

### Introduction

Per First Steps legislation (Section 52-152-70 (A)), each First Steps Partnership Board shall bring the community together to identify the area needs related to the goals of First Steps, develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs, and then develop specific initiatives to implement the elements of the plan while integrating service delivery where possible. The partnership board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the partnership's comprehensive strategic plan, which shall include direct service provision, contracting for service provision, and organization and management of volunteer programs. In addition, each partnership's comprehensive plan shall include the following core functions:

- a) service as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
- b) service as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families; and
- c) support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board.

Needs and Resources Assessment: Each local First Steps partnership undergoes a community needs and resources assessment process every three years, in consultation with its local board, staff, clients and partners. A description of this process can be found online at <http://scfirststeps.com/fy-17-needs-and-resources-assessment/>

Alignment to State First Steps Priorities: Each local First Steps partnership is a non-profit organization created in legislation in support of the statewide First Steps initiative, which is governed by a state board of trustees and supported by the State Office of First Steps. Each local plan aligns with the priorities of the South Carolina First Steps Strategic Plan, **Vision 2020** (<http://scfirststeps.com/resources-and-state-reporting/>). These priorities are:

- Increase access to quality early childhood programs and resources
- Enhance leadership development and capacity building
- Strengthen interagency accountability and public-private collaboration

Support for First Steps Legislative Goals: The strategic goals of this comprehensive plan support one or more goals of the First Steps initiative, as defined in state legislation (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c152.php>):

1. "Provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
2. Increase comprehensive services so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
3. Promote high-quality preschool programs that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
4. Provide services so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
5. Mobilize communities to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed."

Promotion of South Carolina's Definition of School Readiness: The goals and objectives of this comprehensive plan promote one or more descriptions of school readiness (Ready Children, Ready Families and Caregivers, Ready Schools and Educators, Ready Communities) as defined in South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner (<http://www.ican.sc>), adopted in 2015 by the South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees and the South Carolina Board of Education as the state's readiness benchmarks.

# South Carolina's School Readiness Description (Profile of the Ready Kindergartner)

## 1 Ready Children

- 1A Approaches to Learning & Inquiry (10)
- 1B Emotional & Social Development (12)
- 1C Physical Development, Self-Help & Motor Skills (4)
- 1D Language & Literacy Development (24)
  - o Listening, Speaking and Understanding (8)
  - o Early Reading (12)
  - o Early Writing (4)
- 1E Mathematical Thinking (9)
  - o Number Sense (5)
  - o Matching, Sorting, Classifying (4)

## 2 Ready Families and Caregivers

*Ready Kindergartners have the foundation of family and caregivers who:*

- 2A Provide safe and loving home environments in which children can grow and develop optimally.
- 2B Ensure that their children's pediatric health and dental needs are regularly addressed.
- 2C Create "language rich" homes in which conversation and written literacy are modeled daily.
- 2D Ensure that their young children receive adequate rest and a healthy diet.
- 2E Expose young children to regular and varied learning experiences in and out of the home.

## 3 Ready Schools and Educators

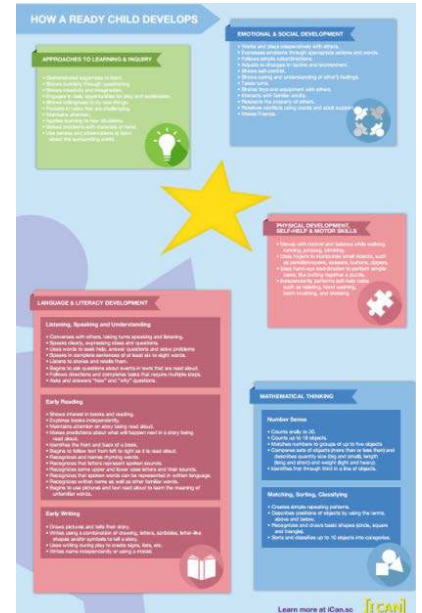
*Schools and educators for the Ready Kindergartner:*

- 3A Understand that each child develops on a unique timeline.
- 3B Are prepared to meet the unique, individual needs of all students.
- 3C Are highly knowledgeable in both child development and the progression of early learning.
- 3D Provide the social, emotional and academic supports needed to advance their students abilities.
- 3E Create emotionally safe and nurturing environments that are free of stress.
- 3F Are equipped to support the needs of their students' parents and caregivers.

