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/](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/](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](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](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/](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.”
Dear Community Partners, Families and Early Childhood Educators:

The Partnership Board of Orangeburg County First Steps is looking forward to expanding the services that meet the needs of the children served by the agency. Furthermore, we intend to fully implement the vision and mission of Orangeburg County First Steps. We truly believe in the Core Values of working collaboratively to advocate for children, developmentally appropriately shaping the minds of children to be ready for school and supporting families through programs and evidence based services. This plan approved by the board of directors on December 14, 2017 outlines the goals and objectives designed to have the greatest impact on those who are participants in programs hosted by Orangeburg County First Steps. Please be informed that the goals and objectives outlined in this Comprehensive Plan is based on the needs assessment conducted in 2015-17. This assessment reflects that the target population is in need of additional home visitation services, further community collaboration, early intervention services and additional training, mentorship and coaching for providers serving young children on a daily basis.

As we continue to grow and expand, we would like to thank you for your dedicated service to our mission. We could not successfully assist children and families without those who passionately believe that every child deserves an early start. Therefore the staff and County Partnership Board are dedicated to expanding services and continue to evaluate the needs of all of those who are served. Thanks again for your continued efforts to better serve the children and families of Orangeburg County.

Respectfully,

LaMyra Sanders, M. Ed
Executive Director

Reginald Williams, Ph. D
Board Chairman
Vision, Mission, and Values

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.

- **Orangeburg County First Steps Vision Statement**
  Every Child in Orangeburg County will be prepared for success in school.

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.

- **Orangeburg County First Steps Mission Statement**
  Collaborating with other entities Orangeburg County First Steps helps 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.
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.

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

### Orangeburg County First Steps Core Values

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

Parents, families and schools are the 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 evidence based. Orangeburg Count First Steps operates within a culture of accountability.
**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Orangeburg County First Steps Strategic Goals, 2018-2020</th>
<th>FS Legislative Goal(s) Addressed (Abbreviate as Goal 1, 2, etc.)</th>
<th>Profile of the Ready Kindergartner Benchmark(s) Addressed (Abbreviate as 1A, 2B, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to increase access to home visitation programs as services provided by the agency.</td>
<td>1,3,5</td>
<td>2c,2D,2A, 2E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to increase services for early identification of physical, emotional and educational disabilities.</td>
<td>2,3, 4</td>
<td>1A, 1B,1C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to improve the quality of the environment and educational services provided by the child development centers enrolled in the Quality Enhanced Program.</td>
<td>3,4, 2</td>
<td>4A, 4B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to improve quality professional development opportunities in order to increase the number of qualified staff persons who work with children ages 0-5 who work with children in Orangeburg County.</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
<td>3A-F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to serve as a community portal for connecting families of preschool children to services designed to strengthen families and promote optimal child development.</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>3A-F, 4A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Orangeburg 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
Orangeburg County First Steps will connect families of preschool children to services designed to strengthen families and promote optimal child development (State Priority: Core Function).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)</th>
<th>Success Metrics</th>
<th>Action Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps will maintain a Community Resource Guide that will be published on the agency’s website for public access. <strong>Increase access, strengthen inter-agency accountability</strong></td>
<td>Published document on the website</td>
<td><strong>Evaluating relevant services available in the community</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps will offer two trainings on the specific topics of the Ready Kindergartner and Early Childhood Education Standards to providers who work with children on a daily basis. <strong>Increase access, build capacity</strong></td>
<td>Documentation of trainings hosted, attendance, evaluations</td>
<td><strong>Secure the facilitators, location and time</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps will offer additional parent training to all parents who receive scholarships to increase access to community resources and build capacity for increasing their child’s growth and development on a quarterly basis. <strong>Increase access, build capacity and strengthen inter-agency accountability and collaboration</strong></td>
<td>Documentation of trainings hosted, attendance, evaluations</td>
<td><strong>Collaborate with community agencies to secure facilitators based on the needs of participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Community Education and Outreach**

Orangeburg 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)

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<td>Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, <em>Vision 2020</em>: 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability &amp; collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)</td>
<td>Secure the facilitators, location and time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps will offer two trainings on the Ready Kindergartner and Early Childhood Education Standards to providers who work with children on a daily basis. Trainings will be offered to all early childhood educators in Orangeburg County.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Documentation of trainings hosted, attendance, evaluations, Quality Improvement Plans</td>
<td>Advertise, complete registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase access, build capacity, strengthen inter-agency accountability &amp; collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create Pre and Post Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Host event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mobilizing Communities on Providing Enhanced Services to Support Families and their Young Children
Orangeburg 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).

<table>
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| Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, Vision 2020: 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration | (Abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.) | Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation) | Invite community stakeholders  
Create a collaborative agenda  
Create action plan |
| Orangeburg County First Steps will host a quarterly meeting with agencies who serve children 0-5. This meeting will provide information on regulations, services available and issues to be addressed in the early childhood community. | 2,5 | Meeting agendas, and documentation of attendance | |
| Increase access, strengthen inter-agency accountability | | | |
**Quality Enhancement Program**

**Description:** First Steps’ Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) strategies are intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided young children, as measured by a program’s advancement within South Carolina’s existing quality infrastructure (the ABC Quality Rating and Improvement System) and/or its improvement on an approved program quality measure.

