



Meeting of the Board of Trustees

October 21, 2021 2:00 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/93597311398?pwd=dkl3MkRKbytrMEtvMHJkQ2JqQWVYUT09>

AGENDA

- I. Roll Call (Georgia Mjartan)
- II. Public Comment Period
The public is invited to provide comments relevant to the SC Early Childhood Advisory Council and/or South Carolina First Steps during this period. Members of the public wishing to speak must either email ajones@scfirststeps.org or notate their interest in speaking in the comment box on Zoom *prior* to the start of the meeting. Comments should be limited to no more than three minutes per speaker.
- III. Call to Order and Approve Agenda (David Morley)
Motion: To adopt the agenda as submitted
Motion: To adopt the August 19, 2021 minutes as submitted
Attachments: August 19, 2021 Minutes
- IV. Executive Committee Report (David Morley)
Attachments: Executive Committee Report, Executive Committee Meetings Minutes
- V. Consent Agenda: Motions Recommended by Committees (David Morley)
 - a. Motion: To receive the 2020-21 Fiscal Year Financial Audit. (Finance and Administration Committee recommends)
 - b. Motion: To approve that Allendale County First Steps and the Oconee County First Steps be allowed to change programs as voted and approved by their Board of Directors for FY 22 Grant Year. (Program and Grant Committee recommends)
 - c. Motion: To approve the addition of the updated standards for the evidence-based program Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards (Program and Grant Committee recommends)
 - d. Motion: To approve the addition of standards for the evidence-informed program Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards (Program and Grant Committee recommends)
- VI. Finance and Administration Committee (Walter Fleming)
Attachments: Finance and Administration Committee Report, Finance and Administration Committee Meeting Minutes, FY 2022 Financial Status Report as September 30, 2021, FY 2022 Donations Report as of September 30, 2021, FY 2021 Financial Audit, Inspector General's Review of Greenwood County and Abbeville County First Steps Partnerships
- VII. Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee (Jennifer McConnell)
Attachments: Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Report, Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting Minutes, Oconee County First Steps FY2022 Budget Reallocation Request, First Steps HIPPY Program Guidelines, First Steps SCPV Program



Accountability Standards, Local Partnerships Designated and Legislative Appointments as of October 14, 2021

- VIII. Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee (Dr. Amy Williams)
Attachments: Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Report, Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes
- IX. Legislative Committee (Sen. Gerald Malloy)
- X. Executive Director's Report (Georgia Mjartan)
Attachments: Executive Director's Report
- XI. **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees



Board of Trustees Meeting

August 19, 2021

2:00PM

<https://zoom.us/j/92196505922?pwd=WnA4MFlyZWJXWmFJU21xK2YzWndFdz09>

Draft Minutes

Members Present (17):

Dave Morley, Chair
Dr. Shelley Canright
Sen. Greg Hembree
Rep. Rita Allison
Rep. Jerry Govan
Dr. David Mathis
Mary Lynne Diggs
Sue Williams
Michael Leach

Dr. Edward Simmer
Walter Fleming
Tim Holt
Jennifer McConnell
Dr. Amy Williams
Jessica Mackey
John Hayes
Nicole Wynkoop

Members Absent (6):

Sen. Gerald Malloy
Robert Kerr
Constance Holloway
Alexia Newman
Roger Pryor
Janie Neeley

Others Present (83)

Georgia Mjartan
Abby Thorman
A Brewton
Adrienne Troy Frazier
Aleisha Butler
Amy Engle
Angelia Mikolajczak
Angela Pruitt
Ariel Gilreath
Audrey McClary
Avian Jones
Barbara Manoski
Berry Kelly
Beth Moore
Betty Gardiner
Betty Washington
Bill Potapchuk
Blaire Van Dyne
Carletta Isreal
Chastine Dickey
Chelsea Richard
Cheryl Scales-Chavis
Christy Stanton
Cindy Ellis

Cindy Galloway
Cindy Kellett
Crystal Campbell
Delores Rock
Derek Cromwell
Diana Cadena
Dione Brabham
Dorian Young
Dorina Foster
Dorothy Priestler
Gina Beebe
Janice Kilburn
Jared Busker
Jennifer Williams
Jenny May
Jon Artz
Joy Mazur
Justina Siuba
Karen Oliver
Kate Roach
Kathy Fitzgerald
Katie Dow
Katrina Bost
Kerry Cordan

Kim Trudell
Kristine Jenkins
Laura Baker
Linda Hickson
Lis Guimaraes
Lavinia Tejada
Marie Stewart
Mark Barnes
Martha Strickland
Mary Beth Testa
Meredith Dickens
Michael Gaskins
Michelle Wight
Nancy Ziobro
Peggy Ball
Pierce McNair
Pauletta Plowden
Rachal Hatton
Reginald Williams
Rogers Pender
Rosemarie West
Ryan Shinn
Sally Cauthen
Sharon Bruton

Shayla Pettigrew
Shelia Cornwell
SheKiah Reese
Sherry Stewart
Stacy Greenwalt
Suzanne McGougan
Tammy Hutcherson
Tiffany Outlaw
Valerie Johnson
Valencia Johnson
Willa Wingate

Ms. Jones conducted a roll call.



Ms. Jones reported there were no members of the public that requested to speak.

Mr. Morley called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. Mr. Morley requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Dr. Canright provided the motion. Mr. Holt provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the June 17, 2021 minutes. Mr. Holt provided the motion. Ms. Williams provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley reported on the Executive Committee and the status of the regional board-to-board meetings. Dr. Williams made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the evaluation of the agency head to include compensation. Sen. Hembree seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved. The board entered executive session.

Sen. Hembree made a motion to accept the agency head evaluation as presented and to contact the Agency Head Salary Commission to raise Georgia Mjartan's salary by ten percent. Dr. Mathis seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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

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

- a. Motion to prohibit the following local partnerships from being awarded future competitive and targeted grants from South Carolina First Steps until all of the partnerships' issues contained in their Corrective Action Plans and until any pending investigations are resolved; Unresolved Fiscal Year 19 corrective action and unresolved OIG investigation- Abbeville County FS and Greenwood County FS; New unresolved Fiscal year 21 Corrective Action- Barnwell County FS, Horry County First Steps, Jasper County FS, and Kershaw County FS. (Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
- b. Motion to accept the Early Childhood Innovation Grant Awards to 5 applications representing the following 7 Local Partnerships as recommended by the SC First Steps grant review committee- Chesterfield, Anderson, Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester, Cherokee, and Colleton County Local Partnerships. (Program and Grant Committee recommends)

Mr. Fleming reported on the Finance and Administration Committee. He stated that FY2020 ended in good shape financially and that for FY 2021-2022 the state is providing \$15.6 million in additional funding. The total budget for FY 2021-2022 will exceed \$68 million.

Ms. McConnell reported on the Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee. She reviewed the Local Partnership Corrective Action Plans and announced the local partnerships that have been awarded Early Childhood Innovation Grants. Ms. Mjartan reviewed the designated and legislative board appointments for the local partnerships.

Dr. Williams reported on the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee and reviewed the results from the survey that went out to parents of 4K students.



Rep. Govan and Sen. Hembree provided a legislative update and discussed the additional funding for SC First Steps, the expansion of First Steps 4K and the ESSER III funding for early childhood from the State Department of Education to SC First Steps

Ms. Mjartan provided the Executive Director's report with information on the plan for the ESSER III funds, AmeriCorps, First Steps 4K and the statewide expansion. She introduced the new team members and reviewed the current list of vacancies. Ms. Mjartan announced that the agency is planning a spring fundraising event and asked for board participation on the planning committee.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Williams provided the motion. Rep. Govan seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14 pm by Mr. Morley.



