



Meeting of the Board of Trustees

June 15, 2023 2:00PM

Via Zoom

AGENDA

- I. **Roll Call** (Avian Jones)
- II. **Public Comment Period**
The public is invited to provide comments relevant to the SC Early Childhood Advisory Council and/or South Carolina First Steps during this period. Members of the public wishing to speak must sign up before the meeting. Comments should be limited to no more than three minutes per speaker.
- III. **Call to Order and Approve Agenda** (Dave Morley)
Motion: To adopt the agenda as submitted
Motion: To adopt the April 20, 2023 minutes as submitted
Attachments: SC First Steps Board of Trustees April 20, 2023 Minutes
- IV. **Executive Committee** (David Morley)
- V. **Consent Agenda:** Motions Recommended by Committees (Dave Morley)
 - a. **Motion:** To approve the corrective action determination as presented for Lancaster County First Steps. As a result of corrective action, the Lancaster County First Steps is not eligible to apply for competitive or targeted grants until they have satisfactorily resolved the deficiencies noted on their corrective action plan as determined by SC First Steps. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
 - b. **Motion:** To approve the Program and Operational Guidelines with updates by SCFS Staff for implementation for the Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1, 2023. (Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee recommends)
 - c. **Motion:** To approve the Formula Funding grant requests, with the exception of the Scholarship Program in which budgeted administrative cost not exceed 25% of the value of the scholarships received from DSS as recommended by SCFS Staff to the forty-six (46) First Steps Local Partnerships for Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1st, 2023. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
 - d. **Motion:** To approve thirteen (13) grant awards for the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grants in order to serve more children and families in their communities. Twelve (12) Local Partnerships have been selected by the SCFS State Office staff review committee; Allendale, Bamberg, Charleston, Darlington (2), Dillon, Greenville, Greenwood, McCormick, Orangeburg, Pickens, Spartanburg, and York counties for amounts documented on attached table. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
 - e. **Motion:** To approve the Targeted grant applications funded through the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grant opportunity for six (6) local partnerships for the Family Café; Barnwell, Darlington, Fairfield, Greenwood, Lee, and Williamsburg counties, and four (4) Local Partnerships for the Supporting Providers Through Visits (SCPV); Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, and Williamsburg



counties for amounts documented on attached table (Local Partnership Programs and Grants Committee recommends)

- f. **Motion:** To approve the Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps as amended. (Finance and Administration Committee recommends)

- VI. **First Steps Is Here: Parents as Teachers** (Gina Beebe)
Talkea Guess, Parent Participant, Orangeburg County First Steps

- VII. **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment** (Dr. Jenny May, SC Education Oversight Committee)

- VIII. **Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee** (Dr. Amy Williams)
Attachments: Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Report, Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes, Countdown to Kindergarten Evaluation Project Summary

- IX. **Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee** (John Hayes)
Attachments: Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Report, Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting Minutes, Lancaster County First Steps Corrective Action Plan, Parenting Program Guidelines Proposed Changes for FY24, FY24 Formula Funding, READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23), READY Targeted Grant Awards

Motion: To approve the language change for the Enhanced Early Care Onsite Tutoring program as follows: Children that receive Enhanced Early Education Onsite Tutoring, must meet SCFS age-eligibility requirements of students three (3) to entrance into 5k classrooms for implementation for Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1, 2024.

- X. **Finance and Administration Committee** (Tim Holt)
Attachments: Finance and Administration Committee Report, Lancaster County First Steps Corrective Action Plan, Finance and Administration Committee Meeting Minutes, FY2023 Financial Status Report as of May 31, 2023, FY2023 Donations Report as of May 31, 2023

- XI. **Legislative Committee** (Sen. Gerald Malloy)
Attachments: Legislative Committee Report

- XII. **Executive Director's Report** (Georgia Mjartan)
Attachments: Executive Director's Report, Growth and Impact First Steps 4K 2022-2023, SC PAT Family Engagement Survey 2023 Statewide Report

- XIII. **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting of the SC First Steps Board of Trustees



Board of Trustees Meeting
April 20, 2023 2:00PM
SC First Steps
636 Rosewood Drive Columbia, SC 29201
Minutes

Trustees Present (16):

Rep. Terry Alexander	Jessica Mackey
Dr. Shelley Canright, Vice Chair	Dave Morley, Chairman
Jacque Curtin	Roger Pryor
Mary Lynne Diggs	Edward Simmer
Matthew Ferguson	Wes Wooten
John Hayes	Sue Williams
Sen. Greg Hembree	Dr. Amy Williams
Tim Holt	
Michael Leach	

Trustees Absent (6)

Rep. Shannon Erickson
Constance Holloway
Robert Kerr
Sen. Gerald Malloy
Janie Neeley
Alexia Newman

Attendees (64)

Georgia Mjartan	James Calhoun	Nur Tanyel
Avian Jones	Jennifer Williams	Glennis McElveen
Cindy Riley	Joy Mazur	Jade Wright
Tangela Green	Kathy Fitzgerald	Jon Artz
Derek Cromwell	Kenna Hoover	Elizabeth Dudek
Sarah Crawford	Kerry Cordan	Sam Ingram
Sheila Cornwell	Kristine Jenkins	Gina Beebe
Chelsea Richard	LaMyra Sanders	Mark Barnes
Leeza Steward	Lexi Jones	Martha Strickland
Santasha Highley	Mary Baddela	Betty Gardiner
Loretta Parker	Myrelo King	Beth Moore
Kaitlyn Richards	Olandor Lewis	Rashawn Aaron
Jackson Wilkens	Pauline Whiting	Cory Wilson
Laura Baker	Sharon Bruton	Justin Myers
Rachal Hatton	Shayla Pettigrew	
Lis Guimaraes	Sherri Evans	
Angela Pasquino	Tamatha Kohler	
Berry Kelly	Whitney White-Anderson	
Brandie Maness	Vanessa Harrell	
Carletta Isreal	Shirleen Lewis	
Cindy Dixon	Jabari Clyburn	
Cindy Galloway	Deborah Mitchell	
Dorian Young	Quinn Baker	
Faith McCaul	Rochelle Elliott	
Hannah Hayes	Birley Wright	



Mr. Morley called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m. Mr. Morley requested a motion to adopt the agenda. Dr. Canright provided the motion. Mr. Holt provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the February 16, 2023 minutes. Mr. Holt provided the motion. Dr. Canright provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Morley provided a report on the Executive Committee where he provided updates on board transitions. Jennifer McConnell fulfilled her commitment to the board by serving two terms. New appointments to the board are Wes Wooten, Rep. Terry Alexander, and the Superintendent of Education's designee Matthew Ferguson. Mr. Wooten will serve on the Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee. Rep. Alexander will serve on the Legislative Committee. Mr. Ferguson will serve on the Early Childhood Advisory Council's Interagency Collaboration Committee.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to approve the following consent agenda. Dr. Williams provided the motion. Dr. Canright provided a second and the motion was unanimously approved.

Consent Agenda: Motions Recommended by Committees (Dave Morley)

- a. **Motion:** To approve the Evidenced Based Program Go NAPP SACC to be added to the SC First Steps Evidenced Based Program list for Program Year 24 beginning July 1, 2023. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
- b. **Motion:** To approve the program guidelines for the Evidenced Based Program Go NAP SACC to be added to the SC First Steps Evidenced Based Program guidelines for Program Year 24 beginning July 1, 2023. (Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee recommends)
- c. **Motion:** To approve the award of Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Child Care Technical Assistance Expansion or Establishment Grants to five (5) Local Partnerships (see the award chart Attached) as selected by the SCFS State Office External Review Committee: Berkeley, Dillon, Dorchester, Spartanburg, and York County Local Partnerships. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
- d. **Motion:** To approve the award of Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Infrastructure and Capacity Building round 2 Grants to Lee County First Steps per the partnership's grant application (see the award chart attached) for its non-capital request as recommended by the SCFS State Office Review Committee. (Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee recommends)
- e. **Motion:** To approve the 2021 Form 990. (Finance and Administration Committee recommends)
- f. **Motion:** To approve the capital improvement request for Lee County First Steps. (Finance and Administration Committee recommends)

Dr. Williams reported on the Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee. Dr. Williams announced that Lexi Jones will be designated as the staff liaison for the committee while Dr. Richard is on leave.



Mr. Hayes reported on the Local Partnerships Programs and Grants Committee.

Mr. Holt reported on the Finance and Administration Committee. He presented the 2021 Form 990 to the board for approval where a motion was requested on behalf of the committee. The 2021 Form 990 was approved unanimously. He discussed the committee's approval of the Lee County First Steps capital improvement request.

Mr. Cromwell shared information on Nurturing Parenting. He introduced Rashawn Aaron and Cory Wilson, Parent Educators from Dillon County First Steps, and Justin Myers, parent participant. Mr. Aaron and Mr. Wilson discussed how the program is implemented in their community. Mr. Myers shared his experience as a participant of the program.

Sen. Hembree provided a legislative report where he commended Ms. Mjartan and staff on educating the General Assembly about First Steps. He shared information on the budget and the legislation proposals regarding the reauthorization of First Steps and the restructuring of First Steps local partnerships.

Ms. Mjartan provided the Executive Director's report where she acknowledged the retirement of Virginia Newman, Calhoun County First Steps Executive Director and Barbara Manoski, Spartanburg County First Steps Executive Director. She shared information about the success of the ReadIn SC event that was held and the fundraiser being held that evening. She provided information and statistics on First Steps 4K. Ms. Mjartan provided an update on the Your Voice Matters First Steps 4K Spring Family Survey and an update on the agency's grantmaking status and process. She introduced new staff and highlighted the agency's Infants in the Workplace policy.

Mr. Morley asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Williams provided the motion. Mr. Pryor seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m. by Mr. Morley.



Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee

CHAIRWOMAN'S REPORT

The committee meeting took place on Monday, May 22, 2023 via Zoom and was called to order at 9:33AM. The committee members present were myself and Janie Neeley. There were several staff and guests present.

The meeting focused on Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK), an evidence-informed program developed by First Steps in the mid-2000s. The main keys to success of CTK are: (1) building relationships with child's soon-to-be kindergarten teacher or teaching assistant; (2) increasing parent knowledge and competence in kindergarten expectations and how to support learning at home; (3) using and distributing high quality materials with families.

Funded by the Preschool Development Grant (PDG), the agency has commissioned the University of South Carolina's Research, Evaluation, and Measurement Center to evaluate CTK at several levels. This aligns with the agency's strategic plan (Strategy 1.4.8: "Evaluate the impact of the Countdown to Kindergarten program using both quantitative and qualitative methods") and with the program's plans of building enough evidence for the board's consideration for moving it from an "evidence-informed" to an "evidence-based" designation. The definitions of "evidence-informed" and "evidence-based" can be found in S.C. Code 59-152-25.

The presentation described the program and the pilot and scaled evaluations that have taken place to date. Details about the studies and their associated manuscripts in development are included in the attached fact sheet. The high-level takeaway findings from the scaled evaluation are:

- Students who participated in CTK had significantly higher skills in language and literacy, math, and social foundations and had significantly stronger home-school relationships, than those who were eligible, but did not participate.
- Families who participated in CTK had, on average, significantly more connectedness with schools, stronger parent-teacher relationships, and more parent knowledge about kindergarten expectations, than families who did not participate in CTK.

