

## 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.

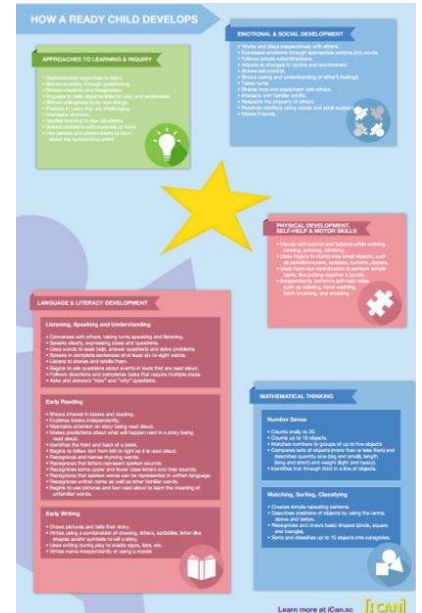
## 4 Ready Communities

*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 brochures are available from each local First Steps office.**

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



Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochure

### 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."



## 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.

---

### 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 SC First Steps Vision 2020 vision statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

---

### 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 SC First Steps Vision 2020 mission statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan

## 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

## 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>Colleton County First Steps Strategic Goals, 2018-2020</b>	<b>FS Legislative Goal(s) Addressed</b> (abbreviate as Goal 1, 2, etc.)	<b>Profile of the Ready Kindergartner Benchmark(s) Addressed</b> (abbreviate as 1A, 2B, etc.)
1	CCFS will serve as the local portal connecting families of preschool children to community based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children.	1, 3	1B,1C,2A,2B,2C,3C, 4A
2	CCFS staff and partnership board will document efforts to mobilize community early childhood agencies/organizations to enhance services to support high risk families and their children.	5	2E, 3B, 3C,4A,4B
3	CCFS will work with community partners to enhance and secure additional resources for school readiness strategies.	2,4	1A, 1D, 1E, 2E, 3F

## Colleton 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>			
Colleton County 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)
CCFS will serve as a local portal and identify all agencies in the county who work with families with children under the age of five.	1,2	Surveys, evaluations of programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compile a list of agencies and services to provide to agencies and families</li> <li>▪ Conduct/attend regional meetings with the agencies to discuss and streamline services for the families</li> </ul>
CCFS will work with individuals, businesses, and other organizations to meet the needs of our high risk children and their families.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CCFS staff will <b>provide</b> books to individuals, families, and community organizations for distribution to children and their families</li> <li>▪ CCFS staff, board members and community partners will <b>provide</b> resources for families during the holiday season to ensure that the needs of many of our children and their families are met</li> </ul>

## Community Education and Outreach

Colleton County 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>CCFS will participate in local/county/regional coalitions, committees, etc.... of child serving agencies and organizations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2, 3</p>	<p>Coalitions, group meetings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will attend local/county/regional meetings.</li> <li>▪ Provide information to families of high risk children</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will participate in community wide events such as the Back to School Bash, Transition Fairs, etc. to disseminate information and distribute books to families in need.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1,2,3</p>	<p>Feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff and board members will participate in community events to disseminate information to the public</li> <li>▪ Staff will disseminate information throughout the community to make families aware of our services</li> </ul>



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

Colleton County 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).

<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>CCFS will keep an up to date inventory of available programs and services to connect families.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Up to date inventory/services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will update and make connections with all agencies/programs to connect families</li> <li>▪ Staff will communicate needed services to our families as well as others</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will identify any community partner that can assist our partnership to provide resources to continue the strategies we have identified as promising programs in our county.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1,3</p>	<p>Evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will share information with community partners</li> <li>▪ Staff will assist or provide necessary resources to high risk families in our programs</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will bring parents and teachers together as partners to set the foundation for school success for children.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1,2,3</p>	<p>Evaluations, Surveys, Feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CCFS will administer Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) to eligible rising kindergartners and their families</li> <li>▪ CCFS will ensure that home visitations, learning celebrations, and public awareness of CTK take place</li> <li>▪ CCFS will partner with the office of Federal Programs of the Colleton County School District, Colleton County Library, and other partners to serve as many children and rising kindergartners as possible</li> </ul>

## Child Care Training

**Description:** CCFS will provide high quality training to all day care providers and school staff. We provide training on a monthly basis. The training is vital to the providers in Colleton County. We will continue to work with the ABC monitors and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network to help move centers from B+ to an A, B to B+, and C to B. This was part of our plan in writing and receiving the grant from the Beaufort Fund.

