

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2024 – 2026



Acknowledgments

Bamberg County First Steps would like to graciously extend a thank you to everyone who worked to support the vision and mission of our comprehensive strategic needs assessment process. This important endeavor included representation from our First Steps Partnership Board, local school district, local state agencies, parents, and businesses.

“The project described was supported through South Carolina First Steps by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0080-02-01 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.”

Bamberg County School District Superintendent, Dr. Dottie Brown and Bamberg County First Steps Executive Director, Pauletta Plowden



Message from the Executive Director



Pauletta Plowden

Executive Director
Bamberg County First Steps

Bamberg County First Steps, a “National Blue Ribbon”, Parents As Teachers Affiliate is very proud to serve as an Early Childhood School Readiness Champion for the citizens of Bamberg County, South Carolina. As we navigate through our Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning Process for our 2024-2026 Comprehensive Plan, we’d like to give thanks to everyone who supported this important endeavor. To ensure high quality school readiness for our youngest learners, Bamberg County First Steps will continue to provide a professional strategic vision, that will be inclusive, engaging and viable in preparing our youngest learners for future scholastic success!

Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director

Message from the Board Chair



Tracy Golden

Board Chair

Bamberg County First Steps

Bamberg County First Steps has thrived to make sure our children start school ready. They have done an excellent job engaging families, teachers and community partners to help improve early childhood development for children aged zero to five years old in Bamberg County. I enjoy hearing about their parents program each month and all the impressive activities that was done. Our board works collaboratively to make sure our children and families in Bamberg County are provided continuous support and resources by connecting with our board members, school district and community partners and agencies. It gives me the greatest of pleasure to serve as Bamberg County First Steps Board Chair.

Sincerely,

Tracy Golden

Needs Assessment Process

CONVENE

Bamberg County First Steps held three community convenings with twenty-one participants and developed a vision for young children and their families. The Vision for Bamberg County First Steps will be *"Every child in Bamberg County will arrive at the first grade healthy and ready to learn!"*

January 6, 2023; February 28,2023; March 1,2023

PRIORITIZE

Pursuant to community engagements and valuable input, Bamberg County First Steps will focus on the following important priorities as part of the Needs Assessment/Strategic Planning Process: Childcare Deserts, Childcare Scholarships and Parenting Services.

January 2023 –March 2023



UNDERSTAND

Bamberg County First Steps reviewed local data, community resources and mapped assets to understand the state of young children, their families, and the early childhood system in Bamberg County, South Carolina.

January 6, 2023; February 28,2023; March 1, 2023

I am happy to be able to help Bamberg County First Steps with this important community planning engagement!