Dr. D'Amico also shared the future directions of this work, which is funded by the PDG Planning Grant this calendar year. There was deep discussion between the committee and the presenters regarding the future work and its implications. The meeting adjourned at 10:28AM.



Strategic Planning and Evaluation Committee Meeting Minutes Monday, May 22, 2023 9:30-10:30AM via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Dr. Amy Williams, Janie Neeley

Staff Present: Dr. Chelsea Richard, Lexi Jones, Georgia Mjartan, Betty Gardiner, Derek Cromwell, Dr. Janice Kilburn

Guests Present: Drs. Leigh D'Amico and Xumei Fan (University of South Carolina's Research, Evaluation, and Measurement Center)

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 9:33AM and opened with an announcement that an evaluation coordinator, Dr. Roddrick Dugger, will be joining the First Steps team on June 2, 2023. This addition will bring the agency's dedicated data and evaluation team to a total of five full-time staff, including its Director, a testament to the agency's commitment to data-driven decision making.

Chelsea relayed to the committee that the meetings planned for the remainder of the calendar year will focus more on showcasing the agency's multifaceted approach to evaluation and less on updates. This meeting focused on Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK), an evidence-informed program developed by First Steps in the mid-2000s. Using funding from the Preschool Development Grant (PDG), First Steps commissioned the University of South Carolina's Research, Evaluation, and Measurement Center to evaluate CTK at several levels. This aligns with the agency's strategic plan (Strategy 1.4.8: "Evaluate the impact of the Countdown to Kindergarten program using both quantitative and qualitative methods") and with the program's plans of building enough evidence for the board's consideration for moving it from an "evidence-informed" to an "evidence-based" designation.

Pursuant to S.C. Code 59-152-25, the definition of evidence based is: "a program based on a clear and consistent program model that is designated as such by the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees because the program:

- (1)
 - (a) is grounded in published, peer-reviewed research that is linked to determined outcomes;
 - (b) employs well-trained and competent staff to whom the program provides continual professional development that is relevant to the specific model being delivered;
 - (c) demonstrates strong linkages to other community-based services; and
 - (d) is operated to ensure program fidelity; or

(2) is commonly recognized by experts in the field as such a program.”

Traditionally, programs are recommended as evidence based after thorough review by a team of qualified staff, all holding PhDs with a combined 50+ years of research experience, to the Program and Grants Committee of the First Steps Board for their consideration.

Drs. Janice Kilburn and Leigh D’Amico presented the CTK evaluation approach and findings to the committee. Dr. Kilburn opened the presentation with an overview of the program, which pairs incoming kindergartners with their soon-to-be kindergarten teacher for five personal visits and one school visit in the summer before kindergarten. The main keys to success of CTK are: (1) building relationships with child’s soon-to-be kindergarten teacher or teaching assistant; (2) increasing parent knowledge and competence in kindergarten expectations and how to support learning at home; (3) using and distributing high quality materials with families.

Then, Dr. D’Amico described the pilot and scaled evaluations that have taken place to date and the associated manuscripts that are in development. The attached fact sheet includes the details. The high-level takeaway findings from the scaled evaluation are:

- Students who participated in CTK had significantly higher skills in language and literacy, math, and social foundations and had significantly stronger home-school relationships, than those who were eligible, but did not participate.
- Families who participated in CTK had, on average, significantly more connectedness with schools, stronger parent-teacher relationships, and more parent knowledge about kindergarten expectations, than families who did not participate in CTK.

Dr. D’Amico also shared the future directions of this work, which will be funded by the PDG Planning Grant this calendar year. There was deep discussion between the committee and the presenters regarding the future work and its implications. The meeting adjourned at 10:28AM.

Evaluating the Impact of Countdown to Kindergarten: A Partnership Between UofSC REM Center and First Steps

Pilot Evaluation

Of the 248 teachers who participated in CTK during summer 2021, 50 were randomly invited to participate in the pilot evaluation



Of the 50 invited, 16 kindergarten teachers participated and rated 320 students' performance in four domains



Academic Readiness Family Engagement Social Foundations Home-School Relations



The same 16 kindergarten teachers also participated in an interview about the impact, benefits, and quality of the CTK program

Overall, 3 themes emerged from the interviews. Teachers believe the CTK program

Eases children's transition to kindergarten
Develops positive home-school interactions
Promotes an understanding of kindergarten expectations with parents

Manuscript 1 – "Multi-level impacts of a summer transition program and teacher/school characteristics on kindergarten readiness among disadvantaged children and families"

In development

Manuscript 2 – "Supporting Children and Families with Opportunity Gaps: Educators' Perspectives of a Summer Kindergarten Transition Program"

In development

Children who participated in CTK had significantly stronger home-school relations and more family engagement, on average, **compared to students who were eligible but did not participate in CTK.**

Scaled Evaluation

Of the 220 teachers who participated in CTK during summer 2022, 60 were randomly invited to participate in the scaled evaluation



Of the 60 invited, 30 kindergarten teachers participated and rated 617 students' performance in four domains



Language and Literacy Math Social Foundations Home-School Relations



380 parents/caregivers in the 30 classrooms completed a survey

Of the 380 parents/caregivers,

52% (194) participated in CTK
44% (166) did not participate in CTK
4% (16) were uncertain of whether they participated in CTK.

Families who participated in CTK had, on average, significantly.

More connectedness with schools
Stronger parent-teacher relationships
More parent knowledge about kindergarten expectations

than **families who did not participate in CTK.**

Families who participated in CTK had children who were significantly more prepared, adjusted to, and interested in kindergarten, on average, **compared to families who did not participate in CTK.**

Manuscript 3 – "Impact of a summer transition program on kindergarten readiness of children from disadvantaged backgrounds"

In development

Manuscript 4 – "Perspectives of parents and caregivers on kindergarten readiness: A focus on the impact of a summer transition program"

Submitted to *Early Child Development and Care* (May 2023)

Children who participated in CTK had significantly higher language and literacy skills; math skills; social foundation skills; and stronger home-school relations, on average, **compared to students who were eligible but did not participate in CTK.**

Future evaluations with the REM Center will continue to build a base of evidence for the CTK program



Comparison of KRA scores among CTK and non-CTK students
In development



2023 Countdown Community Partners Program Evaluation
Coming Summer 2023



2023 CTK Evaluation
Coming Fall 2023

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) supports smooth school transitions

30 Kindergarten teachers who participated in CTK during summer 2022 rated 617 students' performance in four domains



Language & Literacy



Math



Social Foundations



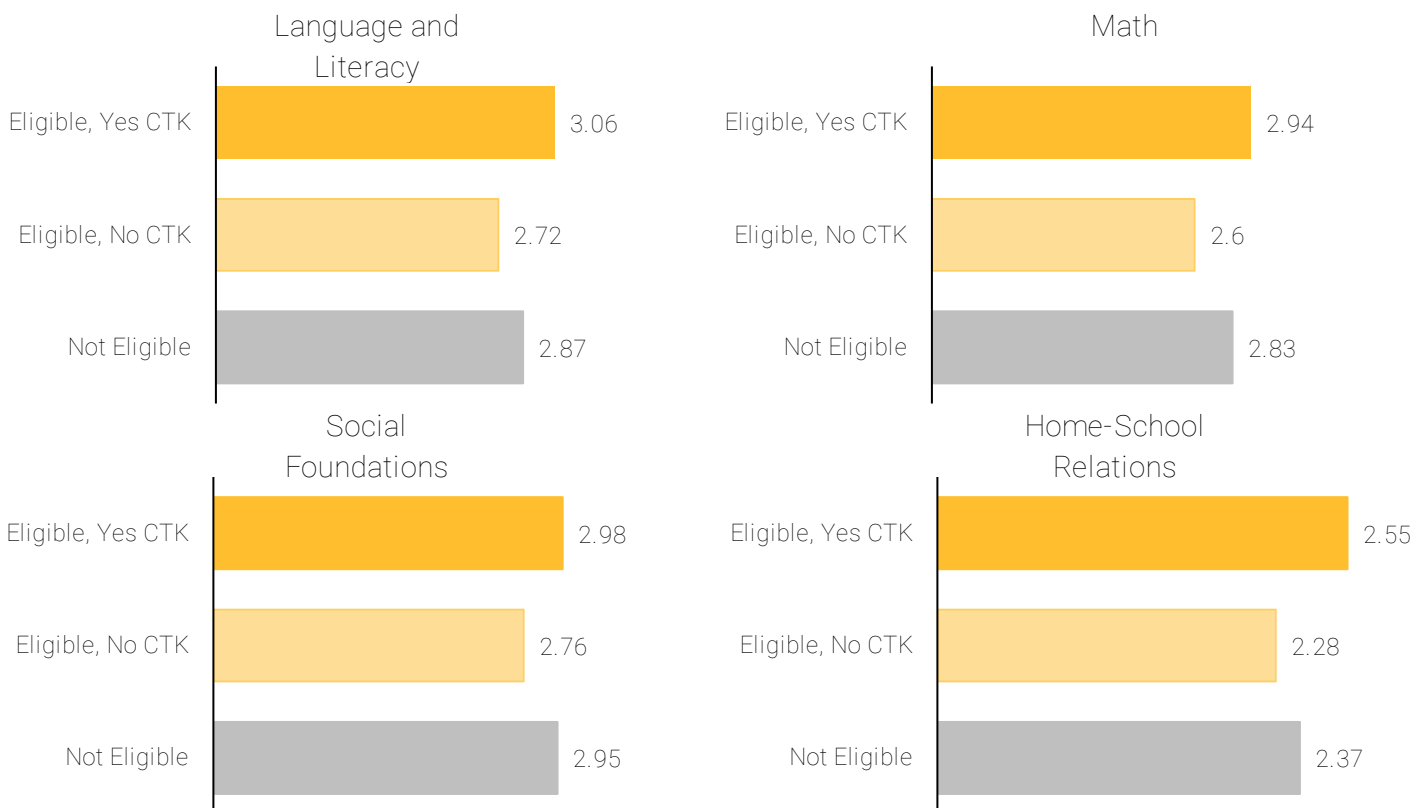
Home-School Relations

*Preliminary data reported from an evaluation conducted in partnership between the Research, Evaluation, and Measurement Center at the University of South Carolina and SC First Steps. Teachers who participated in CTK during summer 2022 were invited to complete an observational template of their students. Data were provided by 30 teachers on 617 kindergarten students.

CTK closes the gap in children's academic skills and home-school relations

Children who participate in CTK had statistically significantly higher language and literacy skills; math skills; social foundation skills; and stronger home-school relations, on average, compared to students who were eligible but did not participate in CTK.

Of the 617 students, the eligibility status for 201 students was unknown. Of the remaining 416, 42% (n=176) were eligible and participated in CTK, 28% (n=117) were eligible but did not participate in CTK, and 30% (n=123) were not eligible to participate in CTK.