**Integration:** We conducted a needs assessment with the providers to determine their needs. The providers can attend appropriate training classes that are relevant to the age group of children they are caring for and not attend any training just to receive hours. All of our trainers are master trainers and/or certified by CCCCD. By providing high quality trainings for our centers, we hope to improve the high quality preschool programs.

**Collaboration:** The school district, CCCCD, Coastal Electric Cooperative, and CCFS are collaborating partners. The school district allows us to use their facilities for training and so does Coastal Electric Cooperative. CCCCD certifies the trainers that we can use for these trainings.

<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>CCFS will increase the number of adults served per year by 15 to 215 by the end of 2020. We will also increase the number of hours of childcare training provided from 50 hours in fiscal year 2017-18 to 54 hours of quality child care training by 2020.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>Surveys, evaluations, sign-in sheets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will secure certified and master trainers to provide high quality child care training</li> <li>▪ Provide books and other materials to centers as incentives to attend trainings</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will work with centers to <b>increase</b> their grades from ABC monitors and Child Care Resource and Referral Network.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p>	<p>Surveys, assessments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will work with day care centers to secure the necessary materials needed to increase their grades.</li> <li>▪ Staff will review the guidelines with the day care centers to assist them to meet the guidelines to be compliant.</li> </ul>

## Parents As Teachers

**Description:** This program services children from pre-natal to 5 years old. The parent educators begin early interventions and parent/child interactions with the families. The Parent educators meet with the families twice monthly and the families are expected to attend a monthly group connections meeting. The focus of the visits with the parent educators is early interventions, family wellbeing, and child centered development. The goal is to get these children ready to start school.

**Integration:** The PAT program is operated in house. Referrals are made to Baby Net of any children with developmental concerns. Other community partners include the Department of Social Services, the Colleton County School District, The Office of Federal Programs, Molina Health Care, the Faith Based Community, Colleton County Memorial Library, and Colleton County DHEC. All of these agencies support our monthly group connections meeting and collaborate with us on grants and our book distribution program.

**Collaboration:** The Colleton County School District gives CCFS office space and provides our internet service and electricity. The Colleton County Memorial Library helps at our monthly group connections meetings as well as the Department of Social Services. DSS and DHEC also receive books from us to distribute to the community.

<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>CCFS will increase the number of 20 children served per year in 2017-18 to 28 by the end of 2020. At least 80% of clients served will participate in the program for at least 12 months.</p>	<p>1,2,3</p>	<p>Assessments of children, surveys, feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will meet regularly to review data to assure data is being entered and compliance is being met.</li> <li>▪ Staff will schedule technical assistance calls/meetings with our State Rep to ensure that we are in compliance with all PAT standards.</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will work with community partners to enhance resources and secure additional funding for PAT so families are not on a waiting list.</p>	<p>1,2,3</p>	<p>Feedback, surveys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will continue to identify resources and work with the partners we currently have.</li> <li>▪ Staff will continue to seek additional funds from grants, partners, etc....</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
<p>CCFS will offer scholarships on a case by case basis to eligible families who are in the PAT program for a minimum of two months.</p>	<p>1,2,</p>	<p>Surveys, feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Staff will continue to work with high risk families and keep them in the PAT program to ensure their eligibility</li> <li>▪ Staff will continue to seek funds to increase the number of scholarships offered per fiscal year</li> </ul>