

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2024 – 2026



# Message from the Executive Director



**Virginia Newman**  
Executive Director  
Calhoun County First Steps

Over the past twenty years, Calhoun First Steps Board has provided research-based early childhood programs to Calhoun County families. Calhoun First Steps is an awesome resource in the community serving families with children from prenatal to five-years old through programs such as Parents As Teachers, Imagination Library and Countdown To Kindergarten.

Through collaborative efforts, we will continue to meet the needs of families in Calhoun County.

*Virginia L. Newman*

# Needs Assessment Process

## CONVENE

Held one community convenings with 20 participants and developed a vision for young children and their families

November 2022



## UNDERSTAND

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

October 2022 – March 2023

## PRIORITIZE

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

January 2023 – March 2023



# Asset Map



# Priorities: Summary

## 1. Child Care Deserts

- Calhoun County currently has one licensed childcare center.

## 2. Community Playgrounds

- Calhoun County has three community playgrounds where none are located in St. Matthews.

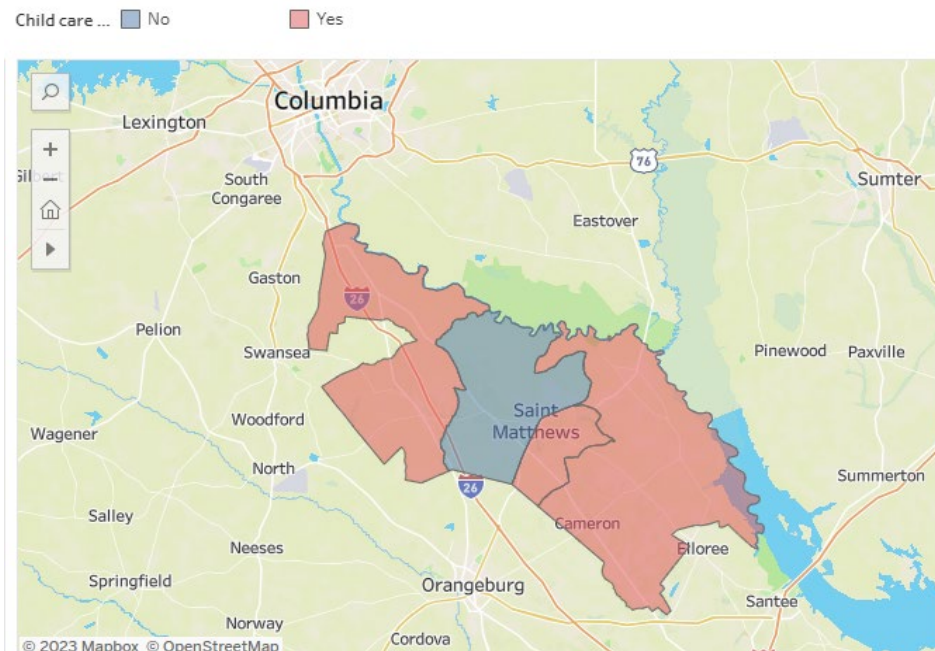
## 3. Economic Gaps

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

# Priority One: Childcare Deserts

## 34.6% of census tracts are considered childcare deserts in Calhoun County.

Provider location and center capacity obtained from [scchildcare.org](https://scchildcare.org) on October 16, 2022. The definition of a childcare desert obtained from the Center for American Progress, “A childcare desert is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no childcare providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots” (<https://www.childcaredeserts.org/>). Population under age 5 by census tract obtained from the American Community Survey 2016-2020 Five Year Estimates (Table B01001). US Census Bureau. Calculations were done by Chelsea Richard of South Carolina First Steps (October 16, 2022).