**Language and literacy, math, and social foundation scores are on a scale from 1 (Not Met) to 4 (Fully Met). Home-school relations scores are on a scale from 1 (Not Engaged) to 3 (Engaged).



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Shelley Canright

Date: June 5th, 2023

RE: Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee

The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee met on June 5th, 2023, to receive updates and address action items. Detailed minutes of that meeting are attached.

Action Items

1. Corrective Action- Lancaster County First Steps

Derek explained that we generally are not considering Corrective Action items at this meeting, however the items were urgent enough that action is not only being taken in this committee, but also had been taken up in the Finance and Administration committee at its May meeting. Lancaster County First Steps first steps is being recommended for corrective action for several reasons related to the Clyburn Child Development Center. Items of deficiency include 1) Failing to receive competitive bids for contract valued at over \$105,000, 2) making capital improvements to a facility without a signed lease or contract, 3) failing to request and receive State Board of Trustee approval for capital improvement spending. The following motion was made by John Hayes, seconded Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda:

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the corrective action determination as presented for Lancaster County First Steps. As a result of corrective action, the Lancaster County First Steps is not eligible to apply for competitive or targeted grants until they have satisfactorily resolved the deficiencies noted on their corrective action plan as determined by SC First Steps.

2. Program and Operational Guideline Updates

Derek explained the purpose of bringing the Program Guidelines to vote. Every year we bring the program and operational guidelines to the committee for updating. This year, due to the number of items updated, and to be more streamlined in the number of action items we brought before the committee, we included a summary of changes to the committee and put all updates in one action item. Items to be updated after discussion as required by motion are noted in the attached minutes. A separate motion will be introduced to the full board defining the age of service for children participating in the Early Care and Education onsite Tutoring program to define age eligibility. The following motion was made by Jessica Mackey, seconded by John Hayes, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants committee approves the Program and Operational Guidelines with updates by SCFS Staff for implementation for the Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1, 2023.

3. Grant Year 24 Formula Funding Request Approval

Kerry and Derek gave an overview of the Local Partnerships Formula Funding Grant request for grant year 2024. See attached funding request document. During the discussion, it was questioned by



committee why there were expenditures in the “scholarship” line item for a program where local partnerships do not spend dollars on scholarships. The scholarships are provided free to SCFS by DSS. It was explained by staff that the amount in the line item was actually program management cost that was entered through budget allocation, and not direct cost of scholarships. Committee recommended that the program management cost be limited to 25% of value of scholarships each local partnership will distribute in their counties. That requirement is reflected in the motion. The following motion was made by John Hayes, seconded by Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee recommends the approval of the Formula Funding grant requests, with the exception of the Scholarship Program in which budgeted administrative cost not exceed 25% of the value of the scholarships received from DSS as recommended by SCFS Staff to the forty-six (46) First Steps Local Partnerships for Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1st, 2023.

4. READY Grant Award Recommendation (Competitive)

Chelsea explained the review process in which the 13 grants were recommended by SCFS staff. Twelve (12) local partnerships are being recommended for thirteen (13) grant awards, with one local partnership being recommended for two (2) awards. The following motion was made by Jesica Mackey, seconded by Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda.

Motion: The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee approves thirteen (13) grant awards for the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grants in order to serve more children and families in their communities. Twelve (12) Local Partnerships have been selected by the SCFS State Office staff review committee; Allendale, Bamberg, Charleston, Darlington (2), Dillon, Greenville, Greenwood, McCormick, Orangeburg, Pickens, Spartanburg, and York counties for amounts documented on attached table.

5. READY Grant Award Recommendation (Targeted)

Derek, Jon and LaMyra explained the two (2) Targeted grant opportunities covered by this award, Family Café and Supporting Care Providers Through Visits (SCPV, the process in which the grants were reviewed, the amounts for each local partnership, and the total amount of \$50,500 committed in READY funding. The following motion was made by Jesica Mackey, seconded by Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda.

Motion: The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the Targeted grant applications funded through the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grant opportunity for six (6) local partnerships for the Family Café; Barnwell, Darlington, Fairfield, Greenwood, Lee, and Williamsburg counties, and four (4) Local Partnerships for the Supporting Providers Through Visits (SCPV); Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, and Williamsburg counties for amounts documented on attached table.



Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee Meeting
Monday, June 5, 2023
Minutes

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/jDbEiL4r_QOyUgOc4jdSSJwE1Dn8HfV18AWqF07pWijWUIDIjimsE3KNtqcen8jU.Wk2u_4eWNwDqQqrQ
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Attendance

Committee: Present: John Hayes, Shelley Canright, Wes Wooten, Jesica Mackey.
Absent: Roger Pryor

SCFS Staff:

Derek Cromwell, Georgia Mjartan, Chelsea Richard, Kathy Fitzgerald, Kerry Cordan, LaMyra Sanders Dukes, Gina Beebe, Jon Artz, Jade Wright, Roderick Dugger.

Welcome:

Meeting was called to order by acting Chair Shelley Canright. Since this was our first in person meeting in a couple of months and we had new staff and new committee members, committee and staff introductions were completed. We then moved into the first action item;

Action Item 1: Corrective Action

Derek opened by explaining that this is not normally a meeting where we would present corrective action recommendations. However, it was deemed the issue was urgent enough to bring action now. Lancaster County First Steps is recommended for corrective action for the following deficiencies related to the completion of the Clyburn Early Childhood Center.

- Failed to get competitive bids for contract worth over \$105,000 awarded to a single vendor as required by state law.
- Expended funds to make capital improvements to a facility and operated facility without appropriate contracts for a lease.
- Failed to get approval from SCFS State Board of Trustees for capital improvements as required by state law.
- Finance and Administration Committee approved corrective action at its May 2023 meeting.

Motion

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the corrective action determination as presented for Lancaster County First Steps. As a result of corrective action, the Lancaster County First Steps is not eligible to apply for competitive or targeted grants until they have satisfactorily resolved the deficiencies noted on their corrective action plan as determined by SC First Steps.

Call to Motion: John Hayes

Second: Wes Wooten

Vote: All in Favor

Action Item 2: Program Guideline Updates (see attachments)

Derek opened by explaining the purpose of the annual review of Program and Operational Guidelines. He also explained to streamline the number of action items we had for this meeting; all guideline updates were included in one action item. See attached for detailed guideline updates. The following areas were updated.

- a. Parenting Guidelines Updates (Gina Beebe)
- b. School Transition Guidelines Updates (Janice Kilburn)
- c. Early Care and Education Guidelines Updates (Kate Roach)
- d. Family Café Guidelines Updates (LaMyra Sanders)
- e. Operational Guidelines Updates (Derek Cromwell & Jon Artz)
- f. Full Program and Operational Guidelines (Derek Cromwell & Kerry Cordan)



Each of the above program areas were presented by the Team lead or by Derek Cromwell in their absences. Edits to the changes after discussion that were had for program guidelines were as follows. The edits below will be included in the published document as approved by this action item.

CTK/CT4K:

- Change the word “sessions” to “personal visits” throughout

Family Café

- Where it read “partnership staff”, change to “partnership staff or team member”
- 3rd bullet under service delivery: change “officials from local state agencies” to “publicly funded agencies and entities”

ECE

- Questions about the use of “through 5K” since FS can’t serve kids once enrolled in 5K; language to use was not resolved.
- Program 320, service delivery
 - Item “a” 5K issue as stated above.
 - A separate motion at the Full Board of Trustee meeting in June for approval of language.
 - Item b”” remove KRA from list and add “and/or other state or federally approved assessment(s)”

Motion

The Local Partnership Program and Grants committee approves the Program and Operational Guidelines with updates by SCFS Staff for implementation for the Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1, 2023.

Call to Motion: Jessica Mackey

Second: John Hayes

Vote: All in Favor

Action Item 3: Formula Funding (see attached funding request and breakdown)

Kerry and Derek gave an overview of the Local Partnerships Formula Funding Grant request for grant year 2024. See attached funding request document. During the discussion, it was questioned by committee why there were expenditures in the “scholarship” line item for a program where local partnerships do not spend dollars on scholarships. The scholarships are provided free to SCFS by DSS. It was explained by staff that the amount in the line item was actually program management cost that was entered through budget allocation, and not direct cost of scholarships. Committee recommended that the program management cost be limited to 25% of value of scholarships each local partnership will distribute in their counties. That requirement is reflected in the motion.

Motion

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee recommends the approval of the Formula Funding grant requests, with the exception of the Scholarship Program in which budgeted administrative cost not exceed 25% of the value of the scholarships received from DSS as recommended by SCFS Staff to the forty-six (46) First Steps Local Partnerships for Grant Year 2024 beginning July 1st, 2023.

Call to Motion: John Hayes

Second: Wes Wooten

Vote: All in favor



Action Item 4: READY Grant Award Recommendation (Competitive- See attached funding request and breakdown)

Chelsea explained the review process in which the 13 grants were recommended by SCFS staff. Twelve (12) local partnerships are being recommended for thirteen (13) grant awards, with one local partnership being recommended for two (2) awards. The following motion was made by Jessica Mackey, seconded by Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda. No other discussion required.

Motion:

The Local Partnerships Program and Grants Committee approves thirteen (13) grant awards for the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grants in order to serve more children and families in their communities. Twelve (12) Local Partnerships have been selected by the SCFS State Office staff review committee; Allendale, Bamberg, Charleston, Darlington (2), Dillon, Greenville, Greenwood, McCormick, Orangeburg, Pickens, Spartanburg, and York counties for amounts documented on attached table.

Call to Motion: Jessica Mackey

Second: Wes Wooten

Vote: All in Favor

Action Item 5: READY Grant Award Recommendation (Targeted- See attached funding request and breakdown)

Derek, Jon and LaMyra explained the two (2) Targeted grant opportunities covered by this award, Family Café and Supporting Care Providers Through Visits (SCPV), the process in which the grants were reviewed, the amounts for each local partnership, and the total amount of \$50,500 committed in READY funding. The following motion was made by Jessica Mackey, seconded by Wes Wooten, and unanimously approved for the consent agenda.

- a. Family Cafés are structured discussion groups that use the principles of adult learning and family support. They are highly sustainable with training reinforcement, institutional support, and a commitment to an approach that engages and affirms parents as leaders. Participants leave Family Cafés feeling inspired, energized, and excited to put into practice what they've learned."
 - Six (6) Local Partnerships applied to be funded for the targeted grant opportunity for Family Café' which supports Core Function work within our local partnerships.
 - The Local Partnerships recommended for funding are, Barnwell, Darlington Fairfield, Greenwood, Lee, and Williamsburg.
 - \$71,900 has been committed in this funding recommendation.

- b. Supporting Care Providers Through Visits (SCPV): Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV) strives to give care providers research-informed information and evidence informed practices that are supportive and educational. In addition to helping care providers better serve, the SCPV curriculum offers materials (Parent Pages) to help parents be better teachers in the home.
 - Four (4) Local Partnerships applied to be funded for the targeted grant opportunity for SCPV.
 - The Local Partnerships recommended for funding are, Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, and Williamsburg.
 - \$50,500 has been committed in this funding recommendation.