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees
From: David Morley, Chairman, Executive Committee
Date: October 14, 2021
RE: Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees met on September 17, 2021. Minutes of the meetings are attached. No action was taken.

Board Additions

We are pleased to welcome **Dr. Michelle Gough Fry** to the Board of Trustees. Dr. Fry is the Director of the South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs as of October 2021. She has served as part of the executive team for multiple state agencies and a large, complex nonprofit organization for the past decade. Dr. Fry has also served as a Commissioner for the Indiana Civil Rights Commission, General Counsel to the State Board of Education, General Counsel to the Indiana Charter School Board, and General Counsel to the Indiana Department of Education. She assumes the role from Acting Director **Constance Holloway**.



Executive Committee Meeting Minutes September 17th at 11:00 am by Zoom

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of South Carolina First Steps met by Zoom on September 17th. The meeting was called to order by David Morley, Chair, as 11:05 am. Members present: Dr. Shelley Canright, Jennifer McConnell, Walt Fleming, Dr. Amy Williams. Members absent: Sen. Gerald Malloy. Staff present: Georgia Mjartan.

Director Mjartan presented information and requested feedback on the agency's proposed legislative agenda for FY2023 (2022 session) including budget request, provisos, and local partnership governance.

The committee reviewed legislative reporting including the Agency Accountability Report and the agency head planning stage document. There was a discussion about which goals the agency had achieved and which required additional attention. The committee discussed high intensity programs and the overarching measure of success to increase the number of children enrolled in high intensity programs funded by First Steps. Consideration must be given to the impact of additional funding such as ESSER III supporting and expanding programs and services that are *not* high intensity and how this may negatively impact the *proportion* of children enrolled in high intensity programs while the *action* number may be increasing. There as discussion about the potential need to change the metric associated with this goal to relate to increased numbers of children receiving high intensity programs rather than proportion of children receiving these services.

Updates were provided regarding local partnerships, program implementation, grant-funded expansion, compliance, and corrective action measures underway. Director Mjartan also provided point-in-time and year-to-date data on the roll-out of First Steps 4K statewide expansion.

The committee discussed the value that internal research and evaluation capacity has brought to the agency's efforts. Mjartan shared about the agency's plans to hire a full-time evaluation coordinator to support the Director of Research and Strategy's work and discussed the additional need for an implementation science lens on evaluation, especially during this period of growth and expansion. Dr. Williams offered to connect an implementation scientist from MUSC with the agency.

The committee was given an update on First Five SC and members were asked to consider whether they or someone they know would be willing to serve as a tester.

Director Mjartan presented updates on AmeriCorps, fundraising and development including information about the Spring 2022.

The committee decided which items within the Birth through Five Plan the ECAC Board of Trustees would vote on, and which did not require a vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:56 pm with a unanimous vote (Shelley Canright motion, Walt Fleming second).



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Walter Fleming, Chairman, Finance and Administration Committee

Date: October 7, 2021

RE: Finance and Administration Report

The Finance and Administration Committee met via Zoom conference call on October 7, 2021 to receive updates from staff and to take up action items. Detailed meeting minutes are attached. The committee brings forward one action item, and the following updates.

ACTION: Receipt of the 2020-21 Financial Audit

Presentation by Emily Sobczak, CPA, Partner, Greene Finney, LLP. Ms. Sobczak presented the Financial Statements and Audit for SC First Steps for the 2020-21 state fiscal year. She mentioned the auditor issued an unmodified opinion, which is the best an agency can receive. In addition, she mentioned that the agency has also received no findings, or discuss with management concerns which is excellent. The agency has had perfect audits for the last five years, which speaks very highly for Mark Barnes, Lavinia Tejada, and the First Steps financial team. Additional information is in the audit, which is being sent to the Board as an attachment and in the minutes of the meeting. We will also send a copy of the presentation by Ms. Sobczak.

Based on the discussion Mr. Holt motioned, with Mr. Fleming seconding, that the Audit be received. The Committee voted unanimously to receive the Audit and send it to the Board of Trustees. The Committee makes the following Motion:

Motion: To receive the 2020-21 Fiscal Year Financial Audit.

First Steps State Office

Financial Report

2021-22: The YTD financial report was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. The organization will have its largest ever annual budget for the coming year. COVID is still impacting our 4K providers but we are moving forward with statewide expansion in that program. The biggest increase for the new year came from the state for the 4K Program's statewide expansion, which made up most of the \$15.6 Million in new state funds. Additional Federal dollars were also received for the new year.

New Building Update

SC First Steps has recently moved into its new leased building at 636 Rosewood Dr. in Columbia. The new building will allow for almost 16,000 square ft of space for our growing organization. The previous building at 1300 Sumter St provided approximately 11,000 square feet.

State Budget Update

SC First Steps submitted a single state budget request to the Governor's Office for the upcoming 2022-23 state fiscal year. The request is for \$6 Million in recurring funds for the Local Partnerships. Funds would be used for targeted and competitive grants and capacity and infrastructure needs. We are also requesting increases in tuition rate payments for 4K as well as transportation and classroom start-up funds.

Local Partnerships

Update on Inspector General's Investigation

The committee discussed the report provided by the Inspector General on their investigation of Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps. We discussed their final recommendations and findings. The report confirmed the issues that were raised in the 2019 Financial Audit for Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps. Corrective Action Plans have been developed and are being implemented. The State Office will be working with the Local Partnerships to implement all recommendations and Corrective Action Plan Items. A copy of the Inspector General's Report is sent as an additional attachment.



Minutes from Finance and Administration Committee Meeting

October 7, 2021

Members present: Walter Fleming, Chairman, Tim Holt

Members not present: N/A

Nonmembers present: Mark Barnes, Director of Administration; Lavinia Tejada, CPA, Director of Finance and Audits

With all public notices being provided, the Zoom meeting was called to order by Walter Fleming at 10:00 am.

2020-21 Fiscal Year Financial Audit

Required Action Item: Receipt of the 2020-21 Fiscal Year Financial Audit

Presentation by Emily Sobczak, CPA, Partner, Greene Finney, LLP. Ms. Sobczak presented the Financial Statements and Audit for SC First Steps for the 2020-21 state fiscal year. She mentioned the auditor issued an unmodified opinion, which is the best an agency can receive. In addition, she mentioned that the agency has also received no findings, or discuss with management concerns which is excellent. The agency has had perfect audits for the last five years, which speaks very highly for Mark Barnes, Lavinia Tejada, and the First Steps financial team. She mentioned that the total fund balance increased from \$6.9 Million in FY 2020 to \$16.7 Million in FY 2021. Most of which is restricted for specific programs. She mentioned there are several reasons that it is important to maintain an adequate fund balance, and it's very important during uncertain economic times. Much of the fund balance increase came from a reduction in expenditures from COVID impacts. Total revenues also increased at the same time to a total of \$45.2 Million in FY 2021. Over \$5 million of the revenue was from COVID federal funds. She mentioned that the pension and other post-employment benefits (OPEB) projected costs had increased but that these would not affect the current financial status as these costs were projected for the future, and including these are now a requirement for GASB standards.

There was general discussion by the Committee with Ms. Sobczak. Tim Holt motioned that the Audit be accepted and the Committee voted unanimously to accept. Motion will go to the Board of Trustees to accept the audit.

First Steps State Office

Financial Report

The YTD financial report for 2021-22 was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. He shared that the projected budget for FY 2021-22 was the largest in agency history and was greater than \$68 Million. This is up from \$45 million in FY 2020-21. The biggest change came from the receipt of over \$15.6 million in new state

funds for the new year. Most of this was in funds for the statewide expansion of 4K. But additional federal funds have been received from the State Department of Education, while we are continuing to receive the Preschool Development Grant from the Department of Social Services along with several other federal grants.

