

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2026





## Mission

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

## Vision

Every child in Calhoun County will enter school healthy and ready for success.

## Values

Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children. Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of families and their children.

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

Services must be high-quality and grounded in strong evidence to achieve desired results. Calhoun First Steps operates within a culture of accountability.

# 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 Calhoun County.

## 1. Child Care Deserts

Calhoun County currently has one licensed childcare center.

## 2. Community Playgrounds

Calhoun County has three community playgrounds where none are in the town of Saint Matthews.

## 3. Economic Gaps

The economic gap between African Americans, Whites, and White (Non-Hispanic) in Calhoun County based on the median household income.

# Objectives

**1. Collaborate with the local childcare center.**

**2. Increase Community Awareness**

**3. Expand Resource Development**

# **Objective One:** Collaborate with the Local Childcare Center

## **STRATEGY 1.1**

### Parents as Teachers

#### **SMART GOAL(S)**

Increase the number of families served through the Early Learning Academy from 3% to 5% by the end of FY 26.

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- Early Learning Academy, LLC.

## **STRATEGY 1.2**

### Imagination Library

#### **SMART GOAL(S)**

1. By the end of FY26, enroll all children served through the Early Learning Academy into the Imagination Library program.

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- Early Learning Academy, LLC.

# Objective Two: Increase Community Awareness

## STRATEGY 2.1

### Community Day

#### SMART GOAL(S)

1. Calhoun County First Steps will host at least two community resource/family fun days by the end of FY26.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Calhoun County Recreation and Community Department
- Calhoun School District
- Calhoun Public Library
- Calhoun DSS and DHEC
- Calhoun County Family Health Center
- Tri-County Health

## STRATEGY 2.2

### Increase social media presence

#### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 26, we will increase the number of Facebook followers from 36 to 100 followers.
2. Calhoun County First Steps will increase the number of families enrolling through social media platforms from 3% to 5% by the end of FY26.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Calhoun County SC Digital Signage
- Calhoun Connects
- Calhoun Times

# Objective Three: Expand Resource Development

## STRATEGY 3.1

Increase fundraisers

### SMART GOAL(S)

- Calhoun County First Steps will increase the annual number of fundraisers from 1 to 2 fundraisers a year by the end of FY 26.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Calhoun County First Steps board members
- Local small businesses
- Large local corporations

## STRATEGY 3.2

Board members to increase contributions to the partnership

### SMART GOAL(S)

- Board members to increase personal contributions from \$27 to \$50 by the end of FY 26.

# Overarching Measure(s) of Success

## 1. MORE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT KINDERGARTEN READY FOR SUCCESS

By 2026, the percentage of children who score at the highest level of the Kindergarten Readiness Assess will increase from 52% to 55%

## 2. INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES

By 2026, the percentage of children in need who are directly served by Calhoun First Steps will increase from 72% to 80%

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