Motion:

The Local Partnership Program and Grants Committee approves the Targeted grant applications funded through the Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Grant opportunity for six (6) local partnerships for the Family Café'; Barnwell, Darlington, Fairfield, Greenwood, Lee, and Williamsburg counties, and four (4) Local Partnerships for the Supporting Providers Through Visits (SCPV); Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, and Williamsburg counties for amounts documented on attached table.

Call to Motion: Jessica Mackey



Second: Wes Wooten

Vote: All in Favor

Information Updates- Derek Cromwell

Due to time constraints Chief Partnership Officer Derek Cromwell did not present Information updates as stated on the meeting agenda.

Meeting was called to adjourn by acting chair Shelly Canright at 3:28pm



LOCAL PARTNERSHIP CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Issued by SC First Steps

PARTNERSHIP Lancaster County First Steps
VERSION NO. AND DATE **Version 1, May 8, 2023**

The Corrective Action Plan will act as an instrument of tracking between the assigned Program Officer and a Local Partnership as the partnership progresses towards compliance in identified areas where Minimum Qualifications are not met. Per the formula funding grant application process the Office of SC First Steps established a set of **Minimum Qualifications** – i.e., legislatively required conditions for local partnerships receiving a state grant.

Local First Steps partnerships not meeting one or more Minimum Qualifications may be subject to implement a Corrective Action Plan for the current fiscal year which specifies the qualification(s) not met and a summary of action steps to be taken for achieving compliance. The purpose of this process is to provide an opportunity for Local Partnership staff and board members to acknowledge the receipt of recommendations, and for Program Officers to approve reports of compliance. A list of Minimum Qualifications was included in the partnership’s FY 2019-2020 Formula Funding Grant Application and is attached to this document for reference.

Corrective Action Plans may be issued, modified, or added to at any point during the grant year, as needed. Both initial and subsequent versions of Corrective Action Plans must be **signed** by the partnership Executive Director and Board Chair, as well as shared with the full partnership board at its next scheduled meeting and reflected in partnership board minutes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS

Date Issued	Area <i>Governance, Operations & Accountability, Fiscal & Resource Development, Program Strategies, Core Functions</i>	Unmet Minimum Qualification	Fiscal year(s) not met	Timeline of action(s) to be taken to achieve compliance	Date Completed
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations & Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps issued awards to a single vendor in excess of \$105,000 without competition. According to SC State Law, Section 59-152-150, A, Local Partnerships purchases of goods or services "shall require competitive bids for the purchase or procurement of goods and services of ten thousand dollars or more." All financial records, coding and documentation should reflect	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff, as appropriate, will develop the required level of knowledge of the statutes, bylaws, grant agreement and operational policies required of Local Partnerships. LCFS Board and staff will certify when this has occurred. 2. LCFS will implement Board approved local policies and procedures in compliance with all SC First Steps requirements as spelled out in number one above. LCFS will provide Board Meeting Minutes to document actions taken. 3. Will be required to get all contracts and agreements approved from SC First Steps prior to any purchase of goods or services over \$10,000 for the next 9 months. 4. Pass a financial, procurement and contract audit by the State Office after 9 months. 5. Have no additional violations of the items listed in #1 above for the corrective action period. 	

Lancaster County First Steps Corrective Action Plan
Version #1, May 8, 2023

		these costs accurately.			
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations and Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps conducted capital improvements without approval from the Board of Trustees of SC First Steps as required by SC Statutes.	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a LCFS Board approved request for the Capital Improvements to the Finance and Administration Committee of the First Steps Board of Trustees immediately. 2. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff will develop the required level of knowledge of the statutes, bylaws, grant agreement and operational policies required of Local Partnerships. 3. LCFS will implement local policies and procedures in compliance with all SC First Steps requirements as spelled out in number one above. 4. Once in compliance, will have no further violation for this item for the corrective action period. 	
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations and Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps expended funds to make capital improvements for a facility, and operate a facility without appropriate contracts for a lease. The Local Partnership also obligated funds for a contractor without a contract.	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff will follow appropriate contractual processes for obligations with other entities to manage risk and to be in compliance with general procedures for managing organizations. 2. Pass a financial, procurement and contract audit by the State Office after 9 months. 3. Once in compliance, will have no further violation for this item for the corrective action period. 	



**Parenting Program Guidelines
Proposed changes for FY '24**

First Steps staff thoroughly reviewed the parenting program section of the Program and Operational Guidelines. In most cases language to provide clarity, but not change intent occurred. However, during review there are several items received edits to emphasize delivering service to meet model fidelity and/or enhance service delivery based on implementation data.

Page Number	Program Strategy	Current Item	Proposed Change
Multiple	All	Some strategies reference: participating family connect with a pediatric medical home	All strategies to state: Parent educators [program staff] shall seek to ensure that each participating family connects with a pediatric medical home and other community services as appropriate.
Multiple	All	Regarding documentation put into the First Steps Data Collection system: Within 7 days of service or referral	Regarding documentation put into the First Steps Data Collection system: Within 5 days of service or referral
Multiple	Parents as Teachers Family Literacy Model Early Steps to School Success Incredible Years	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (assessment): Complete within 90 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until family exits the program.	Healthy Families Parenting Inventory (assessment): The baseline HFPI is encouraged to be completed at the first visit but must be within 45 days of enrollment and every six months thereafter until program exit.
7	Parents as Teachers	Current: Parent Educators receive annual performance review	Add: Supervisor to receive annual performance review
9	Motheread/Fatheread	Each participating parent uses the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 developmental screenings	Each participating parent will be informed about the importance of developmental screening and offered the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 developmental screenings

13	Parent Child + <i>Edits made per changes from the model developers</i>	Families currently complete: Parent and Child Together (PACT) Observation, Child Behavior Traits (CBT) and Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO)	Beginning 8/1/23 newly enrolled families will complete: ASQ-3, ASQ:SE-2 developmental screenings and Parental Involvement in Early Learning (PIEL). Other tools will phase out when currently enrolled families exit the program.
27	Nurse Family Partnership		Move strategy to Health Section
28/29	Incredible Years	Targeting by Age and Group Sessions option: Advanced Program (ages 4-12) from guidelines	Eliminate: Advanced Program (ages 4-12) from guidelines
39	Reach Out and Read		Move strategy to Health Section
49-52	Nurturing Parenting	Various changes	Items re-organized, re-worded and additional language provided to clearly state requirements of the model
56-60	Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY)	Current: Each client child shall be assessed using the age-appropriate developmental screening tool... within 30 days of enrollment Various points of clarification	Add language: ...and six months from date of the first screen Language clarification based on practice and specific forms and tools named
62, 63	Supporting Care Providers through Visits	No parameters for length of time a Family Child Care Home Provider to receive SCPV services Current: Pre-Care Provider Survey completed within 45 days of enrollment	Added limit for a Family Child Care Home Provider to receive SCPV services: maximum retention time is three (3) years Change to capture a good baseline: Pre-Care Provider Survey completed during enrollment or at the first visit

All Other Program Guidelines Proposed changes for FY '24

School Transition

- Throughout the Program Guidelines, replaced “home visitation” wording with “sessions”, “school transition”, or similar, to indicate that Countdown to Kindergarten programming is no longer expected to be home visitation.
- Service Delivery: Added service delivery expectation of length of sessions (45 to 60 minute). This was stated as expectation in other documents, such as Countdown to Kindergarten MOA, but it needs to be included in Program Guidelines.
- Service Delivery: Changed expectation of sessions from no more than two sessions/week to no more than three sessions/week. This is to address a shortened summer break for several school districts.
- Ongoing Program Quality Improvement and Professional Development: Changed guidance to reflect new Countdown to Kindergarten teacher training platform, which no longer offers discussion forum - *Countdown teachers, Bilingual Specials, and Disabilities Specialists are to reach out to available supports when needed. These include their First Steps Local Partnership, South Carolina First Steps, their local school, and/or Countdown Mentors.*
- Data Submission and Fiscal Reporting: Took out wording that alluded to older parent survey (pre/post) which some Local Partnerships used. It is only offered now upon request. Other survey is shorter, post-only satisfaction survey.

Enhanced Early Education Onsite Tutoring

- Added an additional “Enhance Early Education risk factor” – “Child has been prioritized as most in need of additional support as identified by the classroom teacher and student assessment data.”
- Took out “students aged 3 through 5” and changed to “students in 3K through 5K classrooms (must meet First Steps age eligibility requirements)”
- Added KRA to assessments used to identify children needing additional supports.
- Added principals and childcare directors to satisfaction survey clients.

Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) and Quality Counts (QC)

- I had to make changes in the qualifications for TA providers because currently, there is not a Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) certification with our state’s certifying body, SC Endeavors. I added minimum qualifications for TAPs (this is different for QE and QC).

- Added to QE that a partnership may request a waiver from us (SC First Steps Local Partnership team) if a childcare TA does not meet the qualifications. That person would then receive additional support from the Early Care and Ed. team.

Core Functions, Family Café

- The removal of AmeriCorps language and replacing with “local partnership staff”

Program and Operational Guidelines

- Wording change to reflect that local partnership on-site monitoring can be done at any time and not just every 5 years.
- Additional wording to explain that the Formula Funding Grant is now on a 3-year cycle with annual progress reports.
- Additional wording to include the policy and steps for possible reduction in funding as the result of noncompliance with corrective action.
- Consent Authorization Form

**READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs
Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23)**

Recommendations to Program and Grants Committee



SUMMARY

In FY2022-23, South Carolina First Steps intends to award up to \$1,435,000 per year in Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) competitive grants to local First Steps partnerships, renewable for at least one additional year, to serve more children and families in their community. READY priorities include evidence-based programs for children birth through age 3 who live in rural communities and in communities where kindergarten readiness scores are consistently below the state average. No more than 10% may be distributed to any one county and no more than 3% retained by the state office for administering, monitoring, and evaluating the program.