New Building Update

SC First Steps has recently moved into its new leased building at 636 Rosewood Dr. in Columbia. The new building will allow for almost 16,000 square ft of space for our growing organization. The previous building at 1300 Sumter St provided approximately 11,000 square feet. We have worked very hard to get moved and get everything done necessary to create a good working environment. We hope to be able to have meetings in our building so people will get to see it as soon as possible, but that will be based on the pandemic.

State Budget Update

SC First Steps submitted a single state budget request to the Governor's Office for the upcoming 2022-23 state fiscal year. The request is for \$6 Million in recurring funds for the Local Partnerships. These funds would be used for two purposes, they include targeted or competitive grants, and for capacity and infrastructure. In addition, we requested some proviso changes that would increase the amounts paid to the 4K providers for transportation, tuition, and class-room start-up funds. We will meet with the Governor's Office later this month to present our request.

Local Partnerships

Update on Chart of Accounts and other changes

We have made a number of changes to the Chart of Accounts for the Local Partnerships financial system. These changes will make it easier for them to track and manage the increasingly more complex grants and funds management. These changes allow funds tracking for federal grants that don't match our fiscal year and should simplify the grants and cash management.

Update on Inspector General's Investigation

Mr. Barnes provided a copy of the completed Investigation of Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps to the Committee members. There was general discussion about the IG's final recommendations and findings. The report confirmed the issues that were raised in the 2019 Financial Audit for Greenwood and Abbeville County First Steps. It mentioned that the Corrective Action Plans that had been established through the work with the attorneys, would resolve the concerns that were confirmed. In addition, it made several recommendations and findings. All of the recommendations were included in the Corrective Action plan except for two. These included providing annual training for the Local Partnerships related to the Grant Agreement and other requirements, and for SC First Steps to take steps to try and resolve the fact that Local Partnership staff are not allowed to participate in the Retirement System. SC First Steps will be implementing these recommendations. In addition, we will be working through the items identified in the Corrective Action Plans. Per the plans and their timelines, which were established by the Greenwood and Abbeville Local Partnership Boards, the plans will be completed by June 30, 2022.

Local Partnership Retirement Efforts

The State Office is continuing work with their attorney to assist with supporting Local Partnership staff to be eligible to enroll in the state's retirement system. Work is being done to submit a request to the Attorney General's Office for information on the classification of the Local Partnerships, and at the same time reviewing potential changes to First Steps statutes which would change their status to PEBA and therefore allow the Local Partnerships to participate in retirement.

4K Program

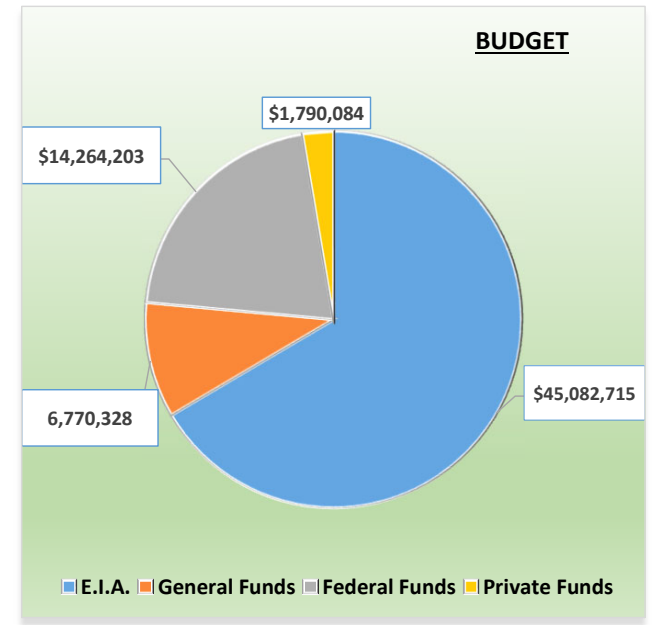
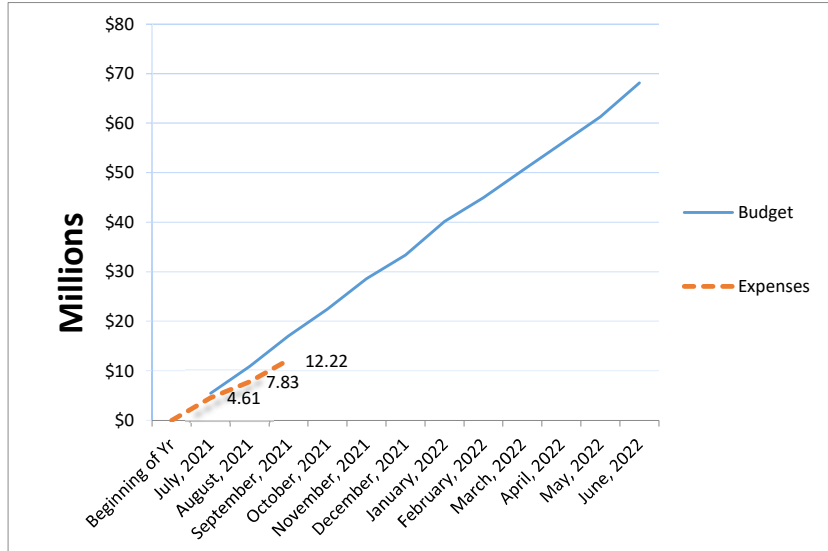
Staff gave an update on the program's status. This included an update on the statewide expansion efforts.

Other

With no further business to discuss Tim Holt motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.

As of
September 30, 2021

Spending Rates	
Projected	25%
Actual	18%



PROGRAMS / OPERATIONS	STATE APPROPRIATIONS			FEDERAL GRANTS			PRIVATE FUNDS			GRAND TOTAL			
	Description	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS	14,435,228	3,926,545	10,508,683	2,025,313		\$ 2,025,313				-	16,460,541	3,926,545	\$ 12,533,996
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT & TECH ASST.	2,896,900	522,244	2,374,656	3,385,280		\$ 3,385,280	198,393	16,209	182,184		6,480,573	538,453	\$ 5,942,120
PRIVATE 4-K	32,014,655	6,861,308	25,153,347	5,307,914		5,307,914				-	37,322,569	6,861,308	\$ 30,461,261
EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL	193,500	16,998	176,502	2,531,685	437,530	2,094,155	130,000		130,000		2,855,185	454,528	\$ 2,400,657
AMERICORPS				326,703	31,267	295,436				-	326,703	31,267	\$ 295,436
POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY	2,557,208	393,423	2,163,785	687,308		687,308	1,461,691	10,918	1,450,773		4,706,207	404,341	\$ 4,301,866
GRAND TOTAL:	52,097,491	11,720,518	40,376,973	14,264,203	468,797	13,795,406	1,790,084	27,127	1,762,957		68,151,778	12,216,442	\$ 55,935,336

Notes:

1) Local Partnerships:

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

2) Private budgets based on Projected Fund Raising and income & prior year cash.

45,327,163	E.I.A.
6,770,328	General Funds
14,264,203	Federal Funds
1,790,084	Private Funds
68,151,778	

3) LP Support & Technical Assistance

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

Federal Funds:

AmeriCorps:	326,703
SLDS:	173,017
PDG:	5,686,573
10% Quality	339,517
ESSER Funds	4,485,914
GEER Funds	3,252,479
	13
	14,264,203

3) LP Support & Technical Assistance (cont.)