Priority one relates to SC First Steps **Every Child Ready strategy 2.3.1**  
*“Proactively work to decrease the percentage of South Carolinians affected by childcare deserts.”*

## Priority Two: Community Playgrounds

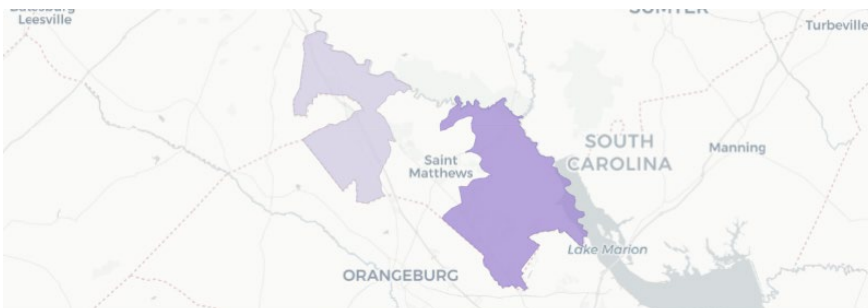
Playgrounds are safe places for families. Having an accessible playground in the community will promote physical health, increase social development, improve health conditions, and the imaginative skills necessary to ensure children arrive ready for kindergarten.

Priority two relates to **SC First Steps 2020-2025 strategic priority 1. Ensure Children are Ready for Kindergarten**

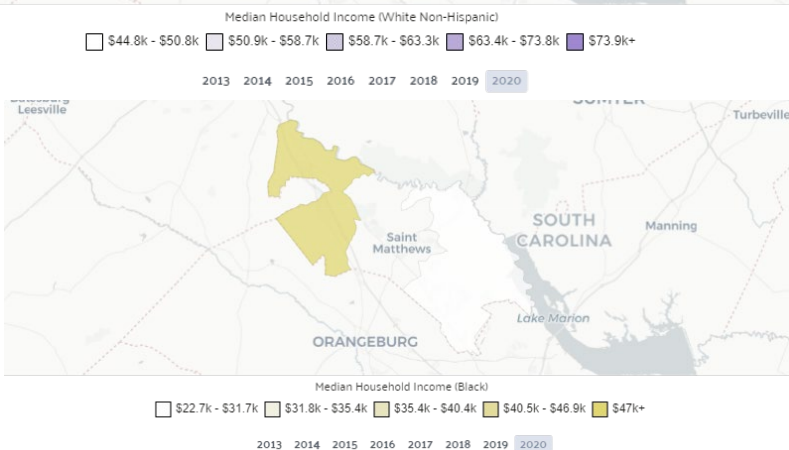
*Children arrive at kindergarten with the physical well-being, motor skills, social-emotional development, language, and literacy, mathematical thinking, and cognitive skills necessary to ensure early school success.*

# Priority Three: Economic Gaps

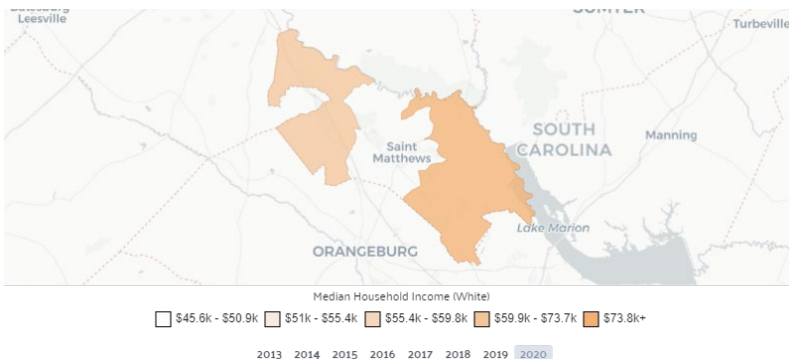
According to Data USA the following maps below show the median household income gap between the whites, blacks, and white (non-Hispanic) in Calhoun County. Data from [the Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimate](#).



White (Non- Hispanic)



Blacks



Whites

Priority three relates to SC First Steps ***Every Child Ready*** strategy 2.1.1 *Target investment in programs, services, and local partnerships that are most effectively reducing racial and economic disparities.*



# Next Steps