Priorities for this opportunity were to partnerships:

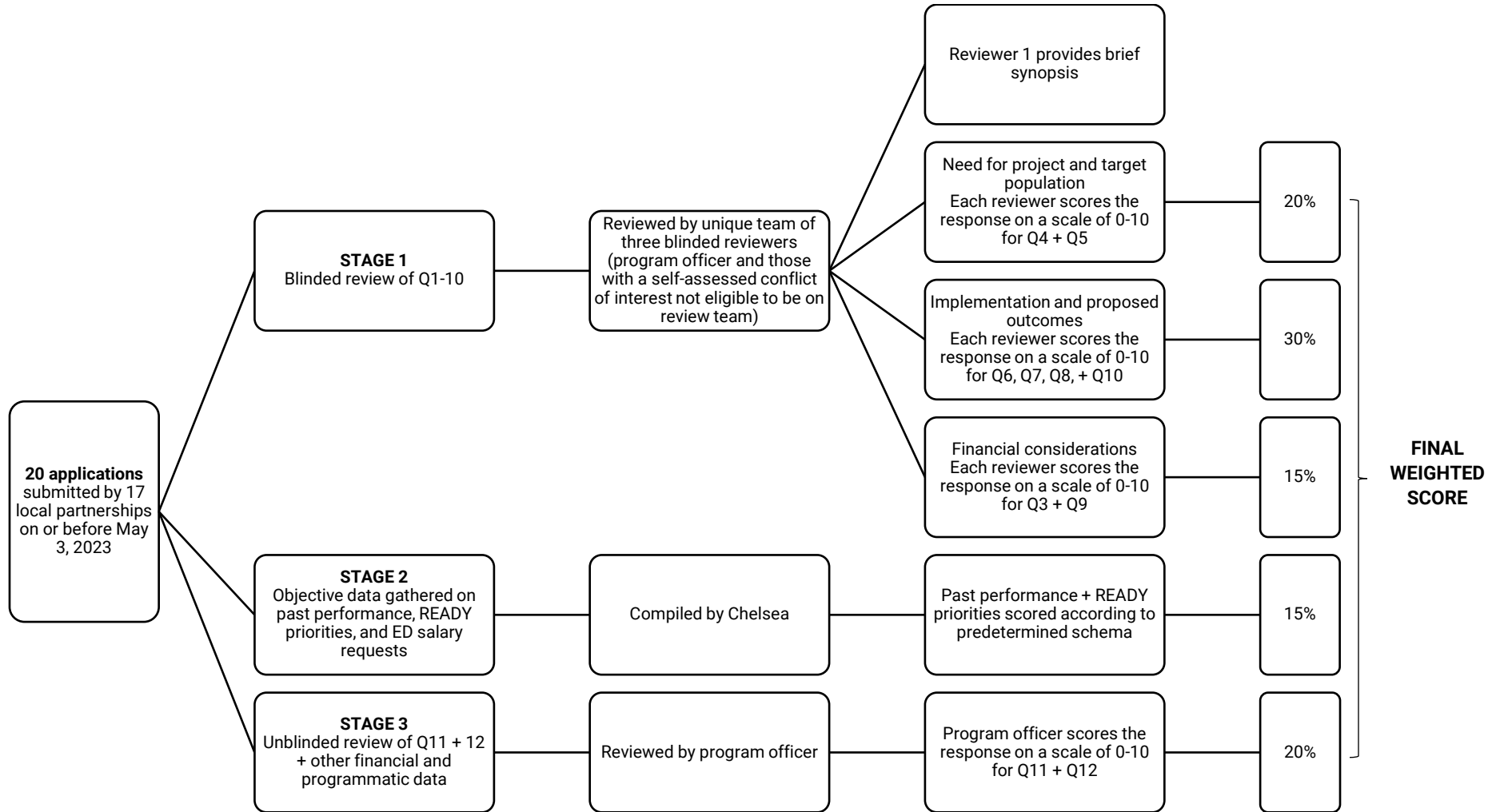
- applying to sustain the reach of effective programs funded by Preschool Development Grant and/or other funding sources whose grant periods have ended or are ending soon
- expanding existing, effective programs; and/or
- establishing new programs or services.

Applications were due on May 3, 2023, and twenty applications from seventeen local partnerships were received. Each application was blind reviewed by a unique team of three reviewers (see process on next page). Reviewers and other staff came together to blindly discuss each application and make recommendations for funding. Thirteen applications are being recommended for funding. Full grant applications are available upon request.

Fiscal Year	FY2023-24	FY2024-25
Total Funding Being Recommended	\$690,675.80	\$901,797.05

**READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs
Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23)**

Recommendations to Program and Grants Committee



After scoring completed		
Step 1: Blind Review	Step 2: Unblinded Review	Step 3: Program and Grants Committee Consideration
Purpose: review blinded applications from highest to lowest score to determine staff recommendations	Purpose: review staff recommendations with counties identified	Purpose: Program and Grants committee considers staff recommendations and receives all grant applications recommended for funding

**READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs
Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23)**

Recommendations to Program and Grants Committee



RECOMMENDATIONS							
County	Program	Priority	FY24 PTS	FY25 PTS	FY24 Budget Proposed Award	FY25 Budget Proposed Award	Synopsis
Allendale	Nurturing Parenting	Expand	15	15	\$27,940.00	\$25,990.00	Expanding their Nurturing Parenting program with a projected to serve from 10 families to 15 families by hiring a part-time parent educator to cover the families under this expansion. Their request includes an additional parent educator, as well as operations and program materials funding. According to their budget, their matching funds will be through office space, meeting space, and funds for refreshments. Their target population are families with children 0-5 with at least 2 risk factors and living in the rural part of their county. They mentioned having families on a waitlist.
Bamberg	Parents as Teachers	Sustain	20	20	\$37,100.00	\$37,100.00	Funding a continuation of Parents as Teachers program for 20 families previously funded by the Preschool Development Grant.
Charleston	Motheread/Fatheread	Establish new	10	20	\$8,730.00	\$10,855.00	Establishing a Motheread/Fatheread program to serve 20 adults. The primary focus is to increase adult literacy with children birth to age 3.
Darlington	Parents as Teachers	Sustain and Expand	80	80	\$0.00	\$128,529.25	Sustaining and expanding Parents as Teachers , particularly in underserved communities. Because a neighboring county recently discontinued their program, they are confident they can recruit already certified parent educators.
Darlington	Reach Out and Read	Expand	200	230	\$30,000.00	\$30,000.00	Expanding Reach Out and Read from 2 to 3 pediatric practices. In the past 3 years, they have used the program in 2 pediatric offices which have disseminated more than 3,000 books to families of children 0-5. The county serves families that are situated in rural areas, experience low KRA scores, and are considered a county that has child care desert issues. Resources are scarce and the capacity to meet the needs of families is limited.

**READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs
Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23)**

Recommendations to Program and Grants Committee



RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED							
County	Program	Priority	FY24 PTS	FY25 PTS	FY24 Budget Proposed Award	FY25 Budget Proposed Award	Synopsis
Dillon	Nurturing Parenting	Sustain and Expand	45	100	\$121,258.00	\$227,341.00	Sustaining and expanding their Nurturing Parenting Program. Strong demonstration of community need and desire for this program (via an existing waiting list), as well as partnerships in place to be successful.
Greenville	Family Connects	Establish new	3120	4120	\$110,000.00	\$110,000.00	Establishing Family Connects program. Strong rationale and research for program, connected to READY priorities. Strong demonstration of need in community - using community task force data (priority - rural areas of county and Medicaid recipients). Lots of planning and buy-in already from community partners - funding and match is already high.
Greenwood	Parents as Teachers	Establish new	30	30	\$41,472.00	\$30,972.00	Establishing a Parents as Teachers program with 2 full time parent educators that will mainly serve families of children 0-3 and, if the need arises, serve families of 4-5 year old children. The county currently is discontinuing a parenting program and has a plan to transfer those families to PAT. From First5, the county has received more than 100 referrals for PAT. Families are situated in rural areas, experience low KRA scores, and have a Hispanic population with literacy support needs. The county observes a low participation rate from clients residing in local housing programs or experiencing homelessness but maintains a relationship with community partners to provide screenings, child care, and in-kind funds.
McCormick	Nurturing Parenting	Expand	10	10	\$55,964.00	\$50,164.00	Expanding Nurturing Parenting program by adding the Nurturing Father curriculum.
Orangeburg	Parents as Teachers	Sustain	60	62	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	Sustaining its already expanded Parents as Teachers program, targeting children 0-5 with two or more risk factors, who live in outlying areas of the county (most rural communities) where KRA scores have been consistently low for the past five years, and resources and services are limited.

**READY Sustaining and Expanding Effective Programs
Serving Children and Families Grants (FY23)**

Recommendations to Program and Grants Committee



RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED							
County	Program	Priority	FY24 PTS	FY25 PTS	FY24 Budget Proposed Award	FY25 Budget Proposed Award	Synopsis
Pickens	Nurse-Family Partnership	Sustain	20	20	\$78,500.00	\$78,500.00	Sustaining Nurse Family Partnership with the projection of retaining families for more than 1 year is the goal. They maintain an average waitlist of 5 families each year. The county would like to continue providing services to vulnerable first-time mothers. Their families are situated in a rural area, experience historically lower KRA scores, and has a barrier of transportation.
Spartanburg	Early Identification and Referral/PASOs	Establish new	180	180	\$81,822.50	\$71,322.50	Expanding PASOs program from 100 to 180. Strong rationale for expansion with data - increasing Latino population in county. Staff in place for recruitment and program operation, recruiting one additional staff member. Likelihood of success given past experience with program and plan.
York	Parents as Teachers	Sustain	20	20	\$75,889.30	\$79,023.30	Sustaining the Parents as Teachers program serving the Hispanic/Latino Communities, including retaining a bilingual Parent Educator to serve Hispanic/Latino families in very rural community of the county.



Targeted Grant awards: READY funding

Supporting Care Providers through Visits (SCPV)

Partnership	Award Amount
Beaufort	\$12,000
Charleston	\$11,500
Colleton	\$12,000
Williamsburg	\$15,000

Family Café

Partnership	Award Amount
Barnwell	\$12,000
Darlington	\$12,000
Fairfield	\$11,900
Greenwood	\$12,000
Lee	\$12,000
Williamsburg	\$12,000



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Tim Holt, Chairman, Finance and Administration Committee

Date: May 17, 2023

RE: Finance and Administration Report

The Finance and Administration Committee met via Zoom conference call on May 17, 2023, to receive updates from staff and to take up action items. Detailed meeting minutes are attached. The committee brings forward one action item, and the following updates.

ACTION: Review and Approval, Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps

Lancaster County First Steps has had significant turnover in the last year and a half. This has included their Executive Director, Board Chairperson, and a number of critical staff positions. During this time, they have been working on completing the Clyburn Child Care Center in Kershaw. During that work they violated two sections of SC Law related to getting competition for bids and getting approval from our Board of Trustees to pay for capital improvements. In addition, they provided these capital improvements on a building where they did not hold a current lease. Staff is recommending a Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps. The Committee has reviewed the request and has approved an amended Corrective Action Plan which is attached. Therefore, we are submitting the following Motion as part of the Consent Agenda:

Motion: To approve the Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps as Amended.

First Steps State Office

Financial Report

2022-23: The YTD financial report was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. The organization continues to be in good financial condition. Expenditures to date are in line with projections.

Local Partnership Update

State Office staff are working with SLED on two ongoing investigations related to the Local Partnerships. Staff is working with First Citizens Bank and Manley Garvin to implement additional fraud protections.

Other updates can be found in the meeting minutes.



LOCAL PARTNERSHIP CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

Issued by SC First Steps

PARTNERSHIP Lancaster County First Steps

VERSION NO. AND DATE Version 1, May 8, 2023

The Corrective Action Plan will act as an instrument of tracking between the assigned Program Officer and a Local Partnership as the partnership progresses towards compliance in identified areas where Minimum Qualifications are not met. Per the formula funding grant application process the Office of SC First Steps established a set of **Minimum Qualifications** – i.e., legislatively required conditions for local partnerships receiving a state grant.

Local First Steps partnerships not meeting one or more Minimum Qualifications may be subject to implement a Corrective Action Plan for the current fiscal year which specifies the qualification(s) not met and a summary of action steps to be taken for achieving compliance. The purpose of this process is to provide an opportunity for Local Partnership staff and board members to acknowledge the receipt of recommendations, and for Program Officers to approve reports of compliance. A list of Minimum Qualifications was included in the partnership’s FY 2019-2020 Formula Funding Grant Application and is attached to this document for reference.