- d. Workers' compensation insurance coverage
- e. External programmatic evaluation
- f. Financial audits-annually each LP
- g. Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors
- h. OFS program & finance staff (payroll, rent, contractual, supplies, travel, etc)
- i. Includes LP Countdown to Kindergarten program

- 4) State Appropriations Include EIA Funds and General Funds.**
- 5) \$3.2 mil. in GEER Funds were awarded April 1 (reimbursable)**

Donations
FY 2022



As of September 30th, 2021

DATE RECEIVED	GENERAL	DONOR/PAYOR	FUNDS	PURPOSE / COMMENTS
Jul 19, 2021	\$ 25	Cindy Kellet	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jul 19, 2021	\$ 1,000	Brady Thomas	Restricted	Hampton County First Steps
Aug 1, 2021	\$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	\$ 975	Jim & Melinda Robertson-NFG	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	\$ 20	James Rickenbaker-NFG	Restricted	Orangeburg County First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	\$ 96	Blackbaud Giving Foundation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Aug 24, 2021	\$ 125	Flour Enterprise-The Benevity	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Sep 1, 2021	\$ 10	Catherine Morton-FrontStream	Restricted	Berkeley County First Steps

\$ 2,261



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Jennifer McConnell

Date: October 7, 2021

RE: Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee

The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee met on October 7, 2021. Minutes of the meeting are attached. The following motions were approved unanimously; Two counties changing programs, one program standard update and one new program standard.

Local Partnerships Program Change- Oconee County and Allendale County

- Allendale County FS was forced to change programs, Child Care Training & Scholarships due to the school district closing the center servicing their program.
 - The new programs will be Education for Children Under 4 & Early Childhood Identity and referral.
- Oconee County FS will discontinue Healthy Families America and Triple P Parenting due to issues with vender.
 - New programs will be Nurse Family Partnership and Child Care Scholarships

MOTION

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves that the Allendale County First Steps and the Oconee County First Steps be allowed to change programs as voted and approved by their Board of Directors for FY 22 Grant Year.

Moved by Roger Pryor, seconded by Shelley Canright. Motion passed unanimously.

Program Standards Change- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

MOTION

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of the updated standards for the evidence- based program Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards

Moved by Jennifer McConnell, seconded by Shelley Canright. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of New Program Standard- Supporting Care Providers Through Visits (SCPV)

MOTION

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of standards for the evidence-informed program Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards



Moved by Roger Pryor, seconded by Jennifer McConnell. Motion passed unanimously.

Derek Cromwell Chief Partnership Officer Updates

Corrective Action

Updates were given on two counties, Horry County and Barnwell County who had previously been identified as needing corrective action for falling short on match requirements (15%- Horry County)) and falling short of the required number of Board Members on the local partnership Board of Directors (minimum 12- Barnwell). It was reported that both counties have now met the required standard and have been removed from corrective action.

Horry County

- Final numbers brought them to the required level (15%) for match.

Barnwell County

- Elected five board members by board vote 10-4-21 (explanation of board minutes was sent with agenda).
- Brings total to 16 active Board members.

Local Partnership Board Vacancies- Designated

Updates were given on Designated and Legislative Appointments and where we are on board vacancies for Head Start, DSS, DHEC, Library and School districts. The counties discussed were Fairfield, Lancaster, Orangeburg, Barnwell, Dorchester, Kershaw, and Florence.

Local Partnership Carry Forward

It was discussed that the Carry Forward waiver for Jasper county be put on hold and presented on the next Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee meeting as there are other counties involved in carry forward and Derek would like to present a motion for all counties as one motion.

Local Partnership Board Terms

Derek informed the committee that he is working on a plan to address an issue with compliance to the legislation that governs the terms of board members, in particular board members exceeding 8 consecutive years on board. This will be on the agenda for the next ED Webinar to discuss. Derek said he would bring back to the committee a final plan once complete.

Mark Barnes, Director of Administration Update

Inspector General Investigation- Greenwood and Abbeville Counties

Mark updated the committee on the unresolved FY19 corrective action plans for Greenwood County First Steps and Abbeville County First Steps. The IG investigation of Greenwood County First Steps



and Abbeville County First Steps is complete (report was sent to committee members). Mark discussed that the investigation supported most of what OFS found in its corrective action document. Mark also explained that OFS has contracted an attorney to hold conflict of interest training for both partnerships. He further explained that both counties have signed and returned corrective action plans to the OFS with completion dates of June 30, 2022.



State Board

Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting

October 7, 2021
Zoom Webinar
11:30am- 1:00pm

Minutes

Board Presence: Chair Jennifer McConnell, Shelley Canright, Roger Pryor

State Staff Presence: Derek Cromwell, Mark Barnes, Gina Beebe, & Kathy Fitzgerald

Absentees: Board Member John Hayes

Meeting was called to order at 11:33 am by Shelley Canright

Derek Cromwell- Chief Partnership Officer Update

Corrective Action- Two County FS removed from Corrective action:

Horry County

- Final numbers brought them to the required level (15%) for match

Barnwell County

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Local Partnership Board Vacancies- Designated

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consecutive years on board. This will be on the agenda for the next ED Webinar to discuss. Derek said he would bring back to the committee a final plan once complete.

Mark Barnes, Director of Administration Update

Inspector General Investigation- Greenwood and Abbeville Counties

The floor was then handed over to Mark Barnes. Mark updated the committee on the unresolved FY19 corrective action plans for Greenwood County First Steps and Abbeville County First Steps. The IG investigation of Greenwood County First Steps and Abbeville County First Steps is complete (report was sent to committee members). Mark discussed that the investigation supported most of what OFS found in its corrective action document. Mark also explained that OFS has contracted an attorney to hold conflict of interest training for both partnerships. He further explained that both counties have signed and returned corrective action plans to the OFS with completion dates of June 30, 2022

Local Partnerships Program Change request

A motion was brought to the committee to allow two partnerships to change program in their grant agreements.

- Allendale County FS was forced to change programs, Child Care Training & Scholarships due to the school district closing the center servicing their program.
 - The new programs will be Education for Children Under 4 & Early Childhood Identity and referral.
- Oconee County FS will discontinue Healthy Families America and Triple P Parenting due to issues with vender.
 - New programs will be Nurse Family Partnership and Child Care Scholarships

The motion passed as:

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves that the Allendale County First Steps and the Oconee County First Steps be allowed to change programs as voted and approved by their Board of Directors for FY 22 Grant Year.

Motioned: Roger Pryor

Second: Shelley Canright

All voted Yes

Program Guidelines

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (Hippy) – Changes made to current approved Standards (10/8/2020)

- Changes made to include the following:



- Parents of children enrolled in First Steps funded 4K center/classroom (priority is child slots funded through First Steps)
- Parents of children enrolled at home based or center-based childcare setting the local partnership works with currently.
- Parents of at-risk children not attending any type of 4K or childcare program.
- Use “soft borders” to serve the populations above from neighboring counties (communication and memorandum of understanding with the Executive Director’s from both counties, is required prior to recruitment).

The motion passed as:

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of the updated standards for the evidence- based program Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards

Motioned: Jennifer McConnell

Second: Shelley Canright

All voted Yes

Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) – New evidenced-informed standards requiring approval.

- The goal of Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) is to give care providers research-informed information and evidence-informed practices that are supportive and educational.

The motion passed as:

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the addition of standards for the evidence-informed program Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) to the FY22 Partnership and Program Accountability Standards

Motioned: Roger Pryor

Seconded: Jennifer McConnell

All voted Yes



Meeting was Adjourned by Presiding Committee Member Shelley Canright at 12:55pm.

Next meeting: November 16,2021 11:30 am to 1:00pm



**First Steps County Partnerships
FY 2022 Reallocation of Budgets 15% and Greater
OCTOBER 2021**

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
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RE-ALLOCATIONS (Information Only)

Oconee	FUND 550 E.I.A Appro.	Triple P Parenting Program \$23,911	Child Care Scholarships \$23,911	The OCFS Board of Trustee voted on Sept 16 to discontinue the parenting programs of Healthy Families America and Triple P due to problems with Vendors adhering to contract expectations of entering needed data providing High Quality programing. We would like to move these funds to our Child Care Scholarship program to increase the number of families receiving assistance.