## 4 Ready Communities

*Communities that support the Ready Kindergartner:*

- 4A Provide access to the resources necessary to ensure good health and optimal physical, social/emotional and cognitive development.
- 4B Create environments in which children:
  - o Can grow and develop in the absence of fear, stress, danger and hunger.
  - o Have access to needed pediatric, dental and mental health resources.
  - o Spend their days in nurturing, language-rich, and developmentally supportive environments (whether a loving home, a high-quality early education setting or both).
  - o Are cared for by loving adults attentive to their physical, emotional and developmental needs.



Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochure

Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochures are available from each local First Steps office.

Profile of the Ready Kindergartner resources: <http://www.ican.sc/>

### South Carolina's Definition of School Readiness (Section 59-152-25 (G))

"School readiness' means the level of child development necessary to ensure early school success as measured in the following domains: physical health and motor skills; emotional and social competence; language and literacy development; and mathematical thinking and cognitive skills. School readiness is supported by the knowledge and practices of families, caregivers, healthcare providers, educators, and communities."



February 27, 2018

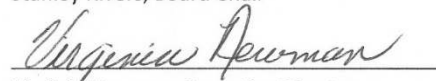
The Calhoun First Steps Board held its monthly meeting on January 30, 2018. During this meeting, the Executive Director distributed and summarized the Comprehensive Plan, 2018-2020 template. The Board Chair assigned a committee to submit a preliminary Calhoun Comprehensive Plan prior to the full board meeting in February to review and approved its plan. The committee was composed of representatives from Calhoun School District, OCAB/Head Start, Calhoun Department of Social Services and Calhoun County Library, the board chair and the executive director.

A copy of a preliminary Calhoun Comprehensive Plan, 2018-2020 as well as a copy of the partnership's Vision 2020 Needs and Resource Assessment were emailed to board members to review prior to the board on February 20, 2018. On February 20, 2018 board members reviewed, revised and approved the preliminary Comprehensive Plan with revisions.

The revised Calhoun First Comprehensive Plan, 2018-2020 was emailed to Board members on February 26, 2018. A Letter of Solicitation was also emailed to board members on February 26. This document will be used by Board members to collect contributions that will be used to support the mission of Calhoun First Steps.

Board members participated in a conference call on February 27, 2018 at 11:00am and approved the Calhoun First Steps Comprehensive Plan, 2018-2020. The Board Chair expressed gratitude to board members for their time and expertise given to this effort.

  
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Stanley Rivers, Board Chair

  
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Virginia Newman, Executive Director

## Vision, Mission, and Values

Source: *Guiding Principles and Best Practices for South Carolina Nonprofits, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* (TogetherSC, 2017)  
<http://www.togethersc.org/?page=GPBP>

In order to engage in strategic thinking that steers the organization in a **mission-focused direction**, the local partnership board must clearly define its mission, vision and values and use these statements to guide planning and action.

Mission and vision statements capture the essence of your organization's beliefs and values, and define its place in the world. A **vision statement** explains the overall goal of your organization looking into the future, while the **mission statement** outlines the present plan to realize the vision.

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### VISION

Communicates the desired future we seek for the community we serve.

**SC First Steps Vision 2020 Vision Statement**

Every South Carolina child will be prepared for success in school.

- The partnership board adopts the following vision statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan:

**Calhoun County First Steps Vision Statement**

Every child in Calhoun County will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

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### MISSION

Describes the purpose that guides everything we do.

