the increased number of families/children served in the program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Recruitment of families</li><li>▪ Additional funding to add program staff</li><li>▪ Seek additional funds/resources to increase #'s</li><li>▪ Provide incentives to keep families engaged in program.</li></ul>
Maintain Parents as Teachers Blue Ribbon status as a means of accountability.	1,2,3, 4, 5	Maintain Blue Ribbon status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Meet SCFS program requirements</li><li>▪ Meet PAT National program requirements</li></ul>
Expand program services to build capacity of program	1,3, 5	Show progress in increased staff available to serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Write grants to seek funding to hire a least one part-time Parent Educator</li></ul>
Engaging families in more literacy opportunities to include fathers' participation in program.	1,2,3,4,5,	Observe and document more intentional reading with children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Quote for Raising a Reader Program</li><li>▪ Fundraise to get monies to implement program</li><li>▪ Train parents and staff on Raising Reader</li></ul>

## Strategy – Quality Enhancement (QE)

**Description:** First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a significant percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process which requires a strong level of commitment. Certified First Steps staff conduct bi-weekly visits to participating childcare facilities and develop a Quality Improvement Plan to address needs; i.e. curriculum, room arrangement, lesson plans, selection of age-appropriate learning materials. One site technical assistance through mentoring, coaching, collaboration, and positive communication, helps to implement effective teaching strategies and techniques. Yearly assessments are used as a measure of improvement. Providers are expected to meet/exceed rating of 5 on (ERS scale 1-7). If score is achieved another classroom is considered for the following year; if program has not met the requirement by end of the fiscal year they may participate a second year to improve standards.

**Integration:** The Quality Enhancement strategy is integrated with other in-house programs such as childcare training and Parents as Teachers home visitation. Providers are encouraged to take part in early childcare trainings and are given information about other trainings offered and services in the community. Parents from the home visitation program are given information about childcare facilities and encouraged to use information gathered to select a quality program. Though not required, the hope is parents would choose one of the Quality Enhancement facilities for their childcare needs based on information they receive about what quality care looks like. Staff makes referrals to community partners depending on the need of the families. For instance the QE staff and Parent Educators may look at a family's specific needs; location, cost and special requirements for the child when helping to decide the best childcare option for the family.

**Collaboration:** First Steps coordinates efforts with other state entities like Child Care Resource and Referral, PITC, Inclusion Collaborative and ABC to offer providers additional services. For instance if there is a request for Special Needs training efforts are made to connect providers with Inclusion Collaborative. First Steps collaborates with other agencies to ensure centers are receiving the right information and assistance from the correct agency to avoid duplication.

<b>Objective</b> Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration	In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b> Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b> Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Increase the number of childcare facilities served per year to 8 by the end of 2020. At least 75% of the childcare programs will participate in the Quality Enhancement (QE) program for at least two years.	1,2,3,4,5	Document increased number of programs served Document number of years in program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased funding to hire part-time staff</li> <li>▪ Seek and train qualified staff</li> <li>▪ Advertise and enroll childcare programs to participate in Quality Enhancement strategy</li> </ul>
Increase the number of facilities obtaining enhanced status through licensing and/or ABC Quality programs.	1,4,5	Enhanced ERS assessments Observations and monitoring through TA visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide technical assistance for childcare staff</li> <li>▪ Mentoring/Coaching in preschool classroom</li> <li>▪ Training for staff on Early Learning Standards and other relevant topics</li> </ul>
Increase quality of overall environment of childcare facilities.	1,4,5	Attainment of enhanced quality status Meet First Steps evidence-based status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued technical assistance support</li> <li>▪ Grants to purchase quality curriculum materials</li> <li>▪ Develop quality improvement plans</li> <li>▪ Coaching and mentoring from First Steps staff</li> </ul>
Making Child Care Available and Affordable for all children.	1,2,3,4,5	Assess funding opportunities to use for scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Find resources to help subsidize cost</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with other agencies to obtain goal</li> </ul>
Collaborate with Early Childhood instructors and T.E.A.C.H. Ambassadors to increase the number of childcare staff enrolling and attaining ECD certificates or degrees.	1,2,3,4,5	Document completion of ECD courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distribute information about T.E.A.C.H.</li> <li>▪ Share course schedules from Technical College</li> <li>▪ Offer incentives for childcare professionals</li> </ul>



## Strategy Name – Child Care Training

**Description:** High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom to ensure teachers put what is learned into practice.

At minimum 10 trainings producing 30+ certified trainings hours are offered each fiscal year to meet the needs of childcare professionals. In addition the yearly TEAM Lowcountry Conference provides an opportunity for participants to achieve 10 more hours of trainings to meet their professional development needs.

Monthly trainings range from free to low cost. People participating in Quality Enhancement are expected at minimum to take at least 8 certified trainings each year through the First Steps office.

**Integration:** Monthly certified trainings are provided to facilities in and around the county. All teachers participating in the Quality Enhancement Initiative receive training at no cost.

Our Quality Enhancement and Training strategies show an improvement in teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child's development and success in school.

**Collaboration:** Beaufort County First Steps collaborates with regional First Steps partnerships (Jasper, Hampton, Allendale), Childcare Resource and Referral, ABC Child Care program, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start, , SC Inclusion, Technical College of the Lowcountry, Beginnings SC, Hope Horizons, SC PITC, and T.E.A.C.H. to offer child care trainings and support annual the TEAM Lowcountry Early Childhood Conference. Financial support for trainings comes from CCCCD (Greenville Technical College), SCECA, Sam's Club, Miller Swamp Missionary Church, and Ridgeland Baptist Child Care Ministry. In-Kind support to include use of facility for childcare trainings, door prizes and other incentives for training comes from Ridgeland Baptist Church, Baptist Church of Beaufort, Kaplan Early Learning Company, Sandbox Museum, The Children's Center Inc., T.E.A.C.H., Traci Lynn Jewelry, Scentsy (Kelli Boniecki) and regional First Steps Partnerships.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b> Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b> Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration			
Increase the number of adults served each year by 10% by the end of 2020.	1,2,3,4	Documentation of increased attendance Satisfaction surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seek qualified trainers</li> <li>▪ Grants to offer training incentives</li> <li>▪ Advertise/promote training offerings</li> </ul>
At least 75% of staff participating in the Quality Enhancement program will attend training offered through First Steps	1,2,4	Documentation of number of participants from QE programs attending training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ QE plan to include requirement of staff to attend trainings</li> <li>▪ Training incentives for QE partners (free)</li> </ul>
Collaborate with other agencies to increase number of quality trainings offered in the community	1,2,3	Increased number of program partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partner with other agencies to offer trainings at low or no cost to childcare professionals</li> </ul>
Enhance knowledge of childcare staff participating in trainings	1,2,3	Pre-post evaluations Surveys Decreased number of programs with licensing deficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow-up technical assistance visits with participating programs; help teachers learn more about teaching young children, help reduce turnover of childcare teachers to provide stability for children</li> <li>▪ Integration of childcare training program with Quality Enhancement strategy</li> </ul>

