



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2026





## Mission

Our mission is to ensure that all children in Spartanburg County start school ready to reach their highest potential.

## Vision

At Spartanburg County First Steps, we envision a community that has the knowledge and services to support all children in reaching their full potential.

## Values

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

**EQUITY**

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION**

**INCLUSION**

We value all children equally and strive to level the playing field to offer the supports need they need to reach their full potential. We build trusting and respectful relationships with families, early care and education providers, and community stakeholders to engage and affect positive change. We offer high-quality programs and services which are evidence-based and research-based to maximize a positive impact on the children and families in our community.

# Message from the Executive Director



**Barbara Manoski**  
Executive Director  
Spartanburg County First Steps

Spartanburg County First Steps is pleased to share our 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. We are grateful to the many community partners who engage with us in trusting relationships that allow us to continue to provide Spartanburg's youngest children with high quality early care and education and much needed services for their families. Their thoughts and voices were a driving force behind this plan. Thank you!

We are looking forward to the many positive changes the coming years will bring!

We know that we work best, when we work together.

With gratitude,  
*Barbara*

# Strategic Plan Process

## CONVENE

Held community convenings to develop a vision for young children and their families

October 2022 – January 2023



## UNDERSTAND

Reviewed local data and map assets to understand the state of young children, their families, and the early childhood system

October 2022 – March 2023



## PRIORITIZE

Organized the insight gathered from the convenings and data to prioritize the concerns, needs, and gaps the partnership wants to address and formalized Needs Assessment

January 2023 – March 2023



## PLAN

Wrote the partnership's three-year Strategic Plan using the Needs Assessment

March 2023 – May 2023



## APPLY

Utilize the Strategic Plan to inform the partnership's Annual Formula Funding Grant Application

May 2023, May 2024, May 2025



## IMPLEMENT

Execute the programs and services outlined in the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026



## MONITOR

Track the partnership's progress on implementing programs to fidelity and on achieving the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026



# Priority Needs: Summary

Through a series of community convenings, a needs assessment and asset mapping process, the following needs were prioritized for Spartanburg County. See our full needs assessment here:

[https://1steps.org/wp-content/uploads/Spartanburg-FY24-26-Needs-Assessment-FINAL\\_.pdf](https://1steps.org/wp-content/uploads/Spartanburg-FY24-26-Needs-Assessment-FINAL_.pdf)

## **1. Supporting parents of young children**

Research shows that a child's parent is their first teacher. Parents need hands-on opportunities to engage in developmentally appropriate activities that support success in life and school for their young children. Programs like Palmetto Basics offer easy to understand tenets for parents.

## **2. Provide high-quality early care and education programs**

Research supports that young children who attend high quality early care and education programs will most likely be prepared for success in school. Our community has a need for more high quality programs to support school readiness.

## **3. Expand early learning network partnerships**

All Spartanburg communities want to provide high quality early care and education programs for their youngest learners, especially those who live in poverty. By expanding our partnerships and creating new ones we will be able to reach more children in need.

# Objectives

- 1. Parents have the knowledge and skills to be excellent caregivers and teachers for their young children.**
- 2. Early Care and Education programs (child development centers, public school, and family home providers) strive to operate with high quality.**
- 3. Community partnerships work to maximize efforts for school and life success for young children.**

# **Objective One:** Parents have the knowledge and skills to be excellent caregivers and teachers for their children.

## **STRATEGY 1.1**

Summer Counts Literacy Program

### **SMART GOAL**

Each year we will increase the number of children and parents participating by 5%.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- Mary Black Foundation, Quality Counts programs

## **STRATEGY 1.2**

Palmetto Basics

### **SMART GOAL**

Each year we will participate in two community fairs, where we will distribute information on Palmetto Basics, including hands-on activities.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- Hello Family, local schools, city of Spartanburg

## **STRATEGY 1.3**

Count Down to Kindergarten

### **SMART GOAL**

Each year we will increase the number of children and parents participating by 5%.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- Hello Family, local school districts

**Objective Two:** Early Care and Education programs (child development centers, public school, and family home providers) strive for high quality.

## **STRATEGY 2.1**

### **Quality Counts**

#### **SMART GOAL**

1. Each year two new centers will participate in Quality Counts.

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- Hello Family, Mary Black Foundation, Spartanburg Academic Movement

## **STRATEGY 2.2**

### **Quality Counts**

#### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY24-25, two public schools will have 4K classrooms participating in Quality Counts

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- Hello Family, local school districts



# **Objective Three:** Community partnerships work to maximize efforts for school and life success.

## **STRATEGY 3.1**

Spartanburg Academic Movement partnership

### **SMART GOALS**

- Sign MOU for increasing the number of early care and education programs in Quality Counts in FY23-24
- Sign MOU for enrolling school district 4K classrooms in Quality Counts

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS**

- QC programs, Spartanburg Academic Movement, Spartanburg School Districts

# Overarching Measure of Success

## **SPARTANBURG COUNTY'S YOUNG CHILDREN ARE ACTIVELY SUPPORTED BY THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITITES**

Data Point: By 2026, the number of children served in evidenced-based programs will increase from 1,114 in 2023 to 1,581 in 2026.



# Acknowledgments

Spartanburg County First Steps would like to acknowledge and thank our staff, our Board of Directors and the many community partners who contributed to the development of the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. Your voice matters, and we are grateful for the gift of your time and thoughts.

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*With gratitude,*

*Barbara Manoski  
Executive Director  
Spartanburg County First Steps*