



Position: 4K Coach Language & Literacy

Organization: South Carolina First Steps (SCFS) is both a nonprofit and state agency and is the only dedicated, comprehensive early childhood agency in South Carolina focused on getting children ready for school and life success. Annually, we serve more than 30,000 children. Established by the South Carolina General Assembly in 1999, SC First Steps provides funding and support to a network of 46 local, First Steps partnerships, one in every county. Through the partnerships, First Steps provides evidence-based parenting, literacy, and development programs; training for early childhood educators; child care scholarships; child care quality enhancement; and a slate of other early interventions. Through First Steps 4K, the agency partners with over 200 child care centers to offer free, high-quality, educational Pre-K 4 to more than 2500 children. In addition to developing, funding, and supporting programs and initiatives statewide, South Carolina First Steps coordinates the activities of the South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council, a collaborative body representing the state's early childhood system. The Early Childhood Advisory Council works to ensure that South Carolina's children arrive at school ready to reach their highest potential, are healthy and safe, and are actively supported by their families and communities.

The diverse workforce that makes up the 65+ member team at SCFS includes salaried and hourly positions and is governed by a State Board of Trustees. As an organization, we value children, relationships, equity, high quality, and results. Our office is in downtown Columbia, SC. As SCFS is a state-wide organization, some positions are remote, and some require travel.

Team: Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP) – 4K Program

The First Steps 4K Team is responsible for providing publicly-funded 4-year-old kindergarten in licensed childcare settings in 64 school districts across SC. The Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP) was created as a pilot program in 2006 and codified alongside the state's Read to Succeed legislation (Act 284) in June 2014. The original pilot program – then known as the Child Development Education Pilot Program or CDEPP - was established by the SC General Assembly in response to Abbeville County School District, et. al. v. South Carolina, a school equity funding lawsuit brought by rural school districts. Children who qualify for free- or reduced-price lunch, those receiving Medicaid, and/or those with documented developmental delays are eligible to participate in CERDEP. CERDEP is co-administered in private preschool settings by South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness (First Steps).

Position Description:

Reporting to the 4K Manager, the 4K Coach is responsible for providing targeted language and literacy supports to coaches, teachers and administrators in the First Steps' prekindergarten program. This position will provide ongoing mentoring/monitoring, coaching, and technical assistance to providers approved for the First Steps' prekindergarten program. They will serve as a resource for quality improvement and accountability using relationship based principles and practices to drive improvement.

4K Coaches will collaborate with SC First Steps staff to develop and promote program accountability, monitoring, and professional development structures which meet legislative requirements and advance best practices in early childhood education.

Responsibilities and Duties:

- Serve as point of contact for language and literacy instruction for First Steps 4K classrooms across the state. Create professional development opportunities that bring evidence-based practices into classes and provide additional on-going support to teachers and administrators. Guide program participants in reflective teaching practices to continuously improve instruction, increase student engagement, improve student achievement and build teacher capacity for lasting impact
- Serve as a Coach to conduct regular visits with a limited caseload of classrooms and programs to foster high quality research-based early childhood curriculum for Kindergarten readiness. Support the development, implementation, and monitoring of goals based plans required as a condition of participation in First Steps 4K Program. Cultivate relationships for strong strategies to enhance best practices in early childhood education.
- Document all provider visits and feedback, prepare communications, and provide accountability to programs and to the the Office of First Steps 4K. Ensure that services implemented are consistent with all goals and measures, while participating as part of the 4K Team.
- Facilitate communication between all SC First Steps program staff and other agency partners, as necessary, to support public and private 4K program guidelines, training, and support structures. Plan, create and implement trainings and professional development offerings for 4K providers and staff.
- Recruit new providers. Conduct on-site evaluations of new 4K provider applicants, along with the 4K Team. Plan and implement onboarding for approved providers. Support the recruitment of students for all approved providers. Develop educational grants and administer grants received.
- Serve as the liaison between approved providers and local First Steps County Partnerships for the purpose of coordinating parenting services, expanded technical assistance, and collaboration of programs.

Qualifications and Skills:

Required:

- Must have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited university in early childhood education or a related field.
- Must have at least 5 years of experience in child development and/or early childhood education
- Must have knowledge of SC Child Care Licensing requirements
- Must possess leadership ability and organizational skills
- Must have good interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to work as part of a team, communicate effectively both orally and in writing, receive and provide feedback, and manage dynamic interchanges in meetings
- Must possess Initiative and problem-solving capabilities
- Must be able to work well with people
- Must be able to demonstrate and promote inclusivity and cross-cultural competence.

Preferred:

- Master's degree from an accredited university in early childhood or related field
- Read to Succeed certification preferred
- Teaching experience for adult learners
- South Carolina Early Childhood teacher certification
- Must have good interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to work as part of a team, communicate effectively both orally and in writing, receive and provide feedback, and manage dynamic interchanges in meetings
- Must possess Initiative and problem-solving capabilities
- Must be able to work well with people

Other Requirements:

- Valid South Carolina Class "D" Driver's License and ability to travel in-state and out of state
- Ability to travel extensively to child care settings.
- Maintain and show proof of personal auto insurance
- Must be able to accept some exposure to communicable diseases (i.e. childcare setting)
- Must be able to work in an environment that may be moderate to loud (i.e. childcare setting)
- Ability to lift up to 45 pounds

Benefits:

This position is eligible for a variety of benefits from a comprehensive health and dental insurance program and generous annual and sick leave policies, to a solid and secure retirement system. The State of South Carolina offers a competitive benefits program for state employees.

SC First Steps is an equal opportunity employer.

SC First Steps is a drug-free workplace.

To apply visit <https://bit.ly/3CygMNj> and submit your cover letter and resume to Avian Jones at HR@scfirststeps.org