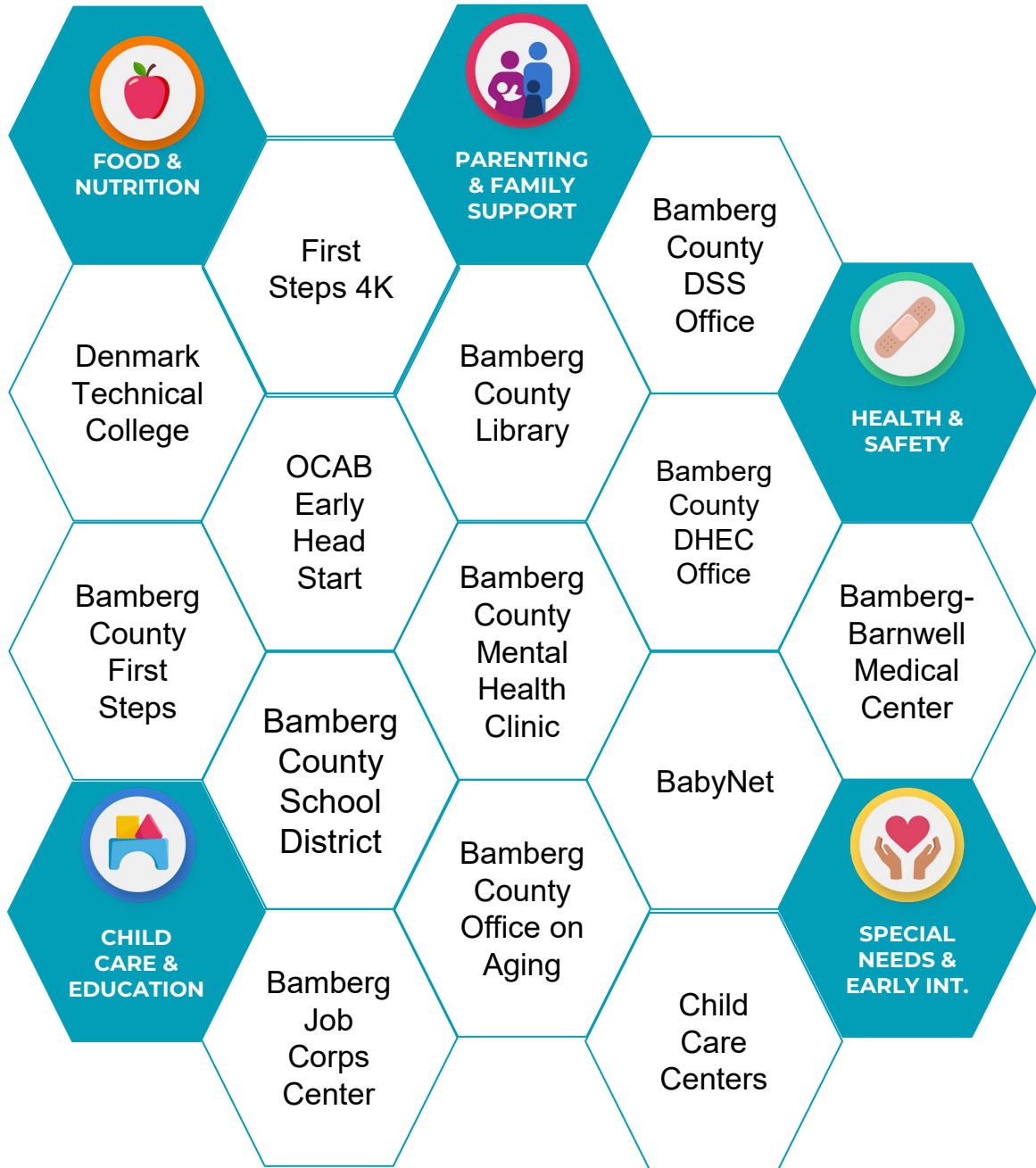
-Ms. M. Frazier



Our family daycare center has collaborated with First Steps for over eighteen years. We are pleased to be a part of your planning for our young children!-Ms. A. Carrigg



Asset Map



Priorities: Summary

1. Child Care Deserts

Establishing the conditions that promote educational achievement for children is critical, beginning with quality prenatal care and continuing through the early elementary years. High-quality preschool programs for 3- to 4-year-olds help set the stage for future skill development, well-being and learning, particularly families from low-income households. With 39.1% of children ages 0-17 living in households with incomes below the poverty level, survey results indicated a high needs for family support in finding high quality daycare centers. ABC quality childcare providers, lay a vital foundation that helps children to develop healthy habits, stay in school, graduate on time, pursue postsecondary education and training and successfully transition to adulthood. With 47% of Bamberg County considered a childcare desert , Bamberg County will work strategically to mobilize early childcare partners and daycare providers to ensure that all children arrive at the first grade healthy and ready to learn.

2. Child Care Scholarships

Access to quality early care education improves school readiness and long term academic outcomes, and provides parents with the opportunity to work and attend school. With 39.1% of children in Bamberg County living below the poverty level, Bamberg County First Steps will partner with South Carolina Department of Social Services to provide childcare scholarships to eligible children to receive free tuition at quality childcare centers.

3. Parenting Services

With 60.2% of children living in single parent families and 26.4% of children living in concentrated areas of poverty, Bamberg County Steps will partner with the local community schools and agencies in helping parents to becoming their child's first and most important teacher. Families will be in enrolled in a comprehensive parenting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed.

Priority One: Childcare Deserts

Data point

Data source: South Carolina First Steps/Kids Count

With 47% of Bamberg County considered a childcare desert, the Bamberg County First Steps will work to increase the number of First Steps funded childcare programs.

Bamberg County First Steps is currently funding two daycare providers in the county. The partnership will work to mobilize and increase collaboration to ensure that families with childcare scholarship have more daycare options for their babies.

SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment

MAPS: Compare county distribution of..	BARS: Compare distribution of two m..	MAPS: Explore census tracts in a county or c..	MAP: Explore child care access in a count..	MAP & BARS: Kindergarten readine..
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Select a Co.. Bamberg

Population .. 15.0%  73.3% Child care d.. No Yes



Provider location and center capacity obtained from schildcare.org on October 16, 2022. Definition of a child care desert obtained from the Center for American Progress, "A child care desert is ..