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

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

Oconee	FUND 550 E.I.A Appro..	Healthy Families America - \$61,887	Nurse Family Partnership-\$61,887	We are proposing discontinuing the parenting programs of Healthy Families America and Triple P and establishing Nurse Family Partnership as our high intensity parenting strategy. The Healthy Families America program and Triple P are not meeting the needs of our families in Oconee County. Also, there are problems with the Vendors adhering to contract expectations of entering needed data and serving an adequate number of families to meet our projected to serve.

NEW STRATEGIES (Information Only)

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FIRST STEPS PROGRAM GUIDELINES HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY; 225)

REQUIREMENTS FOR FY22:

SCFSBOT Designation: Evidence-Based

First Steps' parent home visitation strategies are designed to equip adult clients with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote the school readiness, healthy development and long-term success of their preschool-aged children. Partnerships funding these strategies shall ensure vendor compliance with each of the following:

Partnerships funding HIPPYUSA shall work in collaboration with SC First Steps to ensure full compliance with national model guidelines. Fidelity of implementation in SC includes meeting the HIPPY Model, Guidance and Accreditation Standards along with a few SCFS-specific additions. The following standards include a mix of both; however, the expected Measurement Criteria for HIPPYUSA is attached for clarity.

1) TARGETING:

a) Targeting Clients At-Risk Of Early School Failure

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

- A preschool-aged child has been abused
- A preschool-aged child has been neglected
- A preschool-aged child has been placed in foster care
- Eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, e.g. Food Stamps) or Free School Lunches (130% of federal poverty level or below – with first priority given to TANF-eligible clients whose annual family income levels fall at 50% of federal poverty level or below)
- Eligibility for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Parts B (Preschool Special Education, ages 3-5) or C (BabyNet, ages 0-3)
- A preschool aged child with a developmental delay as documented by a physician or standardized assessment (not screening tool)
- Teenage mother/primary caregiver at or under the age of 20 (at the time of the focus child's birth)
- Low maternal/primary caregiver education (less than high school graduation at the time of focus child's birth)
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to the substance abuse of a caregiver
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver depression
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver mental illness
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver intellectual disability
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to domestic violence within the home
- Low birth weight (under 5.5 lbs.) in association with serious medical complications.
- English is not the primary language spoken in the home.
- Single parent household and has need of other services
- Transient/numerous family relocations and/or homeless
- Incarcerated Parent(s) (parent(s) is incarcerated in federal or state prison or local jail or was released from incarceration within the past year)
- Death in the Immediate Family (death of a parent/caregiver or sibling)
- Military Deployment (Parent/guardian is currently deployed or is within 2 years of returning from a deployment as an active duty member of the armed forces. Deployment is defined as any current or past event or activity that relates to duty in the armed forces that involves an operation, location, command or duty that is different from his/her normal duty assignment.)
- Recent Immigrant or Refugee Family - One or both parents are foreign-born and entered the country within the past 5 years.

The following condition, while not considered part of SC First Steps' targeting criteria, is an additional characteristic that can put children at potentially higher risk for early school failure.

Additional high-risk characteristic tracked by First Steps-funded programs:

- Child was removed for behavioral reasons from one or more child care, Head Start or preschool setting.

b) Targeting By Age (Early Intervention)

HIPPY is designed for families with children 2 – 6 years of age and face various barriers such as limited education, poverty, language and/or isolation.

Services provided with AmeriCorps funding will recruit per the following priorities for recruiting families with four-year old child(ren).

- *Parents of children enrolled in a First Steps funded 4K center/classroom (priority is child slots funded through First Steps)*
- *Parents of children enrolled at home-based or center-based child care setting the local partnership works with currently*
- *Parents of at risk children not attending any type of 4K or child care program*
- *Use “soft borders” to serve the populations above from neighboring counties (communication with the Executive Director from the neighboring county is required prior to recruitment)*

Do not children attending Head Start or public school 4k. Such programs have resources to help support families.

c) Client Retention

In order for home visitation to be effective, it is critical that client families remain in the program long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. Pursuant to national model guidelines HIPPY programs will provide 30 weeks of activities for parents to use in instructing their children.

- Each partnership will be required to demonstrate its successful, long-term retention of at least eighty percent (80%) of children enrolled complete at least 26 weeks, annually.

Since the target child(ren) of participating families are four-years old, they will receive only one year of service prior to entering 5K.

2) SERVICE DELIVERY:

Fidelity to a published, research-based model

In order to ensure the delivery of high quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, vendors shall ensure that each First Steps-funded parenting/family strengthening strategy is implemented with fidelity to its published, research-based model. “Fidelity” is defined as complying with model specifications relating to:

a) Home Visit Intensity and Delivery:

- Ensure each child annually receives an activity packet and a set of story books; a set of geometric shapes with replacements as needed. Ensure each home visitor has access to a Home Visitor Guide and two activity packets (as indicated), a set of story books, and a set of geometric shapes.
 - Enroll children at age 3 and use the Age 3 Curriculum. *Children enrolled in the HIPPY AmeriCorps program will enroll at age 4 and use the Age 4 Curriculum.*
 - Monitor records at least twice a month to ensure parents are working with their children five days per week and that the average number of minutes worked per day is reasonable for the age of the child.
 - If the number of minutes is consistently much less or greater than the average 15-20 minutes per day, determine the cause and if a referral, or other intervention, is needed.
 - When monitoring records, Home Visitors must review a minimum of 10% of enrolled families’ weekly packets or a minimum of 10 randomly selected files. When completing the review:
 - a. Pull Pages from 10%, or a minimum of 10, randomly selected files, AND/OR
 - b. A note indicates the reason for each missing page
 - Role play is used throughout the HIPPY program by all participants based on a cycle that begins with the coordinator and staff.
 - a. The coordinator and home visitors role play the activity packet specified for that week during the weekly training meeting. During role play, the purpose of the activities and the developmental significance for children is explained.
 - b. Each home visitor then engages in the same activities with their child, or with a practice child, in order to gain first-hand experience in how children may react to the activities.
 - c. Finally, the home visitors implement the activities one-on-one with their assigned parents. Note: The home visitor role plays the activities with the parent and does not work directly with the child. The parent is then left with a clean packet containing five days’ worth of activities in which to engage with their child.
 - d. Coordinator and home visitors repeat the role play cycle weekly with the activity packet for the week and discuss the previous weeks’ activities at the weekly training meeting.
- dThe first home visits each program year are for interested families, providing them with a comprehensive understanding of the program, and obtaining intake information for the application process.