**SC First Steps Vision 2020 Mission Statement**

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

- The partnership board adopts the following mission statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan:

**Calhoun County First Steps Mission Statement**

Collaborating with other entities, Calhoun First Steps empowers Calhoun County families and caregivers to help their children to be healthy and ready to learn upon entering pre-school.

### VALUES

Core values and beliefs reflect how our people – and the organization itself – behaves.

#### SC First Steps Vision 2020 Core Values

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped.

Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children.

The work of supporting families and caregivers is a collaborative effort between state and local stakeholders within the public, private and faith sectors.

School readiness is the result of a child's development in many areas, with each contributing to the child's success.

Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of children and families.

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

To achieve desired results, services must be high-quality and grounded in strong evidence. First Steps operates within a culture of accountability.

The partnership board adopts the SC First Steps Vision 2020 core values for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

#### Calhoun County First Steps Core Values

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## STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic goals set the direction for how the organization intends to implement its mission and address the needs of its focus population(s) for the duration of the plan.

#	<b>Calhoun County First Steps Strategic Goals, 2018-2020</b>	<b>FS Legislative Goal(s) Addressed</b> <small>(abbreviate as Goal 1, 2, etc.)</small>	<b>Profile of the Ready Kindergartner Benchmark(s) Addressed</b> <small>(abbreviate as 1A, 2B, etc.)</small>
1	Expand and engage more dads in our parenting and school transition programs and community activities: Call Me Mister and 101 Black Males	1, 2, 3; 4	1B, 1C; 1D
2	Become more visible in the community by getting involve in the School Improvement Council, PTO and activities at St. Matthews K-8 and Sandy Run K-8 schools	1, 3; 5	4A, 4B
3	Increase community collaboration and participation in Calhoun First Steps programs and activities	4, 5	1A, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2B; 2E
4	Expand access to comprehensive family strengthening and early literacy programs	1, 2; 3,	1A, 1B, 2A, 2E
5	Recruit quality board members to cultivate a strong and active board	1, 2, 3; 4	4A
6	Develop private dollars to fund Calhoun First Steps programs and community activities	3, 5	1A, 2E, 4A,4B

## Calhoun County First Steps Partnership

# 2018-2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Organized by the partnership’s current and proposed programs and services, as well as the core functions common to all First Steps partnerships (serving as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to services; serving as a community convener in support of the needs of preschool children and their families; and supporting state readiness priorities).

<b>Local Portal</b>			
Calhoun First Steps will connect families of preschool children to services designed to strengthen families and promote optimal child development (State Priority: Core Function).			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b>	<b>Action Items</b>
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration		Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Publicize and expand service as a local portal for connecting preschool children and their families.	1, 6	Assessment by agencies serving on PAT Advisory County Maintain active liaisons for referrals/follow-ups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Action:</b> Continue connection with organization that promotes family strengthening and health development.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action:</b> Connect with local business via UW Storytelling.</li> <li>▪ <b>Action:</b> Promote First Steps connecting to local at three local churches.</li> </ul>
Network with local law enforcement, fire departments, Calhoun Mental Health and health centers, Emergency Medical Services, Calhoun DSS, and DHEC (WIC), CASA and Calhoun County Council for child safety best practices.	2, 3, 5; 6	Focus groups composed of reps from sheriff and police departments, fire departments, EMS, health centers and mental health center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Action:</b> PAT Monthly Group connections lead by reps from sheriff and police departments, fire departments and Mental Health.</li> </ul>
Build upon and consort with Calhoun DSS-Child Welfare Improvement Team.	2, 6	Focus group will build upon steps that have been put into action by Calhoun DSS director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Network in making referral and meeting needs of at-risk families.</li> <li>▪ Attend DSS-Child Welfare Improvement Team meetings.</li> </ul>

