

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)
 - Listening, Speaking and Understanding (8)
 - Early Reading (12)
 - Early Writing (4)
- 1E Mathematical Thinking (9)
 - Number Sense (5)
 - 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:
 - Can grow and develop in the absence of fear, stress, danger and hunger.
 - Have access to needed pediatric, dental and mental health resources.
 - Spend their days in nurturing, language-rich, and developmentally supportive environments (whether a loving home, a high-quality early education setting or both).
 - 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.”



Every little step I take

You will be there

Every little step I make

We'll be together

-Every Little Step by Bobby Brown

The 90s brought us some of our country's most important achievements, including the iPhone phenomenon, Facebook and social media, the musical lyricism of Bobby Brown, and the launch of SC First Steps.

Founded in 1999 to be a public private partnership, aimed at using state resources to strengthen the private sector's ability to help parents in their mission to see all kids enter school ready to succeed, SC First Steps, and through it, Greenville First Steps was launched.

We have enjoyed the opportunity work alongside our community partners in a series of proven initiatives including:

- The South Carolina launch of Nurse Family Partnership, and the implementation of the nation's FIRST early childhood focused first Pay for Success project
- The launch of the Palmetto Shared Services Alliance, a statewide back-office support system aimed to help childcare providers improve operational efficiencies and reduce overhead costs
- the launch of Palmetto Basics, an evidenced based framework that helps every parent understand what they can do to help children enter school on track and ready to succeed
- the launch of a pooled childcare scholarship endowment, investing nearly \$250,000 in private funds as a match to \$300,000 in state funds, to improve access to quality childcare

In doing so, Greenville First Steps has leveraged nearly 40 cents of private funds for every dollar of state funds invested.

And, in the words of Bobby Brown "every step (we) make, we'll be together".

The next 3 years will see the launch of several new initiatives including:

- Enhanced online supports for childcare providers and family home caregivers
- A hands on "Reggio inspired" immersive learning experience
- The launch of a Nonprofit collaborative space to help our partners join us in reducing back office and operational costs
- The development of a Palmetto Basics Philanthropic resource guide to help funders more easily identify evidenced based investment opportunities within our community.

We hope you take the first steps to join us on our journey

Derek Lewis
Executive Director

Grady Patterson
Board of Directors Chair

Vision, Mission, and Values

Source: *Guiding Principles and Best Practices for South Carolina Nonprofits, 4th 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
- The partnership board adopts the following vision statement for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan:

Greenville County First Steps Vision Statement

Families, early childhood educators, and community partners are equipped with the tools and resources needed to ensure children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

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

Greenville County First Steps Mission Statement

We will serve as a convener of early childhood champions to coordinate services to measurably improve the early childhood development of all children in Greenville County.

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
- The partnership board adopts the following core values for its 2018-2020 Strategic Plan:

Greenville County First Steps Core Values

Greenville First Steps Board of Directors and staff recognize the following values as key to achieving our goals:

- Operational accountability and transparency
- Delivering research-based initiatives
- Convening collaborative public-private partnerships

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.

#	Greenville County First Steps Strategic Goals, 2018-2020	FS Legislative Goal(s) Addressed (abbreviate as Goal 1, 2, etc.)	Profile of the Ready Kindergartner Benchmark(s) Addressed (abbreviate as 1A, 2B, etc.)
1	Improve graduation rates for teenage mothers and ensure teenage mothers have access to supports and resources to be successful parents	Goal 1, Goal 5	2A, 2E
2	Increase access for families to high quality, stable, sound childcare environments	Goal 1, Goal 3	3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F
3	Improve birth outcomes for Greenville County children	Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 4	2B, 1B, 1C
4	Improve literacy outcomes for children 0-5	Goal 5	1B, 2C, 4A
5	Integrate school readiness messaging within Greenville County community partners	Goal 5	4A, 4B
6	Diversify revenue to ensure organizational sustainability	Goal 1,2,3,4,5	4A, 4B, 3A

Greenville 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).

