

JASPER COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Early Identification & Referral

# Annual Report

2017-18



**OUR VISION:**

Every Jasper County child  
will be prepared  
for success in school.

[www.jaspercountyfirststeps.org](http://www.jaspercountyfirststeps.org)

PO Box 776, Ridgeland, SC 29936 ♦ 843-726-5100 ♦ [dpolite@scfirststeps.org](mailto:dpolite@scfirststeps.org)

# Director's Message

## Ready – Set – Go!

Jasper County First Steps is ready! Ready to engage. Ready to empower. Ready to educate.

The release of the year one Kindergarten Readiness Assessment results for Jasper County has definitely shed a light on the ongoing and critical need for organizations that serve young children to engage, empower and educate. An our efforts must be multi-faceted, targeted, and intentional.

**Ready to Engage** – We must be ready to engage and convene key stakeholders to address areas of need, such as educators (school district, HeadStart, private child care providers), support agencies (ABC Quality, CCCCD, CCR&R, etc), and business partners (employers of parents) to work toward common objectives.

**Ready to Empower** – We must empower parents to advocate for the well-being of their children in areas of health, social exposure, and academic readiness. Parents must know that they should have an expectation that systems do not fail their children; and parents must know that they are their children’s first and most important teacher.

**Ready to educate** – We must take seriously our mandate to get children ready. Ready to learn, ready to grow, ready to thrive in kindergarten and beyond. For every child who enters a formal educational, social service, or community action environment, we must be ready to give that child what they need from us to be able to be assessed as “demonstrating”.

Its time for Jasper County to be on the bottom of the state only on a map. But our children must rise to the top. So we are ready... are you?



*Duchett Polite Hylton, Executive Director  
 BUILD – 2018 QRIS Conference*

**Duchett Polite Hylton**  
**JCFS Executive Director**

**OUR MISSION:**  
 Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps Jasper County 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.

**Find Jasper County First Steps:**

### County Programs

- Parents as Teachers
- Imagination Library
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- Child Care Training
- Child Care Scholarships
- Early Identification & Referral

### State Programs

- Early Head Start
- First Steps 4k







# We get children ready.



## THE NEED

School readiness **depends on the capacity of caregivers** to provide children with consistent, nurturing, and responsive relationships in safe, stimulating learning environments, **continuously**, starting at birth. Unfortunately, these quality early childhood experiences happen for too few children in Jasper County.

How are JASPER County's children doing?	What early learning programs are available for children in our county? Last year:	Where can families access child care in our county?
<b>1653</b> are under age 5	<b>8</b> attended Early Head Start as infants and toddlers	<b>8</b> licensed child care centers
<b>35%</b> live in poverty	<b>70</b> attended free preschool or Head Start as 3-year-olds	<b>1</b> licensed group/family homes
<b>26%</b> of babies born in 2016 were to moms without a HS diploma	<b>125</b> 4-year-olds attended free full-day public school 4K or Head Start	<b>3</b> participate in the state's Quality Rating System (ABC Quality)
<b>39%</b> Live in single parent households	<b>106</b> 0-5 year olds received early intervention or special ed.	<b>3</b> providers are rated B or higher by <b>ABC Quality</b>
<b>10%</b> of last year's kindergartners demonstrated readiness	<b>18</b> were served by 	<b>70</b> families received assistance with affording child care last year
<i>Kids Count data provided by:</i> 	<i>Data provided by:</i> 	

## THE GOALS

Our partnership's work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Jasper County towards these strategic goals in support of the **Profile of the Ready Kindergartner**, South Carolina's description of school readiness:

1. To increase partnership presence and services in the community as local portal and convener
2. To increase the reach of JCFS programs and children/families served by building capacity within the partnership through the development and strengthening of human, institutional and funding resources
3. To identify and recruit board members who are active, committed participants to JCFS

## THE IMPACT

**In 2017-18, Jasper County First Steps provided:**

- ✓ **67 children and 64 adults with intensive support** to equip parents and caregivers with the confidence and competence to be a child's first and best teacher, and strengthen their family's health, economic, and overall well-being (**Parents As Teachers, Countdown to Kindergarten**)
- ✓ **24 staff** working in **15** child care providers, Head Start centers and preschool classrooms with training, technical assistance, resources and support, **helping them better meet the needs of children ages 0-5 in their care** (**Child Care Training**)
- ✓ financial assistance to help **9 children 0-5 attend quality child care** so their parents can work or attend school (**Child Care Scholarships**)
- ✓ **4813 books** to spark the love of reading for children (**Imagination Library, Parents As Teachers, Little Free Library, other community book distribution events**)
- ✓ a total of **648 children and 565 adults** were impacted by Jasper County First Steps programs, resources, activities and events.