- a. When possible, the initial visit will be conducted by the HIPPY coordinator or trained supervisor; the home visitor is encouraged to also join on the first visits with parents.
- The curriculum is delivered through home visits for the first 4-6 weeks before incorporating group meetings with home visits.
- Home visitors meet with parents in their home at least 90% of the time. At a family's discretion and supervisor approval virtual and telecommunication visits will also be considered acceptable and count as a home visit.
- Parents are visited in their home 45-60 minutes by their assigned home visitor. The focus of the home visit is the parent, or primary caregiver, who learns from the home visitor how to use the HIPPY curriculum with his/her child in the home. The child should not be present. If the child is present, strategies need to be employed to engage the child in independent play so that full attention can be given to the parent.
 - a. Role playing the HIPPY curriculum with parents is the main activity during the visit.
 - b. The length of home visits must also accommodate reviewing the past week's work, collecting a sample of the child's work; discussing any challenges the parent and child encountered when completing the previous week's activity, and addressing any other challenges the family may face (i.e., information regarding community services).
 - c. The home visitor leaves the parent with the new weekly materials and a reminder of any upcoming parent meetings or community events.
- The HIPPY Coordinator or trained supervisor will accompany home visitors at least 3 times per year in the home of each participating family to observe the interaction between the home visitor and the family, provide supervision, and support home visitors. This practice also increases rapport between coordinators and parents.

b) Group Meetings:

- Group meetings must begin within four to six weeks after home visits have started.
- Last approximately two hours
- Are held in an accessible facility within the target neighborhood.
- Are held a minimum of six times during the HIPPY program year.
- Group meetings offer educational enrichment, information and activities that meet the needs of the parents.
- Enrichment activities are provided for children during group meetings.

c) Screenings and Referrals:

- Parenting vendors shall document the completion of all developmental screenings within 90 days of enrollment.
- Vendors shall seek to ensure that each participating client family is connected with a pediatric medical home and other community services as appropriate.
- Each client child shall be assessed using the age-appropriate developmental screening tool Ages & Stages 3 and Ages and Stages SE2 within 30 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. In the event that a developmental screening (conducted in association with any First Steps-funded program) indicates a possible developmental delay, the vendor shall collaborate with parents/guardians to seek the consensual provision of these results to: (a) the child's pediatric care provider, *and* (b) the child's zoned school district and Disabilities and Special Needs Board (ages 3-5) for additional diagnostic evaluation. Vendors shall maintain (within the First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral.
- In addition, the Vendor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 60 days post completion of referred intervention.
- If a child scores in the monitoring range on ASQ3 and/or ASQ:SE2 in two or more categories and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening questionnaire, the vendor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- Developmental screenings must be conducted on at least 80% of eligible clients. Partnerships and their funded vendors shall ensure active collaboration with other parenting and family support services in their communities, refer families to these services as necessary, and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established. 60% of families that receive at least one personal visit shall be connected to at least one community resource in the program year. Active and sustained efforts to connect client families to pediatric medical homes shall be a priority.

d) Family Assessment and Goal Setting:

- Partnerships or Vendors shall utilize the Survey of Parenting Involvement assessment to refer/ link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial – either simultaneously or as part of a planned, multi-year service continuum.
- In addition, Teaching Strategies GOLD®, an authentic, ongoing observational system, is routinely administered to all SCFS 4K students. Assessment results will help guide HIPPY parent educator planning.

e) Integrated Service Delivery and Referrals:

- Partnerships shall utilize formal or informal need assessments to refer/link families to additional interventions as necessary and beneficial. All referrals to other services shall be entered into the First Steps Data System.

f) Staff Qualifications and Training:

- The HIPPY Coordinator has attended preservice training. The Coordinator has at least a Bachelor's degree. If course work has not included child development, the coordinator has obtained 24 contact hours of training in early childhood development.
- A HIPPY Home Visitor are HIPPY parents, former HIPPY parents, or are knowledgeable of the language and culture of the community served.
- HIPPY Home Visitors can read, write and speak well in the language of the curriculum they will use with assigned parents.
- Home Visitor has a professional development plan based on performance evaluations and career goals.

Services provided with AmeriCorps funding have AmeriCorps Parent Educator members providing HIPPY home visits.

g) Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- The quality assurance process begins with program self-assessment, and subsequently findings are validated by a national trainer. Each site that demonstrates quality programming by meeting all Standards of the HIPPY Model and defined contractual obligations will earn Accreditation status. Accreditation status is awarded with a three-year certification that is valid as long as programming remains fundamentally the same. Detailed information regarding Accreditation is outlined in the HIPPY Model, Guidance, and Accreditation Manual.
- The Coordinator evaluates each home visitor's performance at least three (3) times a year, based on home visits, group and staff meeting observations.
- The Coordinator establishes a weekly schedule to train staff in the curriculum to include child development concepts and terminology utilizing the Coordinator Guide.

3) ASSESSMENT AND DATA SUBMISSION:

- All HIPPY program vendors shall complete, at minimum, the HIPPY Survey of Parenting Involvement Pre-Assessment at time of enrollment, and at the 30 week visit (or sooner if a family leaves the program prior to 30 weeks).
- Adult and child (ages 0-5) information, connections to services, and screening results shall be collected within the cases data First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC). Program sessions and client attendance shall be entered as group meetings within the FSDC. Program assessments containing numerical scores shall be entered in the FSDC (submit request to SC First Steps to add assessment type(s) to the FSDC).

FIRST STEPS PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS SUPPORTING CARE PROVIDERS THROUGH VISITS- SCPV (226)

REQUIREMENTS FOR FY22:

SCFSBOT Designation: Evidence-Informed

The goal of Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) is to give care providers research-informed information and evidence-informed practices that are supportive and educational. It also provides a structure for care providers to pass on that knowledge to the parents of the children in their care through specifically designed Parent Pages.

Care providers – those who are with children while their parents work or who step in when parents are otherwise unable to care for their children – play a critical role in the healthy development of children.

1) TARGETING:

a) Targeting Registered Family Child Care Home Providers and ABC-Quality Monitored Family, Friends, and Neighbors Providers

Each participating Family Child Care Home and Family, Friends, and Neighbors Provider shall be identified by the local partnership in the county where the provider is located. In order to participate, the following must apply:

- Provider must complete and submit a Provider Consent Form and submit Parent Consent/Family Enrollment Forms (parent participation is optional).
- Family Child Care Home Providers must be a registered with SC DSS and serve no more than 6 children.
- A Registered Family Child Care Home provides care for up to 6 children at any given time within the home of the child care provider. A Registration is required if a person provides care to more than one unrelated family of children on a regular basis (more than two days a week).
- Family, friends, and neighbor child care homes can only be served if they are listed with ABC Quality. If the FFN provider is not listed with ABC Quality, a Local Partnership can submit a written justification to SC First Steps for approval to serve the provider.

b) Targeting Clients At-Risk Of Early School Failure

At least 30% of the Provider's families must possess at least one SC First Steps school readiness risk factor or additional high-risk characteristic listed below.

- A preschool-aged child has been abused
- A preschool-aged child has been neglected
- A preschool-aged child has been placed in foster care
- Eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, e.g. Food Stamps) or Free School Lunches (130% of federal poverty level or below – with first priority given to TANF-eligible clients whose annual family income levels fall at 50% of federal poverty level or below)
- Eligibility for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Parts B (Preschool Special Education, ages 3-5) or C (BabyNet, ages 0-3)
- A preschool aged child with a developmental delay as documented by a physician or standardized assessment (not screening tool)
- Teenage mother/primary caregiver at or under the age of 20 (at the time of the focus child's birth)
- Low maternal/primary caregiver education (less than high school graduation at the time of focus child's birth)
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to the substance abuse of a caregiver
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver depression
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver mental illness
- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to parental/caregiver intellectual disability

- A preschool-aged child has been exposed to domestic violence within the home
- Low birth weight (under 5.5 lbs.) in association with serious medical complications.
- English is not the primary language spoken in the home.
- Single parent household and has need of other services
- Transient/numerous family relocations and/or homeless
- Incarcerated Parent(s) (parent(s) is incarcerated in federal or state prison or local jail or was released from incarceration within the past year)
- Death in the Immediate Family (death of a parent/caregiver or sibling)
- Military Deployment (Parent/guardian is currently deployed or is within 2 years of returning from a deployment as an active duty member of the armed forces. Deployment is defined as any current or past event or activity that relates to duty in the armed forces that involves an operation, location, command or duty that is different from his/her normal duty assignment.)
- Recent Immigrant or Refugee Family - One or both parents are foreign-born and entered the country within the past 5 years.

c) Client Retention

In order for provider visits to be effective, it is critical that participating providers remain in the program long enough to benefit from the planned intervention. Minimum retention target for providers is 9 months. Can be longer depending on provider interest and Provider Educator availability.