## Community Education and Outreach

Calhoun First Steps will increase understanding in the community of school readiness domains and assessment, and “what works” to help young children succeed, and will make information easily accessible in all communities and for all families. (State Priority: SCFS Strategic Plan)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective</b></p> <p>Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i>: 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability &amp; collaboration</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Success Metrics</b></p> <p>Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action Items</b></p> <p>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</p>
<p>Network with local school district, local agencies, child care providers and faith-based groups to disseminate materials, market services through our website and FB page.</p>	<p>2,3,5; 6</p>	<p>Contact liaison for referrals and assessments.</p> <p>Lead a focus group to ensure easy access and an increase understanding of school readiness standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Action: Team up with organizations to identify children and families for referrals</li> <li>▪ Distribute invitations by the end of March, 2018 to hold first meeting in early spring</li> </ul>
<p>Use local newspaper to inform and educate local churches businesses and childcare providers to build capacity and increase access.</p>	<p>2, 5</p>	<p>To disseminate materials on school readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Network with organizations to identify families and disseminate information</li> </ul>
<p>Utilize local radio station to promote Calhoun First Steps and educate community on school readiness.</p>	<p>1,3; 5</p>	<p>Documentation: air time provided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set up air time with Harvey Elmwood Talk Show</li> </ul>



## Mobilizing Communities on Providing Enhanced Services to Support Families and their Young Children

Calhoun First Steps will serve as a community convener to address the needs of preschool children in the community, in support of state readiness priorities (State Priority: Core Function).

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<p>Continue to collaborate with the local school district, the United Way of the Midlands, county government and local businesses to participate in Calhoun First Steps monthly events and other parenting family activities.</p>	<p>2,3,5;6</p>	<p>Participate in school district and county library events Network with agencies to participate in FS-sponsored events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with UWM and BC/BS to recruit volunteers, market programs and participate in backpack activities.</li> <li>▪ Plan volunteer events with UWM.</li> <li>▪ Action</li> </ul>
<p>Continue to increase participation in annual golf tournament and Midlands Gives fundraisers.</p>	<p>2,3,5;6</p>	<p>Sponsor two fundraisers events  Write grants to support strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meet and form a Fundraising Committee</li> <li>▪ Mail letters in March soliciting sponsors and golfers in 2018 Golf Tournament</li> <li>▪ Develop grants to support family empowerment and early literacy programs.</li> </ul>

## Parents as Teachers

**Description:** Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed.

**Integration:** All children served in the program are registered for Imagination Library, an early literacy program.

**Collaboration:** Local school district, Calhoun DSS (foster care) Calhoun DHEC (WIC), St. Matthews Head Start, Calhoun County library; Calhoun County Council

<b>Objective</b>	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b> Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	<b>Action Items</b> Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration			
Increase the number of Calhoun families/children served per year to 70 by the end of 2020. At least 70% of clients served will participate in the program for at least 9 months.	1, 2, 3, 4	Parent surveys, assessments and group meeting evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hire and train a P/T PAT educator.</li> <li>▪ Identify foster care parents to serve.</li> <li>▪ Write grants for additional dollars.</li> </ul>
Continue to extend service countywide and provide transportation for families to participate in PAT monthly group connections.	1, 2, 3, 4	Group meeting evaluations SCFS Data system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with DSS and school district to identify families in remote rural areas.</li> <li>▪ Identify churches to promote program.</li> <li>▪ Action</li> </ul>
Engage more fathers in PAT program: Home visits, monthly group connections, and community activities: 101 Black Males (SC State University), Fatherhood/Male Conference; Call Me Mister.	1, 2, 5	SCFS Data system data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to plan group meeting activities that include dad (doughnuts for dad, bowties for Father's Day; Participation in Fatherhood Male Conference sponsored by OCAB Head Start.</li> <li>▪ Contact 101 Black Males and Call Me Mister to obtain schedule of activities.</li> </ul>
Continue to adhere to the Parents as Teachers Curriculum to Include meeting the PAT 11 Essential Requirements.	3,5	PAT annual review SCFS Data system Parent surveys KIPS and ACIRI assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide 12 monthly group connections.</li> <li>▪ Complete health and developmental screenings on all children enrolled in program.</li> <li>▪ Complete KIPS and ACIRI assessments with designated timeframe.</li> </ul>