Corrective Action Plans may be issued, modified, or added to at any point during the grant year, as needed. Both initial and subsequent versions of Corrective Action Plans must be **signed** by the partnership Executive Director and Board Chair, as well as shared with the full partnership board at its next scheduled meeting and reflected in partnership board minutes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLANS

Date Issued	Area <i>Governance, Operations & Accountability, Fiscal & Resource Development, Program Strategies, Core Functions</i>	Unmet Minimum Qualification	Fiscal year(s) not met	Timeline of action(s) to be taken to achieve compliance	Date Completed
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations & Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps issued awards to a single vendor in excess of \$105,000 without competition. According to SC State Law, Section 59-152-150, A, Local Partnerships purchases of goods or services "shall require competitive bids for the purchase or procurement of goods and services of ten thousand dollars or more." All financial records, coding and documentation should reflect	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff, as appropriate, will develop the required level of knowledge of the statutes, bylaws, grant agreement and operational policies required of Local Partnerships. LCFS Board and staff will certify when this has occurred. 2. LCFS will implement Board approved local policies and procedures in compliance with all SC First Steps requirements as spelled out in number one above. LCFS will provide Board Meeting Minutes to document actions taken. 3. Will be required to get all contracts and agreements approved from SC First Steps prior to any purchase of goods or services over \$10,000 for the next 9 months. 4. Pass a financial, procurement and contract audit by the State Office after 9 months. 5. Have no additional violations of the items listed in #1 above for the corrective action period. 	

Lancaster County First Steps Corrective Action Plan
Version #1, May 8, 2023

		these costs accurately.			
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations and Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps conducted capital improvements without approval from the Board of Trustees of SC First Steps as required by SC Statutes.	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit a LCFS Board approved request for the Capital Improvements to the Finance and Administration Committee of the First Steps Board of Trustees immediately. 2. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff will develop the required level of knowledge of the statutes, bylaws, grant agreement and operational policies required of Local Partnerships. 3. LCFS will implement local policies and procedures in compliance with all SC First Steps requirements as spelled out in number one above. 4. Once in compliance, will have no further violation for this item for the corrective action period. 	
May 8, 2023	Fiscal, Governance and Operations and Accountability	Lancaster County First Steps expended funds to make capital improvements for a facility, and operate a facility without appropriate contracts for a lease. The Local Partnership also obligated funds for a contractor without a contract.	2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through self-learning and with training and support from SC First Steps, Lancaster County First Steps Board members and staff will follow appropriate contractual processes for obligations with other entities to manage risk and to be in compliance with general procedures for managing organizations. 2. Pass a financial, procurement and contract audit by the State Office after 9 months. 3. Once in compliance, will have no further violation for this item for the corrective action period. 	



Minutes from Finance and Administration Committee Meeting

May 17, 2023

Members present: Tim Holt, Chairman, Jacque Curtin, CPA, David Morley

Members not present: None

Nonmembers present: Mark Barnes, Director of Administration; Lavinia Tejada, CPA, Director of Finance and Audits

With all public notices being provided, the Zoom meeting was called to order by Tim Holt at 10:00 am. After introductions, a quorum was not available, so the Committee moved to the third item on the agenda, information from staff.

First Steps State Office

Financial Report

The YTD financial report for 2022-23 was reviewed by Mr. Barnes. SC First Steps continues to be in good financial shape. Our year-to-date expenditures are within our budgets and projections. At this point in the year, we have expended 73% against a projected 83%.

Mr. Barnes also mentioned the donations report and noted we have received over \$170,000 in donations this year. This is the largest amount we have ever reported receiving.

A quorum being established, the Committee moved to item number 2 on the agenda.

Required Action Item: Review and Approval, Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps

Mr. Barnes shared the situation in Lancaster County. He mentioned the turnover in the Executive Director, and additional administrative staff and Board members over the last year and a half. He mentioned a number of concerns have been identified with their compliance with state law, the Grant Agreement and agency policies related to the procurement of permanent improvements and renovation of the Clyburn Child Care Center in Kershaw. There were two sections of state law violated, they include the lack of competition in selecting the contractor who provided over \$105,000 worth of renovations as well as failing to get approval from the SC First Steps Board of Trustees to provide capital improvements. In addition, they made these capital improvements to a facility they did not have under lease. With these concerns and violations of state law, First Steps staff is recommending a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the Local Partnership. It would have a time frame of 9 months to complete the actions necessary and would include additional oversight and an audit by First Steps Staff, as well as training for their staff. This time frame would give them the best opportunity to correct the issues before the next round of grants are awarded by SC First Steps. If they are on a CAP, they are not eligible to receive any additional grants. There was general discussion and questions regarding the

CAP and its implementation. Mr. Morley requested that we ensure that communications for this CAP are shared with the full Board and that meeting minutes documenting that are provided. Mr. Barnes would amend the CAP to make sure this was clear. Mr. Holt moved, with a second from Mr. Morley, that the Corrective Action Plan be approved. The motion passed unanimously. This will be included in the Consent Agenda for the upcoming Board of Trustees Meeting in June.

Motion: To Approve the Corrective Action Plan for Lancaster County First Steps as Amended.

Mr. Barnes continued with the updates from staff.

State Budget Update

SC First Steps requested several increases in the State Budget for FY 2023-24. There were three budget items approved by the House. The Senate approved all three in their budget, but two of the amounts were greater. They recommended fully funding the 4K request of \$5.2 million and \$851,000 for the ECAC. One item was the same, \$455,392 in recurring funds for previous cost increases. Both the Senate and the House approved our requested Proviso changes. This included the proviso that would allow First Steps to study coming out from under the Department of Education. At this point we are waiting for the Conference Committee to adjourn and make decisions on which version they are recommending to the General Assembly. (Note: The Conference Committee met on June 8 and will be recommending \$851,000 for the ECAC and \$4.2 million for 4K.)

Legislative Update

The Senate amended again and approved House bill H.4023, which is the First Steps bill that would provide permanent reauthorization to SC First Steps along with some other statutory changes. The Senate removed the requirement that the next First Steps Executive Director be appointed by the Governor, took out the language related to new hiring requirements for the Local Partnerships, and amended the requirement for the State Office of Procurement to approve the new Local Partnership procurement policies. Instead of approving, they will be collaborating with First Steps to develop the policies. The next step will be a conference committee to make bring the two bills into agreement and will send the revised version back to each body for a vote. Mr. Barnes mentioned that a lot of work had been done by Georgia, Kaitlyn and Mark to support this work.

Local Partnerships

Local Partnership Update

Mr. Barnes provided an update on the Local Partnerships. Abbeville County First Steps has completed their Corrective Action Plan and that LaMyra Sanders, their First Steps Program Officer is working with them closely. As a reminder, there are a couple of investigations that are ongoing by SLED. We are following these up and will be taking appropriate actions. Mr. Barnes is working with the bank for the Local Partnerships and Manley Garvin to put additional fraud protection in place. We are implementing a new system for verification of payments between the bank and Manley Garvin which should minimize any possible losses. The bank has been very helpful in reducing any additional costs to the Local Partnerships or to SC First Steps. There was general discussion about the Local Partnerships and the

Executive Director's in the Local Partnerships responsibilities. Mr. Barnes will keep the Committee up to date on any changes or new information.

4K Program Update

Staff is currently evaluating the rates to be paid for tuition for the upcoming fiscal year and will be recommending an increase, most likely, but the amount has not been finalized.

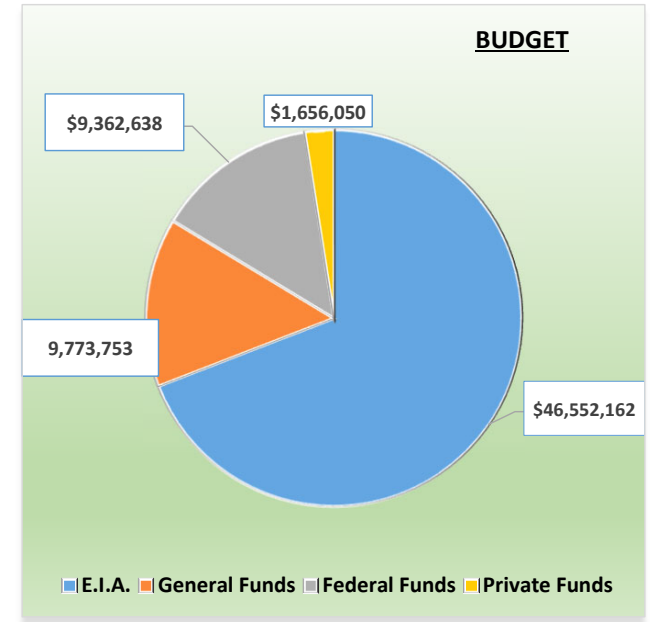
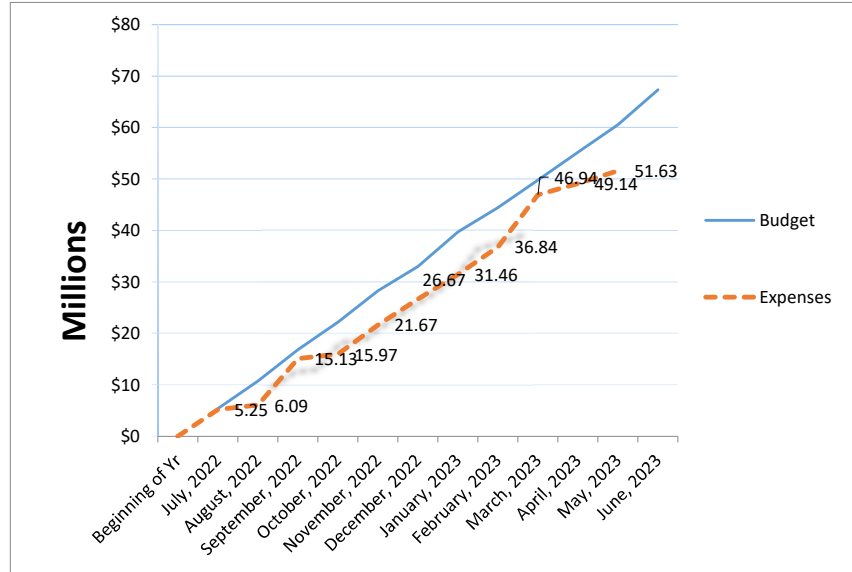
Other

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 am.