2) SERVICE DELIVERY:

Model Fidelity

In order to ensure the delivery of high-quality services and the validity of agency-wide evaluation efforts, vendors shall ensure that each First Steps-funded parenting/family strengthening strategy is implemented with fidelity to the published curriculum complying with model specifications relating to:

a) Provider Visit Intensity and Delivery:

- **Programs shall match the intensity of their service delivery to the specific needs of each provider, with no provider being offered less than 2 visits monthly.** (For each provider served, 1.8 average is considered the minimal threshold for visits per month, 2.0 is the targeted expectation, and 2.5 and above is considered outstanding intensity.)
- All SCPV Programs should complete a minimum of 24 visits per year, per provider, as outlined by the SCPV Curriculum.
- Provider Educators shall use the personal visit plans, special topics, personal visit records, and service record forms from the curriculum to design, deliver, and document personal visits to providers.
- Data on each provider visit shall be entered into the FSDC provider database system within 14 days of completion. In the event that the Partnership has identified an individual responsible for all client data entry, vendors shall formally submit this information to the Partnership within this same 14 day window for subsequent entry.
- No Provider Educator may carry a caseload of more than five (5) active providers.
- Completed personal visit plans from the SCPV curriculum provided by the Provider Educator count as registered training credit hours with SC Endeavors. Provider Educators shall submit documentation of completion of SCPV visit plans to SC First Steps for the Provider to receive SC Endeavors training credit.
- To the extent possible, Provider Educators should share information about trainings and follow-up activities with the provider or refer to CCR&R for follow-up assistance in order to help the provider maintain the requirements to be a DSS registered provider.

b) Group Connections:

- **At least one group connection shall be offered monthly per program year.**
- Providers can join PAT families for their group connections, attend a providers only group, or connections offered by neighboring counties. Group setting must be documented along with group attendance..

c) Screenings and Referrals:

- **Each Provider Educator shall ensure that the opportunity for child developmental screenings using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) is made available to all participating child care providers and/or consenting parents within 90 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. Family participation in ASQ-3 screening is voluntary and can be**

self-administered by the parent/caregiver or administered by the provider or Provider Educator. In the event that a developmental screening (conducted in association with any First Steps-funded program) indicates a possible developmental delay, the vendor shall collaborate with parents/guardians to seek the consensual provision of these results to: (a) the child's pediatric care provider, *and* (b) either BabyNet (ages 0-3) or the child's zoned school district and Disabilities and Special Needs Board (ages 3-5) for additional diagnostic evaluation. Provider Educators shall maintain (within the First Steps Data Collection System) referral records to include information on the outcome/disposition of each First Steps-initiated referral. In addition, the Provider Educator will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 90 days post completion of referred intervention.

- **If a child scores in the monitoring range on ASQ3** in two or more categories and/or if there is a parental concern on the screening questionnaire, the vendor will recommend activities to assist with the areas of possible concern, continue monitoring the child's development, and rescreen the child within 6 months.
- Partnerships and their funded vendors shall ensure active collaboration between parenting family support services and the surrounding community. Provider educators will provide information to childcare and FFN providers to facilitate family referrals to service as necessary and follow up as feasible to ensure that appropriate connections have been established.

d) Provider Assessment and Goal Setting:

- Each Provider must complete and submit the Pre Care Provider Survey at the beginning of the program year or within 45 days of enrollment, and the Post Care Provider Survey at the end of the program year or at the time of discontinuation of services.
- Goal setting and curriculum delivery should be informed by Provider response to the *Vision for Growth* and *General Practice and Activity Information* sections of the Care Provider Survey.
- Providers should participate in activities with their children and apply child development strategies as outlined in goal setting sessions.

e) Staff Qualifications and Training:

- All Provider Educators must have documented successful completion of/initial certification in PAT's *Foundational and Model Implementation Training and the Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) Curriculum*.
- Each Provider Educator shall complete his/her annual recertification and required hours of professional development required by PAT.
- Provider Educators may be trained in using the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (FCCERS). FCCERS training is recommended but not required. Additional assessments (e.g., TPOT, TPITOS, CLASS) can be used in place of the FCCERS assessment with prior approval from the Directors of Parenting and Early Care and Education.

f) Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development

- Provider Educators shall include discussion of their SCPV work during their individualized reflective supervision meetings at a minimum of 2 hours per month. No less than 18 hours of individualized reflective supervision during the program year is expected. Part-time Parent Educators shall participate at a minimum of one hour of reflective supervision per month.
- Provider Educators shall participate in annual training opportunities specific to the SCPV program.

g) Materials Funds

- A minimum of 50% of the incentive funding received by the Partnership must be used to directly benefit the participating child care providers and parents. The remaining funds are available to the Partnership to help with the cost of delivering services.
- SCPV grant funds are intended to purchase program and curriculum materials or other program related items such as books, educational toys, art supplies, rugs, chairs, etc.
- Capital expense are not permitted. For playground equipment such as swing sets, it cannot be anything that requires installation or fixed attachment to the ground or a structure. However, outdoor items like balls, hula hoops, games, etc. are acceptable.
- Materials purchased must be aligned with provider needs as indicated during visits or by the Pre or Post Care Provider Survey, environmental assessment (FCCERS) and/or other approved assessment.

ASSESSMENT

- Environmental or other assessments must be conducted by assessors who have successfully completed the ERSI FCCERS training (or other required training).
- Each home-based provider benefiting from SCPV funding shall receive a baseline assessment with the FCCERS (or other approved assessment) within 90 days of the initiation of service, with a post assessment conducted at the end of the program year or earlier if a provider leaves the program, and annually thereafter in the event that a home-based provider is served across multiple program years. Provider Educators will receive assessment results from the assessor and are responsible for reviewing them with the Provider
- At least annually, the Provider Educator gathers and summarizes feedback from providers about the services they've received, using the results for program improvement. This summary information shall be shared with the SCFS State Office for purposes of providing support to SCPV programs.
- The First Steps State Office will provide a directory of trained assessors and provide assistance in scheduling assessments if needed.

DATA SUBMISSION:

- **How to enter a new case** Each provider/child(ren) must be entered into the client demographic portal of the First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC). When entering client demographic data, each provider should be entered as a "parent" to create a new case number. Once entries are complete, children in their care should be entered under the same record. A parent must provide written consent before a child can be entered in the First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC).
- **Data Collection** The following data must be collected within the First Steps Data Collection System (FSDC): Provider/child client demographic data, provider visits, group connections, program referrals, connections to services, developmental screenings, assessments, and risk factors
- **Monitoring** Local First Steps Partnerships shall monitor progress of each provider and ensure model fidelity with: Cases Visit Summary and Projected to Served, Parenting Home Visit Intensity Summary, Parenting Home Visit Intensity, Group Meeting Detail, Connection Detail, ASQ, Assessment Entry Screen, and Risk Factors Reports.
- One unit of service = 1 provider

Designated & Legislative Appointments

as of October 14, 2021

Designated Board Vacancies by Agency (shall)	
Agency/Program	Local Partnerships Missing Representative
Head Start	Fairfield County FS- No head Start presence in county Lancaster County FS* Orangeburg County FS* - reached out to Mary L. Diggs
DSS	Barnwell County FS^ - Ethel Williams Dorchester County^ FS- Senora Waiters Fairfield County FS^ - Jeffrey Sanders Kershaw County FS- Requested State Office assistance Orangeburg County FS^ - Charlene Nimmons Berkeley County First Steps- Requested State Office Assistance
DHEC	Lancaster County FS*
Library	Lancaster County FS* Berkeley County First Steps- Requested State Office Assistance Barnwell- Resigned to become Executive Director
School District	Florence County FS- Florence 1 not cooperating Lancaster County FS*

Legislative Appointments (may)	
No appointments	22
1 appointment	10
2 appointments	6
3 appointments	3
4 appointments	5

Black*- Indicates that although the Local Partnership does not have designated position filled, they do have local board elected members from each agency represented on the board.

