

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2026





## Mission

The **mission** of Horry County First Steps is to ensure that children start school ready to learn by supporting the caring adults who touch their lives. We establish partnerships and secure resources to provide programs that focus on quality early care and education, family support, health, and early literacy.

## Vision

The **vision** of Horry County First Steps is that every child will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

## Values

- Readiness to learn includes physical, mental, social, emotional and developmental well-being
- We are committed to the success of all children in our community
- We support the role of parents as the child's first and best teachers
- Our community's participation is essential to our success
- The Partnership and the community are mutually accountable to children.
- We will continue to work toward racial equity in all programs and partnerships

# Message from the Executive Director



Horry County First Steps is pleased to share its strategic plan for 2024-2027. This plan represents engagement with members of the community and a concerted planning effort by our board and staff to best serve Horry County in realizing the promise of our youngest learners. Within this narrative, we share our organizational mission, vision, values, strategic direction, priorities, and the planning process in which we engaged. As we look to the future may we constantly be reminded of the importance of ensuring all children entering school healthy and ready to learn.

*Amy Breault*

# 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 Horry County. See our full needs assessment here:

[www.scfirststeps.org/media/m01ies1p/horry-county-fy24-26-needs-assessment.pdf](http://www.scfirststeps.org/media/m01ies1p/horry-county-fy24-26-needs-assessment.pdf)

- 1. Family supports Increase the number of families participating in evidence-based and evidence-informed parenting programs.**
- 2. High quality early childhood environments Support and develop the early childhood workforce through training and professional development.**
- 3. Expand reach Implement a service delivery system that include both programs that are intensive and targeted plus those that are light-touch and have a broader reach. 1. REQUIRED**

# Objectives

- 1. Increase the support for and use of First Steps programs**
- 2. Children are supported by their communities**
- 3. Obtain the funding we need to support excellence, promote innovation, and to sustain core programs despite fluctuating funds.**

# Objective One: Increase Use of First Steps Programs

## STRATEGY 1.1

### Early Identification and Referral

#### SMART GOALS

1. By the end of FY26, families will receive a minimum of two contacts from the EI&R program specialist.
2. By the end of FY25, the EI&R program will maintain two FTE positions

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with all types of service agencies to ensure that families are connected to services benefiting them and their children.

## STRATEGY 1.2

### Childcare Training

#### SMART GOALS

1. By the end of each year, we will provide 15 hours of Professional Development to Child Care Directors and Staff. Participants will earn Certified training hours. There will be a maximum of 40 participants per training session.
2. Every year, we will offer virtual and in-person training.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- We will partner with other Early Care and Education agencies to ensure childcare staff/providers get information related to all training offerings.

# Objective One: Increase Use of First Steps Programs

## STRATEGY 1.3

Center Staff Training and Development

### SMART GOALS

1. Establishment of Cohort 3 by the end of FY26, while maintaining relationships with at least 75% of members in Cohort 1 and 2
2. By the end of FY26 the CSTD Program will maintain 2 Full-Time Quality Coaches

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Work with agencies to encourage childcare facilities to participate in the CSTD program

## STRATEGY 1.4

Raising A Reader

### SMART GOAL

1. By the end of FY26, the Raising A Reader program will engage with 10 Implementation sites
2. By the end of FY26, the Raising A Reader program will meet the Evidence Based Programmatic standards

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Implementation sites to include Head Start, Horry County Schools, Childcare facilities, and Little River Medical



# Objective Two: Children are supported by their communities

## STRATEGY 2.1

Provide support to community-based programs

### SMART GOAL

1. By FY26 FFAS program will increase enrollment in the Preschool classroom to a maximum of 18 children.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR

- Work with the Alumni Association, Head Start, and HCS to engage with families in the Green Sea community and recruit more participants.

## STRATEGY 2.2

StoryWalk programs

### SMART GOALS

1. By the end of FY26 there will be a minimum of seven (7) established StoryWalks
2. By the end of FY24, assist in the creation of a quarterly rotation system

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Chapin Library and Horry County Library will install and maintain the StoryWalks.

# Objective Three: Obtain the funding we need to support excellence, promote innovation, and to sustain core programs despite fluctuating funds

## STRATEGY 3.1

Develop a comprehensive resource development plan to include in-kind contributions

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. A resource development plan will be created by the end of FY24. The plan will include submission of grant applications, special events, and donor engagement.
2. By the end of FY24 each funded program will reflect a match of 15% of state funds. By the end of FY25 and FY26, each funded program will reflect a match of 30% of state funds.

## STRATEGY 3.2

Organize two community wide fund-raising events to include one virtual and one in-person.

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY21 HCFS will host an inaugural virtual event to raise funds for the work of the agency.
2. Throughout FY22 and FY23 the agency will host its annual virtual event during Week Of the Young Child and in person Derby Day fundraiser.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Foundations, private donors, and local sponsors

# Overarching Measure(s) of Success

## **Increase the number of children served by programs funded by HC First Steps**

By FY27, the percentage of children directly served by HCFS funded programs from 9% to 12%

## **Increase the availability of high-quality early care and education opportunities offered by HC First Steps**

By FY27, the percentage of children under age 6 who benefit from Horry County First Steps Child Care Training efforts will increase by .5% from .8% to 2.3%.

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