# School Readiness Outcomes

## What is the KRA?

In 2017-18, kindergartners across the state were given for the first time South Carolina’s newest assessment of school readiness: the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**, or KRA. The KRA provides a snapshot of students’ abilities at the beginning of the school year, in four domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Development and Well-Being. Here are the results locally and for the state:

Jasper County (205 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	45%	39%	16%
Language&Literacy	40%	42%	18%
Mathematics	51%	34%	15%
Physical Dev&WB	51%	25%	23%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>10%</b>

SOUTH CAROLINA (54,927 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	28%	27%	45%
Language&Literacy	23%	43%	34%
Mathematics	31%	38%	31%
Physical Dev&WB	28%	24%	48%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>36%</b>

- 1. Language and Literacy:** reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- 2. Mathematics:** counting, comparison, and sorting
- 3. Physical Well-Being & Motor Development:** dexterity, muscular coordination, and balance
- 4. Social Foundations:** following rules, asking for help, task persistence and other skills necessary to function within the kindergarten classroom

**Demonstrating Readiness:** student demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

**Approaching Readiness:** student demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

**Emerging Readiness:** student demonstrates limited foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

## What is JASPER County First Steps doing to improve KRA results

Jasper County First Steps acknowledges that it is an uphill battle to address the overall findings of the year one KRA. JCFS will engage early child educators (private and public), community stakeholders and parents in discussions and planning sessions to identify where the gaps in service delivery, implementation and evidence of efficacy exist. Child care trainings will be provided to build teacher skills around area of language and math readiness skills development, social/emotional, and motor skills development. Strengthened follow-up and reflective support will be provided to educators to increase fidelity of curriculum strategies. Direct services to families, through home visitation and community education outreach, will also educate parents in ways to reinforce readiness concepts through innovative and proven methods on positive parent-child interactions. As a community, we will strive to fulfill our mission of truly getting children ready for school.

# Early Identification and Referral

Identifying and referring children with possible developmental delays can help assure school readiness.

## Program Description

First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EI&R) programs serve families with young children with suspected delays in development and coordinates public awareness for BabyNet services, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children

### EI&R services include:

1. **Screenings** (developmental, vision, hearing) for children ages birth to 5 years with suspected delays in development
2. **Referrals**, based up the screening results, to appropriate community resources. This could include the local BabyNet System Point of Entry Office, the local school district, and/or support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, and programs in libraries and other community resources.
3. **Parent information** including strategies to monitor growth and development.

### Our EI&R program:

- ✓ Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Promotes services and activities that promote child development
- ✓ Increases children's school readiness and school success



Jasper County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our EI&R families:

- 96% ... live in poverty
- 33% ... didn't graduate high school
- 25% ... were teen parents

## EI&R by the Numbers 2017-18

Children Served	26
Children Referred to BabyNet, Local School, or Other Services	2

## This year, our Early Identification and Referral program:

- ✓ Screened 26 number of children using Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- ✓ Referred 2 number of families to community resources after screening indicated need

## Thank you to our EI&R partners!

Jasper Co School District      DSS - Jasper  
 BabyNet                              DHEC - Jasper  
 PASOs                                  BDSN - Jasper

### Evidence of Effectiveness:

Early Identification and Referral meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an *evidence-based* program.



