

Board Chair:
Okereta Watson
Executive Director:
Virginia Newman
Contact Information:
2831 Old Belleville Road
St. Matthews, SC 29135
Phone: (803) 655-5126
Fax: (803) 655-5695
Email:
calhoun1steps@windstream.net

Calhoun County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report*

Summary

Numbers Served:

510 children; 45 adults/families; 44 health assessments and screenings; 905 home visits; 20 3K/4K slots and 4,587 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$250,357 (includes all funding sources)

Calhoun County First Steps School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	1,076 7 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)*	83 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income	26,842
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	19 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	33 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading **	7%
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math**	11 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	11%
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	15%
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	47 %

*Note: Data is for 2005 except where noted (*2006, **2004, ***2000).*

Profile Comments: *Fifteen percent of births in the county are to mothers with less than a high school education. According to research, a child's success is strongly influenced by his family and the education of his parents. 47% of expectant mothers, in the county, receive less than adequate prenatal care. Research on early childhood and brain development emphasizes the importance of healthy fetal development followed by nurturing and stimulating family and early care environments during the preschool years. 19% of the county's children, ages 0-5, live in poverty and 83% of county's children are eligible for free/reduced lunch. Low income makes it difficult for many families to provide the material and environment enrichment necessary for healthy child development.*

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES

Early Education

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will leverage state, local and private resources to increase the quality of, and number of children participating in, developmentally appropriate pre-kindergarten programs in both the public and private sectors. Particular emphasis will be placed on *fidelity* to research-based instructional models and *targeting* of students at-risk of early school failure.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: – Increase the number of three-year olds participating in a quality child development program.

- *19 children completed the program.*
- *26% of children enrolled in the program were three -year olds.*
- *Daily average of student attendance was 17.8.*
- *The DIAL 3 Assessment was given to fifteen students (three- and four-year olds). All fifteen students showed improvement. The mean pre-test score was 19.86 and the post-test score was 55.60. The class average showed an approximately 100% improvement.*
- *Staff attended nine training sessions and received 13.25 hours in training hours.*
- *There was an average 1.1 volunteers monthly.*

Family Strengthening

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will work collaboratively with its agency partners, the faith community and private sector to support parents and families in their own efforts to maximize the school readiness, well-being and long-term academic success of the state's young children.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Increase adults' literacy skills and level of education and provide training/services so parents may gain a greater respect for education and thus find ways to support their children educational experiences.

- *40 families (47 totaling children served) received Parents As Teachers visits.*
- *A total of 905 home visits were delivered providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their families.*
- *37.5% of families received 3 to 4 visits per month.*
- *Parent educators have advanced education levels: one parent educator has an associate degree and parent educator has a masters degree. Parent educators have specialized training in PAT Born to Learn 0-3, Parent Education Profile, SC Early Childhood Credential (ECD 101) and Potage Guide to Learning and Child Abuse and Neglect.*
- *Families reported an average 4.5 satisfied with the program on a 1 [dissatisfied] to a 5 [highly satisfied] point scale.*

School Transition

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes school entry as a pivotal transition point in each child's educational career. In an effort to ensure strong collaborative relationships between the state's families and schools, the initiative will develop strategies to

maximize parents' understandings of state and local expectations and ensure a smooth and beneficial school transition for each child.

Partnership Goal: Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 25 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.

FY 2007 Results

- 25 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006.
- 100 percent of the children received five or more home visits.
- 16 percent of the children were placed in their Countdown home visitor's kindergarten class.
- 92 percent of the children qualified for free lunch.
- 8 percent of the children qualified for reduced lunch.
- Countdown to Kindergarten resulted in improvements in parent-child interactions, including:
 - A 19% improvement in family visiting a library with their children.
 - A 28% improvement in families drawing, painting or other arts and crafts with their children.
 - A 35% improvement in families visiting a library with their children.

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

The Calhoun County Partnership originally planned to offer Storytelling to St. Matthews Head Start children to improve students' interest in books and to improve students' listening skills but due to a lack of a local storyteller we did not implement this initiative. In 2007-2008 the county partnership will implement the Motherhead (Story Exploring) Program in an effort to provide parents with story exploring skills that will improve their children's interest in reading as well as improve their children's listening skills. This initiative will be integrated with the Parent As Teachers Program. The county partnership will also partner with the local library and Head Start in implementing the Motherhead Program.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

D O L L A R S (budget only)							
State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Lottery Appropriation	Federal	EIA Appropriation	TOTAL
\$108,219	\$1,221	\$32,003	\$14,823	\$0	\$0	\$94,091	\$250,357

NOTE: The above State and EIA appropriation amounts leveraged all state-private, in-kind, local-private, lottery and federal dollars.