Local Portal			
Greenville First Steps will connect families of preschool children to services designed to strengthen families and promote optimal child development (State Priority: Core Function).			
Objective	In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)	Success Metrics	Action Items
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)
Build capacity of a community-wide early literacy initiative	Goal 4	200,000 books for children ages 0-5 are distributed by 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: 3-year operational agreement with Christ Church Episcopal Greenville for book warehouse and distribution ▪ 200,000 books distributed via book warehouse to approved early learning partners ▪ Print and online media content reinforcing early literacy standards reaches 50,000 households
Strengthen interagency accountability and collaboration by convening community stakeholders to address gaps and opportunities within early childhood sector.	Goal 5	50,000 households receive school readiness messaging delivered through partner providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 200 Palmetto Basics Champions identified in Greenville County ▪ Champions develop and distribute readiness messaging to their clients/families ▪ Print and online media content reinforcing early literacy standards reaches 50,000 households
Strengthen interagency accountability and collaboration through a coalition of funders to coordinate public/private funding streams	Goal 6	\$1,000,000 in private assets will be directed to early learning investments with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GFS becomes member of governance team of the Greenville Partnership for Philanthropy, United Way of Greenville

		guidance provided by Greenville First Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GFS and ICS will develop Early Learning Investment matrix for funders ▪ GFS will help coordinate multiagency nonprofit support center operations
Build capacity in nonprofit sector through expansion of Pay for Success financing model for early interventions	Goal 3, Goal 6	Continuation of a Pay for Success model for Nurse-Family Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use \$185,000 (annually) of First Steps funds to leverage \$3.3 million in private investments through Pay for Success Model

Community Education and Outreach

Greenville 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;">Objective</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 & collaboration</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Success Metrics</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;">Action Items</p> <p>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</p>
<p>Increase access to evidence based early literacy programs</p>	<p>Goal 4</p>	<p>300 participants in evidence based early literacy program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100 participants annually in early literacy program ▪ Addition of evidence-based interventions into existing early literacy programs
<p>Strengthen interagency accountability and collaboration to increase understanding of school readiness domains</p>	<p>Goal 5</p>	<p>50,000 households receive school readiness messaging delivered through partner providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Champions develop and distribute readiness messaging to their clients/families ▪ 2,000 participants in regional “What Works” training opportunities ▪ Print and online media content reinforcing school readiness messaging reaches 50,000 households

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

Greenville 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;">Objective</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 & collaboration</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Success Metrics</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;">Action Items</p> <p>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</p>
<p>Strengthen interagency accountability and collaboration to improve graduation rates for teenage mothers and ensure teenage mothers have access to supports and resources to be successful parents</p>	<p>Goal 1</p>	<p>90% of connected teenage parents will successful complete high school graduation requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Greenville County Schools Pregnant and Parenting specialists in identifying teenage parents and connecting them to services ▪ Support Little Steps and similar partners in providing mentoring and supports for 100 identified teenage parents ▪ Provide \$300,000 in childcare scholarships for teen parents participating in these interventions

Increase access for families to high quality, stable, sound childcare environments

Greenville First Steps will provide necessary supports to improve quality of care provided in formal early learning environments (childcare, family home providers) and work to increase operational efficiency and quality of services provided by these partners.

<p style="text-align: center;">Objective</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 & collaboration</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Success Metrics</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;">Action Items</p> <p>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</p>
<p>Build capacity within the professional environment of the childcare sector through expansion of the Palmetto Shared Services Alliance</p>	<p>Goal 2</p>	<p>Over 3 years, 200 registered users will participate in PSSA services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Palmetto Shared Services Alliance Portal will be presented to 300 childcare providers ▪ Riley Institute completes initial Program Impact Review to measure benefits of program participation ▪ 90% of active users report cost savings and time savings benefits as a result of PSSA
<p>Increase access to quality, evidence based, early-childhood professional development opportunities for caregivers</p>	<p>Goal 2</p>	<p>Over 3 years, 200 caregivers will receive total of 3,000 hours of professional development approved by CCCC-D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Online trainings developed and embedded within Palmetto Shared Services Alliance portal ▪ 10 participants will enroll in 6month immersive project-based learning cohort ▪ 40 trainings with an average of 20 participants offered onsite
<p>Increase access to high quality childcare through childcare vouchers</p>	<p>Goal 2</p>	<p>\$1.3 million in childcare vouchers awarded through 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A pool of approved, regionally diverse high-quality centers will be identified ▪ Approximately 200 families will be awarded 10-month childcare vouchers ▪ 400 hours of parent supports and training received