Blue^ - Indicates Designated vacancy has been filled.

Red - Indicates vacant





Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee

Chairwoman's Report

Chairwoman: Dr. Amy Williams

The meeting was held on Monday, August 30, 2021 from 1-2PM via Zoom. Dave Morley and I were present. The meeting opened with a discussion about the agency's research agenda. Dave described his experience on the Parents as Teachers National Board when they developed theirs. His experience is detailed in the meeting minutes. It was discussed that First Steps should consider convening a scientific task force and formally adopting a research agenda. Other programmatic updates were shared, as outlined in the meeting minutes.



Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes Monday, August 30, 2021, 1-2 PM via Zoom

Committee members present: Amy Williams; Dave Morley

Committee members absent: Janie Neeley; Jessica Mackey; Alexia Newman

Staff present: Chelsea Richard

The meeting was called to order at 1:05PM. The meeting opened with a discussion about the agency's research agenda. Dave described his experience on the Parents as Teachers National Board when they developed their research agenda. First, they convened a scientific advisory taskforce through a series of meetings. The taskforce was provided all of the research done to date on the program and were asked to identify the gaps. Then, they prioritized these gaps and recommended the research agenda to the board. Aside from the research agenda, there were several other benefits to convening the taskforce, like raising their profile as a research institution and building a network of researchers. It was discussed that First Steps should consider convening a similar task force and formally adopting a research agenda.

Other programmatic updates were shared.

- There are two prevalent program evaluations currently in progress: (1) Parents as Teachers: preliminary findings will be presented at the October board meeting (finalized report due November 1); (2) child care technical assistance: procurement process has started. The next prevalent program will be voted on by this committee at the November meeting.
- The data system developer, AnLar, is building the First Steps' Knowledge, Information, and Teaming System (KITS) starting at the beginning of a case lifecycle. Right now, the application/interest form is in development, and the intake process will be next. KITS is on track to launch in March 2023.
- This past fiscal year was the first year of the 2020-2025 agency strategic plan, *Every Child Ready*. A progress report will be shared at the board meeting in December. There are several legislative reports that incorporate measures from the strategic plan that will be shared with the board at their next meeting.
- Capacity is building on the Research & Strategy Team. Recruitment is in progress for an evaluation coordinator, which will support evaluation efforts of 4K and other projects. A database administrator position is forthcoming.
- The Birth through Five plan work session was productive, and, now, the development team is working through the feedback and suggested revisions.
- The key questions for the Early Childhood Integrated Data System were adopted at the last board meeting. The next steps is to develop First Steps specific questions and decide what we want to make publicly available.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:01PM.



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Georgia Mjartan

Date: October 21, 2021

RE: Executive Director's Report

FY2023 Budget Request

Request: \$6 million in recurring funds

Purpose: Increase the number of infants, toddlers and preschoolers participating in programs proven to:

- accelerate early learning and development
- improve early childhood health
- strengthen families, building on a parent's role as their child's first teacher
- expand access to high-quality child care
- support a successful start to school

Mechanism: Distribute to First Steps Local Partnerships:

- Through competitive and targeted grants
- Prioritize programs for children birth through three, rural communities, and communities where KRA scores are below state average

Uses:

- Support and expand effective programs
- Build local partnerships' capacity, staffing and infrastructure
- Monitor and evaluate measurable progress toward goals

Proviso Request

- Increase tuition rate to 4K providers by \$270 (5.6% inflation)
\$5016 per child
- Increase transportation reimbursement by \$32.88 (5.6% inflation)
\$619.88 per child
- Classroom Start-Up Grants – increase by \$400 per child and \$4000 per classroom of 7+
- No new funds requested for 4K

Parenting Expansion (ESSER III)

- \$4,910,000 over 3 years (FY22-FY24)
- Purpose: expand existing, or establish new high-intensity, evidence-based parenting programs



- Eligible applicants: First Steps local partnerships
- Funding priorities: geographic areas of high poverty; rural areas; school districts with 3-year average percentage of “demonstrating readiness” on KRA below the state average
- Selection criteria: demonstration of need (including waiting lists); quality of plan to recruit and retain families and workforce members; past performance of parenting programs
- Applications due 10/29/21, expected award date 11/1/21, expected start date 1/1/22

First Steps 4K Recruitment and Retention Initiative (ESSER III)

- \$787,500 over 3 years
- Purpose: Recruit and retain qualified, high-impact teachers for First Steps 4K
- Incremental stipends based on tenure with First Steps 4K, distributed each semester

4K Language and Literacy Boost (ESSER III)

- \$3,300,000 over 3 years
- Eligible Applicants: Providers (212) with Extended Day and/or Summer School delivery models can apply for funding.
- Preference given to applicants that show:
 - o Tenure time and degree of First Steps 4K Lead Teacher
 - o High poverty district (original CERDEP)
 - o Low KRA scores in the district
 - o Coach recommendation
 - o Director participated in and graduated with a Directors’ Credentials from Aim4Excellence
- Language and Literacy Coach to design pilot program and provide curriculum structure
- Professional Development provided for both Teachers and Directors
- ELLCO PreK- \$2500 plus materials
- Accountability measures include both classroom and student assessment

Expanding 4K in Underserved Communities (CERDEP)

- Purpose: One-time funding up to \$30,000 for newly-created or newly-approved providers to enable their participation in the First Steps 4K program. Funds may be used to address building renovations, documented as necessary to bring proposed classrooms into compliance with licensing regulations; materials and staffing costs; and/or other obstacles currently preventing the organization’s participation in the First Steps 4K program. Grantees must commit to serving at least 10 additional First Steps 4K children per year for a minimum of three years.
- Eligible applicants: organizations that are not public schools or school districts
- Funding available: \$100,000, per Proviso 1A.29.
- Funding priorities: Providers located within one or more of the following: counties with one or fewer First Steps 4K providers, newly-eligible CERDEP school districts, or within school districts not participating in public CERDEP in FY22.



- Applications due 11/5/22, expected award date 12/1/22

Newly-Awarded Grants

Catch-up to Kindergarten (fund source: Preschool Development Grants)

- Total amount awarded: \$69,382
- Purpose: meet COVID-related need identified by Countdown to Kindergarten teachers that non-CTK students are experiencing greater than normal challenges transitioning into public school
- Eligible applicants: First Steps local partnerships that participated in CTK in Summer 2021 and have limited financial resources (i.e., receive minimum formula funding of \$200,000/year)
- All local partnerships that applied were funded at their full ask amount: Calhoun, Cherokee, Colleton, Darlington, Lee, McCormick, Pickens, Union, and Williamsburg
- Projects completed by 12/31/21

First Steps 4K

Enrollment and Capacity

2021 – 2022 School Year, As of 10/14/2021

- 3,036 students approved to enroll
 - o 51% increase from 9/15/2020
- 3,150 total served at least one day
 - o 51% increase from 9/15/2020
- 243 active centers with 270 active classrooms
 - o 30 additional centers
 - o 31 additional classrooms
 - o 143 ABC-Q centers rated “B” or above earning 10% higher tuition rate

4K + Siblings

- 815 approved children
- 170 incomplete applications
- 18 denied applications

HR & Operations

- New Staff & Vacancies
- Continued COVID mitigation strategies