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Full Day 4-K (Public)	\$82,030.37
Family Literacy Model (Public)	\$71,616.42
Imagination Library (In-House)	\$9,330.01
Countdown To Kindergarten	\$6,603.80
County Programmatic	\$41,467.19
County Administrative	\$22,836.65
TOTAL	\$233,884.00

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Alaglass Pools	\$620.00
Amaker and Porterfield	\$100.00
Amada Jenkins	\$50.00
Anonymous	\$240.00
Calhoun County Public Schools	\$2,536.78
Calvary Baptist Church	\$50.00
Eastman Chemical	\$130.00
Edward B. Timmons, Jr. Charity	\$5,400.00
Environmental Fabrics, Inc.	\$50.00
Everleen McFadden	\$100.00
Jocelyn Fredrick	\$5.00
JP Morgan	\$900.00
Melody Pedings	\$10.00
Merle V. Govan	\$5.00
Okereta Watson	\$20.00
Preference Plantation Pecan Co.	\$50.00
Regina Huggins	\$5.00
Retana Reed	\$50.00
SC Federal Credit Union	\$500.00
Stanley Rivers	\$50.00
Terrell L. Stone	\$25.00
The Regional Medical Center	\$1,500.00
Tri-County Electric Cooperative	\$235.00
United Insurance Co. of America	\$500.00
United Way of the Midlands	\$1,250.00
Virginia Ott	\$5.00
Vivian Bodrick	\$50.00
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	\$1,500.00
TOTAL	\$15,936.78

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 30.28% (at least 15% required)

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Calhoun County First Steps partnership board members volunteered 209 hours, including 6 hours serving at the Calhoun County Halloween Festival and 12 hours at the county's Purple Martin Festival.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 209 = \$3,922.93

CALHOUN COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Okereta Watson, chair, pre-K educator
Mr. James Amaker, transportation provider
Ms. Vivian Bodrick, early childhood educator
Ms. Elizabeth Branham, healthcare provider
Ms. Susan Chavis, healthcare provider
Ms. Janice H. Crosland, non-profit organization for families and children
Ms. Gloria Frazier, appointee, OCAB/Head Start
Ms. Amanda Jenkins, childcare and early childhood development/education
Ms. Cynthia Keller, appointee, county legislative delegation
Ms. Debi Kizer, appointee, county Department of Health and Environmental Control
Dr. Jacqueline Mayo, early childhood educator
Ms. Everleen McFadden, family education, training and support provider
Ms. Kim Miller, appointee, county Department of Social Studies
Ms. Lillie Murphy, appointee, county library
Ms. Retana Reed, non-profit for families and children
Rev. Stanley Rivers, parent of child served by First Steps
Mr. Vandie Wannamaker, retired pre-K primary educator

SUCCESS STORIES

“My family is Hispanic and has been in the First Steps Program since it started. My son did not speak English when he started in the program. But when he started school he was able to communicate with the other children and his teachers. He even translated for other children who were not in the program. He is doing well in school because language was not a problem. My daughter is receiving weekly visits from a parent educator. I get ideas on how to help my children from visits. I know when the time comes Gloria will be ready for school because of the First Steps Program”.

-Amalia Tapia-

“My name is Leprece Bennett and I had two of my children in Calhoun County First Steps Program. Their names are Gabriel Bennett who started First Steps when he was 2 years old and our daughter Gillian Bennett just barely turning one. They are now both 5 years old and Gabriel turning six, and they both are on the right road to learning at Guinyard Elementary. Thanks to First Steps my

¹ http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

Calhoun County First Steps Partnership

children were ready for elementary school. Gabriel knew a lot when he graduated from First Steps. He knew his ABCs, shapes, colors and his name. Gillian graduated First Steps a year later and went to Child Development at Guinyard Elementary knowing how to write his first and last name, shapes, ABCs, colors and AB pattern. When I went for her first 9 weeks they asked what educational background she had. I was proud to say Calhoun County First Steps. The home visitors were helpful in everyway. They never made you feel unwelcome. They always were open arms. That made me wish my children could stay with the First Steps forever. They were understanding with questions and answer all of our questions. When we needed transportation to get to First Steps, they took time out of their day to pick us up. I really give Calhoun County First Steps 5 thumbs up. And I refer anyone with a child to sign up for First Steps. So again, thank you all so much. Many thanks to out to Melinda Rucker, Lisa Holman, Ms. McFadden and Rosa Anderson. Very thankful parent”

-Leprece Bennett-

“This letter is reference to the First Steps Program of Calhoun County. My daughter has been in your program since birth. She is now 4 years old and will be attending school soon. I really feel that she is ready. She has developed mentally, physically, emotionally and socially. The program has been a great inspiration to help with her development”.

-Mary Myers-