**Parents play a critical role in their child's development.**

## Program 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. PAT services include:

1. **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly
2. **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families
3. **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns
4. **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed

**Jasper County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PAT families:**

96% ... live in poverty  
57% ... didn't graduate from high school  
16% ... were teen parents



*"It is our duty, as parents and as teachers, to give all children the space to build their emotional strength and provide a strong foundation for their future."*

*Kate Middleton*

## PAT by the Numbers 2017-18

Families Served	37	
Children Served	46	
Total Home Visits	495	
Hours Spent Serving Families	522	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS +.08	ACIRI Adult .19 Child .11

## This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 2 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed XX potential developmental delays, and made 6 (15%) connections for families to services such as BabyNet, and School District Special Education and Child Care Scholarships
- ✓ Improved parenting practices through reflective practices and positive modeling during home visits as indicated using Keys to Interactive Parenting Skills
- ✓ Improved literacy skills indicated using Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory, activities from PAT lessons, 221 of books distributed

## Thank you to our PAT partners!

Jasper Co Schools	DSS - Jasper
Faith Communities	Wright Directions
Vocational Rehab	PASOs
Volunteers In Medicine	Pregnancy Center of the Lowcountry

## Evidence of Effectiveness:

Parents as Teachers meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



**Children’s reading scores improve dramatically when parents are involved in helping them learn to read.**

## Program Description

According to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, the peak period for brain development related to language is around **nine months of age**. **One of the easiest and most effective ways to build this capacity in young children’s brains is to read to them.**

JASPER County First Steps is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years. Operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Imagination Library is currently in more than 1,600 communities internationally and mails books to about 700,000 children each month.

Children who register with JASPER County First Steps receive one book per month by mail through the month of their fifth birthday. Each book is carefully selected by a committee of educational specialists.



DPII - Community Reading Night  
What Makes a Seed Grow  
Hardeeville Community Library

## Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2017-18

Children Served	567
Books Given to Children 0-5	4813



## This year, our Imagination Library program:

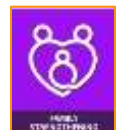
- ✓ Provided one book per month to 567 children
- ✓ Little Free Library Steward – sponsors 15 LFL throughout Jasper County
- ✓ Received donations from community members and organizations in support of children’s literacy
  - Jasper County Government – Imagination Library Funder
  - Sun City Residents – Little Free Library Supporter
  - Bluffton Methodist Church – Little Free Library Supporter

## Thank you to our Imagination Library partners!

- Dollywood Foundation
- Jasper County Government
- Sun City Wood Workers Guild & All About Art Club
- Bluffton Methodist Church

### Evidence of Effectiveness:

Imagination Library meets the First Steps legislation’s definition of an **evidence-based** program.



# Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, and affordable professional development.

## Program Description

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom.

*“An investment in education pays the best interest.”*  
**Benjamin Franklin**

**Training Sponsored by  
 JASPER County First Steps, 2017-18**

Topic:	Sessions:
Cradling Literacy	Modules 1,2, and 7
Planning With The End in Mind	One Session
CCR&R Super Saturday	Module 1 & 2
Math Rocks On!	Modules 1-3
TEAM Lowcountry 2018	Regional Conference



Child Care Training  
 Early educators thinking outside the box!  
 Palmetto Electric, Hardeeville

## Training by the Numbers, 2017-18

Total Training Attendance	80
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	24
Number of Training Sessions Offered	39


- This year, our Training program provided:**
- ✓ 24 early childhood staff with high quality training, impacting 15 providers
  - ✓ 7 hours of certified training and 32 hours of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
  - ✓ Follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice
  - ✓ TEAM Lowcountry provided 29 registered training courses, serving 237 total participants

## Thank you to our Training partners!

- TEAM Lowcountry Partners
- The Peace Project
- Child Care Resource & Referral
- ABC Quality

**Evidence of Effectiveness:**

Child Care Training and Professional Development meets the First Steps legislation’s definition of an **evidence-based** program.





# Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in JASPER County cannot afford quality care for their children.

## Program Description

Access to quality child care is essential for children while away from their primary caregivers. Yet, of those families income-eligible for child care assistance in South Carolina, only a small fraction receive it due to lack of funds. In the absence of nurturing and consistently available family, friends or neighbors, parents are faced with few - or no - affordable care options.