As of
May 31, 2023

Spending Rates

Projected	92%
Actual	77%



PROGRAMS / OPERATIONS	STATE APPROPRIATIONS			FEDERAL GRANTS			PRIVATE FUNDS			GRAND TOTAL			
	Description	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance	Budget	Expended	Balance
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS	17,345,228	14,693,792	2,651,436	2,612,457		\$ 2,612,457				-	19,957,685	14,693,792	\$ 5,263,893
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT & TECH ASST.	2,151,504	3,153,183	(1,001,679)			\$ -	1,495,624	50,000	1,445,624		3,647,128	3,203,183	\$ 443,945
PRIVATE 4-K	32,496,679	26,822,980	5,673,699	1,873,457		1,873,457	142,058		142,058		34,512,194	26,822,980	\$ 7,689,214
EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL	176,000	11,223	164,777	4,289,918	3,508,481	781,437			-		4,465,918	3,519,704	\$ 946,214
AMERICORPS				326,703	289,748	36,955			-		326,703	289,748	\$ 36,955
POLICY & ACCOUNTABILITY	2,774,872	1,962,796	812,076	260,103		260,103	1,400,000	1,137,571	262,429		4,434,975	3,100,367	\$ 1,334,608
GRAND TOTAL:	54,944,283	46,643,975	8,300,308	9,362,638	3,798,230	5,564,408	3,037,682	1,187,571	1,850,111		67,344,603	51,629,776	\$ 15,714,827

Notes:

1) Local Partnerships:

- a. Funding Sources: Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funds
- b. Formula allocation cash advances are disbursed on a quarterly basis
- c. Expenditures reflect disbursements from SC First Steps (state-level)
- d. Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors

2) Private budgets based on Projected Fund Raising and

income & prior year cash.	46,552,162	E.I.A.
	9,773,753	General Funds
	9,362,638	Federal Funds
	1,656,050	Private Funds
	67,344,603	

3) LP Support & Technical Assistance

- a. Contracted accounting firm (Manley Garvin, LLC)
- b. Accounting Software network support & Data Housing
- c. Programmatic data housing & network support

Federal Funds:

AmeriCorps:	326,703
SLDS:	260,103
PDG:	3,729,725
PDG-Planning	560,193
ESSER Funds	4,485,914
	9,362,638

3) LP Support & Technical Assistance (cont.)

- d. Workers' compensation insurance coverage
- e. External programmatic evaluation
- f. Financial audits-annually each LP
- g. Does not include local-level actual expenses to staff and vendors
- h. OFS program & finance staff (payroll, rent, contractual, supplies, travel, etc)
- i. Includes LP Countdown to Kindergarten program

4) State Appropriations Include EIA Funds and General Funds.

Donations

FY 2023

As of May 31, 2023



DATE RECEIVED	GENERAL	DONOR/PAYOR	FUNDS	PURPOSE / COMMENTS
Jul 12, 2022	\$ 120	Jennifer Humphries-NFG	Restricted	Cherokee County First Steps
Jul 12, 2022	\$ 10,000	DSS	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Jul 14, 2022	\$ 10,000	Childrens Trust	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Aug 2, 2022	\$ 500	Sisters of Charity	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Aug 2, 2022	\$ 1,000	Head Start Collaboration-SCDSS	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Aug 11, 2022	\$ 2,000	Enterprise Holdings Foundation	Restricted	SC First Steps
Aug 18, 2022	\$ 2,000	Enterprise Holdings Foundation	Restricted	SC First Steps
Sep 8, 2022	\$ 2,500	Institute for Child Success	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Sep 8, 2022	\$ 2,500	Kaplan Early Learning Co.	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Oct 24, 2022	\$ 15,500	Enterprise holdings	Restricted	SC First Steps
Nov 3, 2022	\$ 1,500	SCDDSN	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 9, 2022	\$ 200	SCIMHA	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 14, 2022	\$ 200	SC Legal Services	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 15, 2022	\$ 158.44	Spartanburg Comm. College	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 15, 2022	\$ 600	Children's Trust	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 1,485	NFG - Replacement Check 1/22 Donations	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 1,275	USC-Columbia	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 200	Palmetto Shared Alliance	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 250	NFG-Rosemary Paterson	Restricted	Laurens County FS
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 50	NFG-Erin Hall	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 100	NFG-Mary Dell Hayes	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Elizabeth Dudek	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 100	NFG-Dana Ritchie	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 22, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Joseph Knapp	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 30, 2022	\$ 500	USC-Columbia	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Nov 30, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Joe Nation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 30, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Elizabeth Dudek	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Nov 30, 2022	\$ 25	Mary Lee Arthur	Restricted	Lee County FS
Nov 30, 2022	\$ 10,000	Dave & Cheryl Morley	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 5, 2022	\$ 200	Newberry Family Literacy	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 6, 2022	\$ 100	Mary Lynne Diggs	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 13, 2022	\$ 50	Jacob Baker	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 13, 2022	\$ 250	American Endowment Foundation	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 14, 2022	\$ 2,500	Lakeshore Learning	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 14, 2022	\$ 14,480	Expo Pass- Summit Sponsorship	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 15, 2022	\$ 71	Expo Pass- Summit Sponsorship	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 19, 2022	\$ 125	Columbia Int.University	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 19, 2022	\$ 500	KRJ Consulting	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 19, 2022	\$ 2,000	Comm.Foundation of Greenville	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 19, 2022	\$ 50	Mary Ann & Alan Mathews	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 19, 2022	\$ 570	Expo Pass- Summit Sponsorship	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 200	NFG-Melissa Sanders	Restricted	Pickens County FS
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 1,000	NFG-Kimberly Clark-Cort Beach Island	Restricted	Aiken County FS
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 50	NFG-Barbara Scott	Restricted	Richland County FS
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 50	NFG-Betty Gardiner	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Sara Eargle	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Shirley Hackett	Restricted	Richland County FS
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 50	NFG-Beatrice Brown	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 20	NFG-Candace Bush	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 100	NFG-Nancy Priestester	Restricted	Beaufort County FS
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 20	NFG-Beth Shelton-Brooks	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 25	NFG-Valerie James	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 30	Network for Good	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 100	Peter & Karen Miller	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 20, 2022	\$ 689	Expo Pass- Summit Sponsorship	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps

Dec 21, 2022	\$ 356	Expo Pass- Summit Sponsorship	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Dec 30, 2022	\$ 1,000	Hal Kaplan	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Dec 30, 2022	\$ 25	Elizabeth Dudek	Restricted	Anderson County First Steps
Jan 5, 2023	\$ 50	Pamela Lynn Bradley	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2023	\$ 1,000	TS Holt Co.	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2023	\$ 1,000	Central Carolina Comm. Found.	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2023	\$ 1,350	Schwab Charitable	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 5, 2023	\$ 2,500	State Library	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Jan 6, 2023	\$ 25	Avian Jones	Unrestricted	SC First Steps
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Vanessa Jefferies	Restricted	Cherokee County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Janice Moore	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 485	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Anderson County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Greenville County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Laurens County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Oconee County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Pickens County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Spartanburg County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Janice Kilburn	Restricted	Union County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Erin Hall	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Susan Jones	Restricted	Horry County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Alston & Susan DeVenny	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Joe Nation	Restricted	Lexington County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Elizabeth Dudek	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 500	NFG-Rogers Pender	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Delores Rock	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 75	NFG-Ben & Mallory Gibson	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Amy Williams	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 250	NFG-Scott Smoak	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 2,500	NFG-Snider Fleet Solutions	Restricted	Spartanburg County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 2,500	NFG-Snider Fleet Solutions	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 350	NFG-Ross Turner	Restricted	Greenville County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 250	NFG-Jesica Mackey	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Brianne Tillirson	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 500	NFG-Shirley Von Beck	Restricted	Aiken County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 175	NFG-Margaret Deans Grantz	Restricted	Richland County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 75	NFG-Margaret Deans Grantz	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 350	NFG-Simmons Purdy	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 500	NFG-Scott Smoak	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Laquitta Bowers	Restricted	Hampton County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 200	NFG-Karen Oliver	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Tracy Darby	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 250	NFG-Rosemary Patterson	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Kent Fiedor	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Barbara Rackes	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 175	NFG-Posey & Posey	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Jim Riddle	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 100	NFG-Lavinia Tejada	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Kenneth Vaughn	Restricted	Spartanburg County FS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 1,000	NFG-Georgia Mjartan	Unrestricted	SCFS
Jan 19, 2023	\$ 5,000	Manley Garvin	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 5, 2023	\$ 2,500	Enterprise holdings	Unrestricted	SCFS
Feb 9, 2023	\$ 75	USC-Columbia	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Feb 9, 2023	\$ 225	USC-Columbia	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Feb 10, 2023	\$ 1,000	Lourie Life & Health	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 11, 2023	\$ 1,000	Scott & Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 12, 2023	\$ 1,000	Midas Auto Serv. - Palmetto Garage Works	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
	\$ 2,500	Dominion Energy	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 21, 2023	\$ 2,500	Truist Corp.	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Feb 23, 2023	\$ 25	Joe Nation	Restricted	Lexington County FS
Feb 28, 2023	\$ 1,000	American Endowment Foundation:Mark Robertson	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Feb 28, 2023	\$ 1,125	York County First Steps	Restricted	Summit Sponsorship-SC First Steps
Feb 28, 2023	\$ 1,000	Nelson,Mullins, Riley, & Scarborough	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 9, 2023	1000	Synovus	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 9, 2023	\$ 2,500	Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate

Mar 9, 2023	\$ 1,000	Kaplan Early Learning Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 13, 2023	\$ 100	Karen Oliver	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 13, 2023	\$ 250	Ronald and Marilyn Artz	Unrestricted	SCFS
Mar 16, 2023	\$ 2,500	Shelley Canright-Schwab Charitable	Unrestricted	SCFS
Mar 16, 2023	\$ 1,000	Robinson Gray Stepp & Liffitte	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 20, 2023	\$ 2,500	Founders Fed.Cr.Union	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 20, 2023	\$ 1,000	Spinks Family Foundation	Unrestricted	SCFS
Mar 21, 2023	\$ 1,250	Riley, Pope and Laney, LLC	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 21, 2023	\$ 1,000	AmeriHealth Caritas Svcs, LLC	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 29, 2023	\$ 1,000	Molina Health Care	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 29, 2023	\$ 5,000	Palmetto Citizens FCU	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 29, 2023	\$ 200	J. Gregory Hembree	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Mar 31, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Joe Nation	Restricted	Lexington County FS
Mar 31, 2023	\$ 110	NFG-Lauren Cunliffe	Unrestricted	SCFS
Mar 31, 2023	\$ 50	NFG-Barbara Scott	Restricted	Richland County FS
Apr 3, 2023	\$ 100	Martha Strickland	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 10, 2023	\$ 1,250	Riley, Pope and Laney, LLC	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 14, 2023	\$ 5,000	Dave & Cheryl Morley	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 14, 2023	\$ 200	Mark Robertson	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 19, 2023	\$ 5,000	Aflac	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 19, 2023	\$ 1,000	Humana	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 18, 2023	\$ 2,500	ASANA Partnership	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 200	NFG-Cheryl & Dennis Wiese	Restricted	Greatest Need
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 25	NFG-Joe Nation	Restricted	Lexington FS
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 200	NFG-Billy and Leigh DuBose	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 1,000	CSX Transportation	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 5,000	Capital Waste Services	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 5,000	The Boeing Co.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	Grayson Posey	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	Meredith Rhodes	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 35	Paige Bryant	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	De'Andra Washington	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 35	David Lisk	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 25	Phillips McWilliams	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	Alexis Juneja	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	Brad Smith	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 30	Brian Moore	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 35	Kate Roach	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	Taylor Roach	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	George Whiteside	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	Jennifer Williams	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	Derek Cromwell	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 35	Kathy Jenkins	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	Darcy Huffman	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 20	Beth Kienzlen	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 45	Payton Bryant	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
Apr 26, 2023	\$ 40	Lyndey Zwing	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate Raffle
May 4, 2023	\$ 10,000	DHHS	Restricted	2023 Summit
May 9, 2023	\$ 10,000	First Citizens Wealth Management	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 9, 2023	\$ 850	Georgia Mjartan	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 15, 2023	\$ 2,500	Unicare Life and Health Ins.	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate
May 15, 2023	\$ 2,500	Delta Dental of Missouri	Restricted	A Night to Celebrate

\$ 197,721



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Senator Gerald Malloy

Date: June 15, 2023

RE: **Legislative Committee Report**

FY 2023-24 Budget – Updates

The state budget has been sent to conference committee, where the differences between the House and the Senate versions will need to be resolved. In the event they cannot reach an agreement, both bodies passed a continuing resolution which would extend current spending into the 2023-24 fiscal year.