**Integration:** Independent Assessment of Environment Rating Scales, Coaching according to assessments, provider survey

**Collaboration:** Collaboration with 4k, Early Headstart, Department of Social Services, Advocates for Better Care

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<td>(Abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</td>
<td>Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)</td>
<td>Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)</td>
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</table>
| Orangeburg County First Steps will improve the quality of coaching and mentoring services by collaborating with DSS, ABC, 4K and Early Headstart during a quarterly meeting hosted by the agency as documented by meeting notes and surveys from the Quality Enhanced Centers. | 3, 4 and 5 | Quality Improvement Plan Attendance Sheets Surveys | - Environment Rating Scales Assessment  
- Develop Quality Improvement Plan  
- Post Assessment  
- Quarterly meetings |
<p>| Increase access, strengthen inter-agency accountability &amp; collaboration and build capacity | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s) (Abbreviate as 1, 2, etc.)</th>
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<th>Action Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps seeks to increase home literacy services provided by parents and home caregivers by 10% as indicated by pre and post surveys by the end of fiscal year 2019-2020.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre and post surveys and activity logs during home visits</td>
<td>Create and administer surveys</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective**
Each objective addresses one or more priorities of the SC First Steps Strategic Plan, Vision 2020: 1) Increase access; 2) Build capacity; 3) Strengthen interagency accountability & collaboration

**In Support of Partnership Strategic Goal(s)**
- Increase access, build capacity

**Success Metrics**
- Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)

**Action Items**
Major activities to be initiated in support of the objective (to be operationalized by staff and partners)
## Early Steps to School Success

**Description:** Early Steps to School Success’ parent home visitation strategies are designed to equip adult clients with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote the school readiness, healthy development and long-term success of their preschool-aged children.

**Integration:** Home visitation

**Collaboration:** Save the Children, Orangeburg Consolidated School Districts 4 and 5

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg County First Steps will establish a resource closet for low-income parents who are in need of tangible resources by the end of fiscal year 2019-20.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Monitor resources, recipients,</td>
<td>Request donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthen inter-agency accountability &amp; collaboration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Childcare Scholarships

**Description:** First Steps-funded child care scholarships are granted in an effort to promote the healthy development and school readiness of participating children.

**Integration:** Partnerships are strongly encouraged to integrate the provision of scholarships with additional First Steps (or partner organization) strategies and may require participation in these additional services as a condition of funding at the discretion of the Partnership Board.

**Collaboration:** ABC, DSS, Providers

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase access</td>
<td>100% of children receiving a scholarship will receive developmental screenings such as hearing and vision for the purpose of early intervention by the end of fiscal year 2019-2020 as indicated by documentation of screenings.</td>
<td>2,3, 5</td>
<td>Results from screenings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase access, strengthen interagency accountability &amp; collaboration</td>
<td>100% of children who show evidence of a possible delay or need of intervention will receive referrals for the appropriate resources; will be made by the end of fiscal year 2019-2020 as indicated by documentation of screenings.</td>
<td>2, 3, 5</td>
<td>Documentation of referrals and connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Secure assessor
- Assess children
- Action
- Make necessary referrals via community resources
Childcare Training

**Description:** First Steps-funded Child Care Training strategies shall, in all instances, be considered part of a larger quality enhancement effort and support providers in one or more of the following: a. Advancement along the Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCD) career lattice, b. Advancement within the ABC Quality system, c. Improvement on an approved measure of program quality, and/or d. A topic-specific focus based on Regional TA Coordination meetings.

**Integration:** Partnerships operating a 605 (training) strategy in conjunction with a 601 (Quality Enhancement) strategy shall explicitly integrate the two in order to maximize service intensity and affect demonstrable quality improvements. In this event, Partnerships shall provide at least eight (8) hours of high-quality, certified training (stemming directly from the provider’s Quality Improvement Plan) to each 601 center staffer.

**Collaboration:** ABC, DSS, Providers

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<td>Evidence for demonstrating progress, or achievement, of this objective (assessments, surveys, evaluations, focus groups, or other documentation)</td>
<td>Pre and post surveys</td>
<td>Partner with appropriate programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centers participating in the Quality Enhancement Program will visit at least one model center exemplifying desired training principles by the end of fiscal year 2018-19 as indicated in documentation of trip and observation forms.</td>
<td>3, 4, 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrange transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase access, building capacity, strengthen inter-agency accountability &amp; collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Countdown to Kindergarten

**Description:** Countdown to Kindergarten is a summer home visitation strategy designed to link incoming kindergartners and their families with the individual who serve as their kindergarten teacher during the coming year.

**Integration:** While the CTK curriculum offers substantial opportunity for personalization by individual teachers, each must adhere to its general format and ensure the delivery of each published lesson. Per the CTK curriculum model, no family should receive less than five (5) visits. The partnership shall make every effort to secure transportation services so that families can attend the final CTK visit to the child’s school.

**Collaboration:** School Personnel, parents and community

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase access, build capacity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Documentation of demographics</td>
<td>• Recruit and serve the target population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recruit via the appropriate school district</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5% increase of program participants will reside in the more rural areas of Orangeburg County as documented by demographics by the end of fiscal year 2019-20.