Jasper County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our scholarship families:

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 44% ... didn't graduate from high school
- 33% ... were teen parents
- 33% ... had developmental delays

In addition to regular monitoring of child care providers that receive First Steps scholarships, First Steps conducts at least one developmental screening each year with scholarship children and connects families to needed services within the community.

Child Care Scholarships are integrated with our Parents As Teachers strategy to support families who are employed or attending school/training. JCFS also supported SCFS 4K students by providing Summer scholarships to lessen "summer slide" for students transitioning to Kindergarten.

*"Research has shown time and time again that infants who receive the high-quality child care and early education programs do better in school, have more developed social skills, and display fewer behavior problems."*

Judy Biggert



Read 4 the Record Event – October 2017  
 Quackers  
 Ridgeland Baptist Church Child Care Ministries

### Scholarships by the Numbers, 2017-18

Children Served	9
Providers Served	2

### This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 2 children served through our Parents As Teachers program with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Provided 7 children served in SCFS 4K class with scholarship assistance during Summer 2017 so their parents could work or attend school and to lessen "summer slide" through continuity of education and care during transition to Kindergarten


### Thank you to our Scholarship partners!

- Beacon of Hope Child Development Center
- Ridgeland Baptist Church Child Care Ministry – 4K

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Our partnership's Child Care Scholarship strategy is considered **evidence-based** because it is connected to the following evidence-based programs:

- Parents As Teachers
- SCFS 4K program





**Bringing parents and teachers together as partners sets the foundation for success in school.**

## Program 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:

- ✓ to forge strong and lasting home-school relationships,
- ✓ to acquaint children and families with the state and classroom expectations to increase the likelihood of school success,
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children’s learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children’s early school success.

Countdown to Kindergarten integrates all of the following:

**Home Visitation.** Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of participating students and families. Children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep.

**Learning Celebration.** The last visit is a “field trip” to the school where the child will attend class in the fall.

**Public Awareness.** Throughout the summer, First Steps releases tips to media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

## \*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2017

Children Served	21
Families Served	19
Home/School Visits	126

*\*CTK program data is for June-August 2017, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.*



## This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ 100% of CTK parents would recommend CTK to other parents
- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 40%
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 100% of CTK children performed as well as, or better than, their fellow students in all areas of readiness during the 2017-18 school year.
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 33% of CTK parents were more involved than other parents in their child’s education in the areas of class room volunteering and maintaining contact with teacher.

## Thank you to our CTK partners!

- Jasper County Government
- Jasper County School District
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Town of Ridgeland

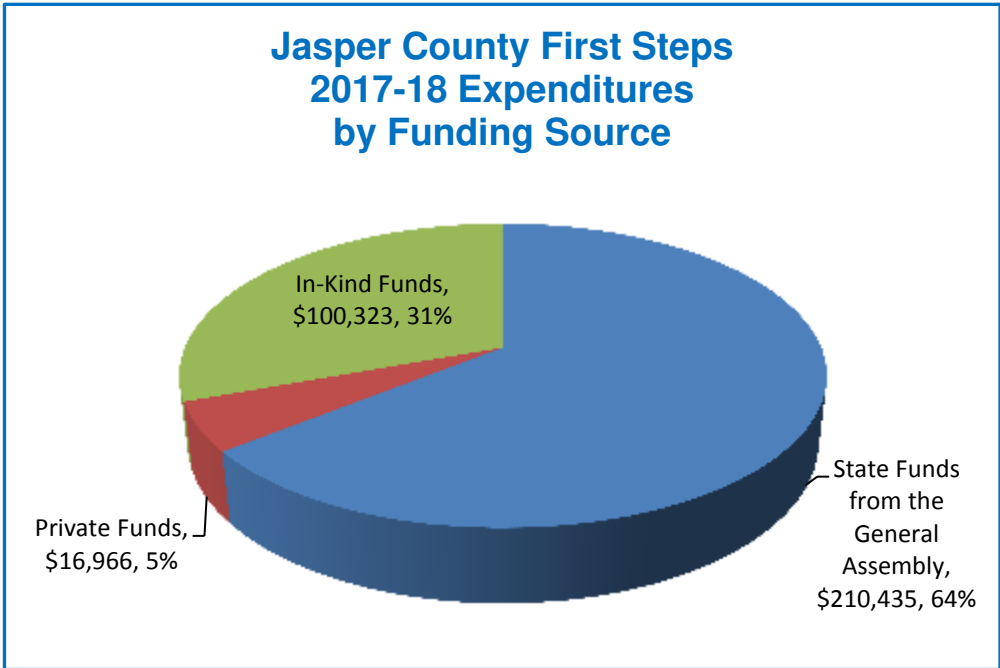
Like us on Facebook!  
 Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina

### Evidence of Effectiveness:

Our partnership’s Countdown to Kindergarten program meets the First Steps legislation’s definition of an **evidence-informed** program.



# Financial Impact



**Total 2017-18 Expenditures: \$330,990**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2017-18\*: 57%**

\*Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds

### 2017-18 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2017-18 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$95,914	\$0	\$3,232	\$8,640	<b>\$107,786</b>	<b>33%</b>
Imagination Library	\$0	\$0	\$9,809	\$62,013	<b>\$71,823</b>	<b>22%</b>
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$6,164	\$3,265	\$0	\$0	<b>\$9,429</b>	<b>3%</b>
Child Care Training	\$16,584	\$0	\$1,007	\$8,640	<b>\$26,232</b>	<b>8%</b>
Child Care Scholarships	\$27,572	\$0	\$1,337	\$3,840	<b>\$32,749</b>	<b>10%</b>
Early Identification & Referral	\$29,616	\$0	\$1,337	\$5,670	<b>\$36,622</b>	<b>11%</b>
Program Support	\$14,927	\$0	\$0	\$8,640	<b>\$23,567</b>	<b>7%</b>
Administrative Support	\$19,658	\$0	\$244	\$2,880	<b>\$22,783</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$210,435</b>	<b>\$3,265</b>	<b>\$16,966</b>	<b>\$100,323</b>	<b>\$330,990</b>	

*Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018*

**Since inception, Jasper County First Steps has leveraged \$1,318,933 from sources outside of state government. That's 41 cents for every state dollar.**

# Thank you supporters!

Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Jasper First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

### Funding Support

- State of South Carolina: \$200,000  
*(through South Carolina First Steps)*
- Jasper County Council: \$15,000
- SC Ports Authority: \$1,000

### In-Kind Support

- Jasper County School District
- Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

### More Community Partners

- TEAM Lowcountry Partners
- Jasper Co. Human Services Alliance
- Faith Community
- Palmett Electric Cooperative
- Jasper Co Parks & Recreation
- Tillman Wagon Branch Community
- Hunger Free Zone
- Pregnancy Center of the Lowcountry



Ms. G. Bostick, DPIL Community Champion  
 Back to School Event  
 Wagon Branch Community

**How your support helps children in Jasper County:**

- ✓ \$25 provides a young child a book per month for one year!
- ✓ \$50 feeds dinner to low-income families attending a parenting workshop
- ✓ \$270 helps a low-income family afford quality child care for one month

**HOW TO GIVE: Jasper County First Steps, PO Box 776, Ridgeland, SC 29936**

### Save the Date!

- 2019 Annual Meeting – Wednesday, October 17, 2018 – 6:00 pm  
 Palmetto Electric Community Room, 4063 Grays Hwy, Ridgeland, SC 29936
- 2019 Cathy Gardner “Growing Healthy Families” Community Fun Day – May 2019

**Support Jasper County First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!**

## Improving Parenting Practices & Detecting Developmental Delays

Amy Vargas, PAT Parent Educator

I have worked as a Parent Educator for over 2 years and have seen countless times that detecting developmental delays early on can make a huge difference in a child's life. Due to having completed the ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE2 assessments on a child I am currently serving, I was able to refer the child to the Jasper County School District due to developmental delays. The Jasper County School system was then able to assess the child and refer this child out to MUSC who then was able to diagnose the child with Autism. This child

is now enrolled in special needs classes for 3 year old children through the Jasper County School District and is receiving

speech and physical therapy and has already made significant improvements. Without the assessments I completed or the PAT program this child and parent would not have been able to get the help they needed or have the child's condition diagnosed at the age of 3 years old.