Priority Two: Childcare Scholarships

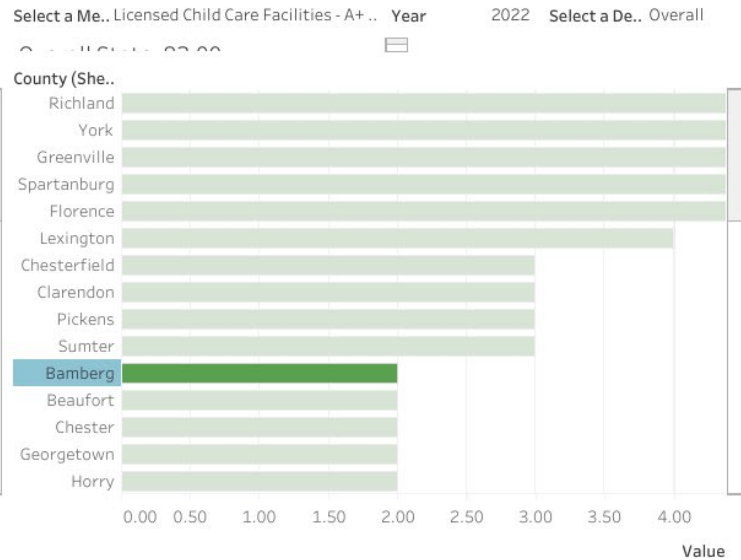
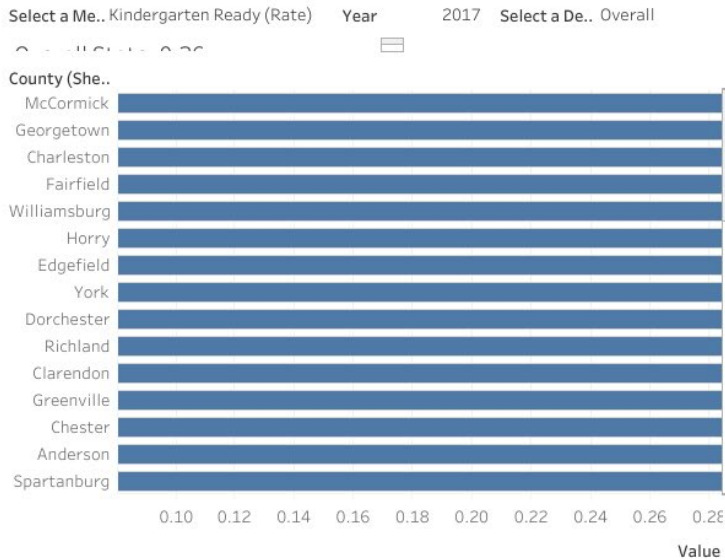
Data point

Data source: South Carolina First Steps/scchildcare.org

Bamberg County First Steps will work with local childcare providers and community agencies to increase their capacity to serve families that qualify for DSS childcare scholarships.

SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment

MAPS: Compare county distribution of..
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 MAP & BARS: Kindergarten readine..



Dashboard developed by South Carolina First Steps. Last updated October 19, 2022.

Priority Three: Parenting Services

Data point

Data source: South Carolina First Steps/ KRA/Kids Count

With less than 34% of kindergarten students demonstrating school readiness, Bamberg County First Steps will partner with local school districts, local childcare providers and DSS in an effort to increase KRA outcomes. With 4.7% of children failing the first, second and third grades, Bamberg County ranks 45 in the state of South Carolina for students failing these early grades. Bamberg County First Steps will provide high quality parenting services to increase positive data outcomes for kindergarten students.

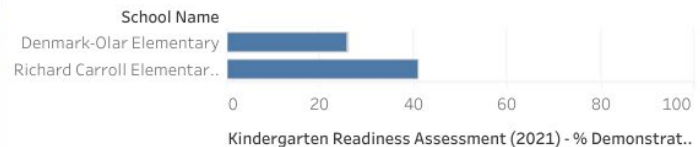
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Select a Dis.. Multiple values

Title I scho..

Yes



Next Steps

APPLY

Bamberg County First Steps will utilize the Strategic Plan to inform the partnership's Annual Formula Funding Grant Application

May 2023, May 2024, May 2025

MONITOR

Bamberg County First Steps will track the partnership's progress on implementing programs to fidelity and on achieving the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026



PLAN

Bamberg County First Steps will write the partnership's three-year Strategic Plan using the Needs Assessment

March 2023 – May 2023

IMPLEMENT

Bamberg County First Steps will execute the programs and services outlined in the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026