The House of Representatives passed their version of the budget on March 15, 2023. The following items related to First Steps and the ECAC were included:

- Unfunded Personnel Cost Increases (EIA) \$455,392 recurring
- Early Childhood Advisory Council \$700,000 recurring
- READY Grants FTE 0
- Full Day 4K (CERDEP) \$4,248,927 recurring

Proviso: 4K Updates

Proviso: READY Report Deadline

Proviso: SDE-First Steps Transfer Plan

The Senate passed their version of the budget on April 19, 2023. The following items related to First Steps and the ECAC were included.

- Unfunded Personnel Cost Increases (EIA) \$455,392 recurring
- Early Childhood Advisory Council \$851,017 recurring
- READY Grants FTE 0
- Full Day 4K (CERDEP) \$5,219,976 recurring

Proviso: 4K Updates

Proviso: READY Report Deadline

Proviso: SDE-First Steps Transfer Plan

Legislative Session – Updates

[H. 4023](#): First Steps and ECAC

- This bill would permanently authorize First Steps, modify the local partnership board structure, outline a path for local partnerships to regionalize if they choose, create additional accountability from the local partnership boards to the State Board of Trustees, and strengthen the work of the ECAC.
- The bill has been sent to conference committee, where the differences between the House and Senate versions will need to be resolved. This committee is set to meet on Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 10:30am to discuss the bill.



To: SC First Steps Board of Trustees

From: Georgia Mjartan

Date: June 15, 2023

RE: **Executive Director's Report**

I. First Steps 4K

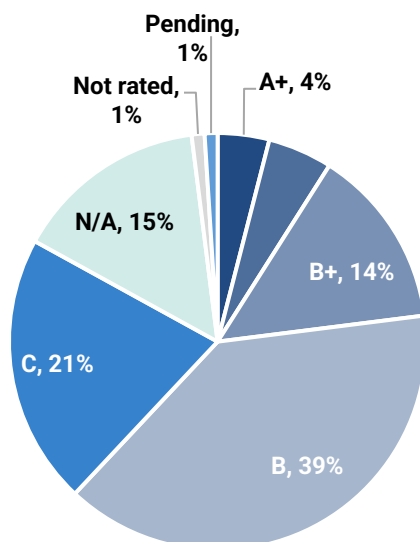
2022-23 School Year as of June 1, 2023, as compared to June 1, 2022

Enrollment: 3,650 students served through Day 180 (9% increase)

First Steps 4K Students Served		
Term	Day 180	% Change
2015-16	2300	
2016-17	2619	13.90%
2017-18	2707	3.40%
2018-19	2895	6.90%
2019-20	3045	5.20%
2020-21	2588	-15.00%
2021-22	3343	29.17%
2022-23	3650	9.18%

Providers: 248 total providers approved (6% decrease)

- 219 (88%) provide an extended service option (i.e., extended day and/or extended year)
- 211 (85%) participate in ABC Quality, the DSS quality rating and improvement system





First Steps 4K + Siblings (data provided by DSS on June 1, 2023)

- 4,447 children have been approved for a 4K + Siblings voucher in the first two years of the program (SY21 – SY22 and SY22 – SY23)
 - 3,723 (84%) have successfully connected with a child care provider
 - 724 children have been funded but are not connected with a child care provider

2023-24 School Year (as of June 1, 2023)

- 2,216 students approved to enroll (27% increase over June 7, 2022)
- Tuition reimbursement base rate increase to \$5500 (6.5 hour, 180 days)
- 276 total providers approved to date (10% increase over June 7, 2022)
- 29 new providers and 29 new classrooms offering First Steps 4K (71% increase in the number of new providers and 53% increase in the number of new classrooms offering First Steps 4K over June 7, 2022)

Targeted Investments in Language and Literacy in First Steps 4K Classrooms

- Language and Literacy Boost
- First Steps 4K and TMW Center Study

Professional Development for First Steps 4K Teachers and Directors

- National Director’s Credential
- 90+ hours of professional development / year
- Twice monthly coaching visits to every First Steps 4K classroom
- Summer and Winter Academy – Multi-day learning and development opportunity
- Palmetto PreK Jamboree (Spring and Fall) – One-day field-building professional development opportunity

Supporting and Sustaining First Steps 4K Workforce

- PEAR Network Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Services
- Recruitment and Retention Stipends

Monitoring and Supporting Children’s Academic Progress and Development

- Implementing Teaching Strategies GOLD assessments to monitor readiness across six domains: language, literacy, cognitive, math, physical, and social-emotional
- Data on students’ academic readiness during the 2022-2023 school year will be presented at future board meeting

For more detail on the investments and initiatives above, see attachment

II. First Steps Local Partnerships

- Formula Funded Grants
- READY Grants for Sustaining and Expanding Programs
- Night to Celebrate Community
- Targeted Giving Days

III. Your Voice Matters: 2023 Parents as Teachers Family Engagement Survey

See attached summary of findings



IV. Grants

AmeriCorps and VISTA

- Awarded grant of \$427,522 for 44 AmeriCorps members for 2023 - 2024
- VISTA site visit June 2023 – positive feedback and potential for growth

Alliance for Early Success

- \$75,000 grant awarded (increase from \$50,000)

In Progress

- Gates Foundation / Harvard Strategic Data Fellow

V. HR Updates

- SC First Steps has the following new staff members:
 - Dr. Roddrick Dugger, Evaluation Coordinator
 - Ashlyn Cobia, 4K Administrative Assistant
 - Michelle Maxberry, Communications VISTA
 - Charlotte Bostick, Countdown to Kindergarten Intern
 - Jose Burgos, 4K Intern

- Currently, the organization has the following vacancies:
 - 4K Coach (Greenville & Spartanburg)
 - AmeriCorps Coordinator
 - Early Care and Education Quality Coordinator
 - Local Partnership Compliance Officer
 - 3 AmeriCorps VISTA Members

Parents as Teachers builds strong communities and thriving families

South Carolina First Steps | 2023 PAT Family Engagement Survey

The South Carolina Parents as Teachers (PAT) Family Engagement Survey was administered from March 6, 2023, to April 24, 2023. During the 2023 program year, there were 40 PAT affiliates in South Carolina, of which 37 (93%) participated in the survey.



Families completed surveys online or on paper



Surveys were offered in English and Spanish

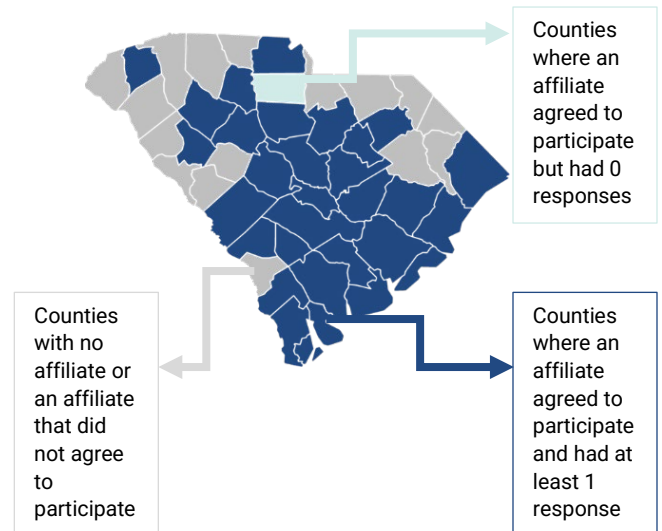
88%
of families completed the survey in English

51%
of invited families participated in the survey

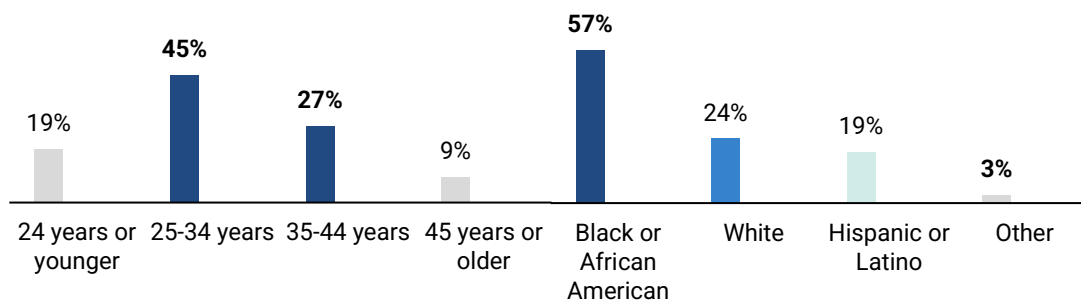
Of the 627 respondents we heard from...

92%
would *highly recommend PAT* to a friend or family member.

Families were represented from the upstate to the coast of South Carolina.



Three out of four respondents were 25-44 years old. Over half of the respondents identified as Black.



* For race/ethnicity data, respondents were instructed to select all that apply. Categories are not mutually exclusive, and percentages will not add to 100%.

Families value learning information during home visits, building relationships with their parent educator, and receiving materials from the program.

Because of PAT...



98%
understand their child's development better



97%
learned new parenting strategies



96%
created goals for their family



[PAT is good at] providing resources to aid families in creating a safe and nurturing environment through learning strategies that help in my child's development.

Parent,
Clarendon County

Parent educators build strong, stable, and nurturing relationships with families.



99%
report always being treated with respect by their parent educator



98%
report communicating with their parent educator in a language they understand



My parent educator brought structure, confidence, support and that has led to meaningful success in my desire to help my son develop to his fullest potential during a crisis when I needed it most.

Parent,
Charleston County

The PAT program strengthens partnerships between parent educators and parents to support a child's development.

Families love the PAT program and want more activities and events.

What is the PAT program in your community good at?



Connecting families to resources, other families, and materials to help advance our children toward being kindergarten ready. I love that we have a personal parent educator who has been working with us since our child was an infant.

Parent,
York County

What could the PAT program in your community do better?



Find ways to inform the community about this "priceless" program so more people can benefit.

Parent,
Lexington County