## Countdown to Kindergarten

**Description:** Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a summer home visitation model connecting rising kindergartners and their families with their future teachers. The program is designed:

**Integration:** Identify all rising kindergartners that were served in Calhoun FS PAT program to participate in CTK

**Collaboration:** Partner with the school district to identify rising kindergartners who are at risk to school readiness

<b>Objective</b>	<b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Success Metrics</b>	<b>Action Items</b>
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i> : 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration		Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)	Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
Increase the number of Calhoun/families served per year to 40 by the end of 2020.	1, 2	Parent pre- and post- surveys and teacher surveys SCFA Data demonstrating progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Obtain grants to increase participation.</li> <li>▪ Identify certified kindergarten teachers.</li> <li>▪ School district ID students meeting risk factors.</li> <li>▪ School district provides financial support.</li> </ul>
At least 90% of clients served will participate in the program for at least all 6 sessions of the curriculum.	1, 2, 3	Assessments and SCFS Data System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During initial meeting with parents, parent and teacher will complete a schedule for 5 home visits and a date for the school visit.</li> </ul>
At least 90% of CTK students will be assigned to their CTK classroom the following school year.	1, 3, 5	Public announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Request school district to assign CTK students to their CTK teacher's classroom the upcoming school year.</li> </ul>
Provide weekly tips regarding kindergarten readiness.	1, 2, 3, 5	Document weekly tips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilize local newspaper to publicize program and to provide weekly tips for kindergarten readiness.</li> </ul>

## Imagination Library

**Description:** Calhoun First Steps is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years.

**Integration:** All children enrolled in Calhoun FS Parents as Teachers program are registered for Imagination Library

**Collaboration:** School district, local faith-based organizations and childcare providers

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective</b></p> <p>Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <i>Vision 2020</i>: 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability &amp; collaboration</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</b> (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Success Metrics</b></p> <p>Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action Items</b></p> <p>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</p>
<p>Increase the number of Calhoun County children served per year to 350 by the end of 2020.</p>	<p>1, 3, 5</p>	<p>SCFS Data Systems- data input</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publicize Imagination Library via newspaper</li> <li>▪ Register children for programs at County library, Calhoun DSS, school district's literacy night programs, DHEC-WIC.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase access to program.</p>	<p>1, 3, 5</p>	<p>Documentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Registration form on website, provide link to register directly with Dollywood.</li> </ul>
<p>Write grants and hold fundraisers to support program.</p>	<p>1, 2, 5</p>	<p>Letters soliciting donations and document donations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold annual golf tournament (fundraiser).</li> <li>▪ Write early literacy grants to fund program.</li> <li>▪ Solicit support from local businesses and board members.</li> </ul>

## Child Care Training & Development

**Description:** High-quality child care centers on high quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce

**Integration:** Montessori on-line training combined with on-site classroom observations at St. Matthews K-8 and Sandy Run K-8 Montessori Classrooms (3-5 years)

**Collaboration:** Local school district - Sandy Run K-8 and St. Matthews K-8 Montessori Classroom (3-5 years)

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<p>Increase the number of teachers trained in the Montessori curriculum per year to 3 by the end of 2020. 95% of teachers served will complete 10 sessions of the on-line curriculum training.</p>	<p>2,3; 5</p>	<p>Assessment; documentation of classroom observations at School district's Montessori classrooms (3-5 years)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support funding for teachers to enroll in on-line Montessori Curriculum training.</li> <li>▪ Have child care center teachers visit and observe school district's Montessori classrooms.</li> <li>▪ Have school district's Montessori teachers visit Child Care Center to observe teachers trained in Montessori curriculum.</li> </ul>