*PAT Group Connection  
 Ridgeland Fire & Rescue Department  
 Fire Safety Training*



*PAT Group Connection  
 Easter Egg Hunt  
 Sgt. Jasper Park, Hardeeville*



*PAT Group Connection  
 Summer Fun In The Sun!  
 Turpin Park, Ridgeland*



*PAT Group Connection  
 September – Library Card Month  
 Pratt Memorial Library*



# First Steps Partnership Board

## JCFS – Transforming the Board, Transforming the Community

The end of FY18 presented Jasper County First Steps with both a unique challenge and opportunity in looking at the composition of the partnership board. Of a board composed of 13 members, 8 would be leaving the organization because of expiring terms or due to leaving the serving area. We took this as an opportunity to take a deep look at the inherent strengths of our board as well as areas of needed bolstering of talents to recreate a thriving, diverse board of community influencers.

As a group, we used the Board Matrix to consider what demographics of persons would complement the current board members while also filling gaps in expertise left by either retiring members or areas that have previously been lacking. As a result of these team-building and reflective considerations, our partnership board has recruited a broad range of new partnership board directors.

In Jasper County, we have a great work ahead of us to realize the fulfillment of our vision that “every child will be prepared (ready) for school (kindergarten) success”. However, we are confident that because of the legacy of those who faithfully served before and the collaborative experience of our new board members, we are ready to tap institutional resources, build capacity to for long-term effectiveness and to convene our community around the shared vision of ready children, ready graduates and an eventual ready workforce.

We thank all our board members who serve, or have served the children of Jasper County over the past 19 years!

### Jasper County First Steps Partnership Board, 2017-18

Name	Position	Board Category
Dr. Tom Balliet	Member	Philanthropic Community
Ms. Deloris Dunham	Chairperson	Family Education Support
Ms. DaShon Ellis-Campbell	Member	Library Representative
Ms. Eleanor Hazel	Vice-Chairperson	School District Representative
Ms. Kimberly Malphrus	Member	DHEC Representative
Ms. Constance Martin-Witter	Member	Early Childhood Educator
Rev. Dave Allen Mitchell, III	Member	Faith Community
Ms. Ladenier Mitchell	Secretary	DSS Representative
Ms. Sharon Murdock	Member	PreK/Primary Educator
Mr. Kelvin Peoples	Member	Business Community
Ms. Denise Smith	Treasurer	Local Government
Ms. Sheila White	Member	Early Childhood Educator
Ms. Margaret Williams	Member	Early Childhood Educator
Ms. Mary WRIGHTEN	Member	Family Education Support

# What is First Steps?

**At the state level and in every county**, First Steps leverages state funding with other public and private resources to help South Carolina’s children enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. First Steps programs and services support families as their child’s first and most important teacher and are customized to meet the unique needs of local communities, grounded in strong evidence, fueled by stakeholder collaboration, and accountable for results.

## First Steps Goals

- (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.

### First Steps Building Blocks of Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



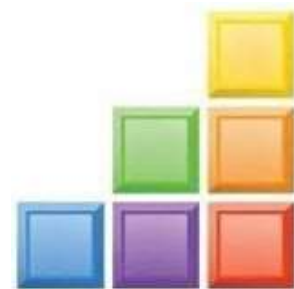
School Transition

From Greenville to Charleston, Abbeville to York, First Steps local partnerships serve as ...

**Local portals** connecting preschool children and families to services

**Conveners** of community stakeholders to address the needs of young children and their families

**Champions** of the importance of school readiness to our children’s future.



for South Carolina and to learn about First Steps 4K programs in your area:

[www.scfirststeps.org](http://www.scfirststeps.org)

for JASPER County First Steps:

[www.jaspercountyfirststeps.org](http://www.jaspercountyfirststeps.org)



[I CAN] is First Steps’ public awareness campaign for school readiness, in support of the state’s Profile of the Ready Kindergartener. Includes resources for parents, providers and communities to learn what they can do to support school readiness.

visit: [ican.sc](http://ican.sc)

Like us on Facebook: [icansc](https://www.facebook.com/icansc)