Local Partnership Governance and Operations Self-Assessment

Local Partnership: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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|  | **Yes** | **No**  |
| 1. a) Does the board coordinate a collaborative effort at the county or multicounty level to identify area needs

 related to the First Steps legislative goals, and develop a strategic long-term plan for meeting those needs? |  |  |
|  b) Does the board assure the partnership’s strategic plan is aligned with the priorities identified in the state  strategic plan adopted by the SC First Steps Board? |  |  |
| 1. Does the board adhere to local partnership By-Laws and Operating Procedures and the First Steps Legislation?
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| 1. Does the board implement program strategies in accordance with SC First Steps Partnership and Program Accountability Standards?
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| 1. Does the board exercise due diligence when selecting program strategies and, when establishing new program strategies, commit to allowing sufficient time for successful implementation (minimum 2 years recommended)?
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| 1. Does the board comply with the terms and conditions contained in the local partnership’s annual grant agreement with South Carolina First Steps?
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| 1. Does the board meet as a full board at least once every fiscal quarter, with one full board meeting each year designated as the Annual Meeting?
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| 1. Does the board maintain all current approved policies/procedures/standards for conducting meetings and elections and disclosing records comparable to those provided for in the Freedom of Information Act and IRS disclosure requirements?
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| 1. Does the board maintain board minutes and records of all full board and board committee meetings (e.g. notices, sign-in-sheets, and documentation of conflict of interest)?
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| 1. Does the board operate in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws pertaining to non-profit organizations and ensure the partnership board and staff meet all requirements to maintain the partnership’s non-profit status with the IRS, including the continuous maintenance of Directors’ and Officers’ liability insurance?
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| 1. Does the board adopt and review annually the Conflict of Interest Policy contained in the partnership’s grant agreement with SCFS?
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| 1. Does the board adopt and maintain a Whistleblower Policy and procedure for the partnership’s board and staff?
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| 1. a) Do new members receive a board orientation that addresses, at minimum, membership responsibilities; the

 mission/vision, structure, policies/procedures/standards for operation; and program strategies?  |  |  |
|  b) Does the board participate in an annual review of key documents to include, but not limited to, thepartnership’s grant agreement with SCFS; partnership and program standards; partnership-by-laws; Conflict of Interest Policy; and First Steps legislation? |  |  |
|  c) Does the board abide by the attendance policy contained in partnership by-laws? |  |  |
| d) Do board members participate in ongoing board development? |  |  |
| e) Do board members maintain a current term on the board not to exceed 8 years (2 consecutive four-year terms) and regularly attend meetings in accordance with local partnership By-Laws? |  |  |
|  f) Does the board hold annual elections for partnership board officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary)?  Officer terms are for one year. Board chair and vice chair terms cannot exceed 4 years (4 consecutive,  one-year terms). |  |  |
| g) Does the board abide by the Conflict of Interest Policy; that is, prior to every vote taken by the board, members  must abstain from voting if the issue being considered would result in a conflict of interest? Is the abstention  noted in the minutes of the meeting? |  |  |
| 1. Are board member rosters published in the partnership’s annual report, reported annually to the partnership’s legislative delegation and on file with the Office of First Steps?
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| 1. Have local partnerships submitted signed, electronic copies of board minutes for the prior fiscal year to SCFS, on behalf of the state board, by the deadline for submitting partnership Annual Reports?
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| 1. Does the board and staff exercise appropriate stewardship by adhering to the practices and procedures outlined in the SC First Steps Operations Manual?
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| 1. a) Are data collected and entered in a timely fashion in the First Steps Data Collection System for all

 programs/strategies, according to the First Steps Program Accountability Standards for that strategy?  |  |  |
| b) Are program and vendor registration completed for all funded strategies, projected to serve numbers for each  strategy entered, and data entry begun by September 1 of each program year? |  |  |
| 1. Are partnership and vendor staff adhering to the standard for timely data submission, which is within

 30 days of the date of service? SC First Steps reserves the right to view partnership and vendor data in the  system at any time, including but not limited to the following data checkpoints: 30 days after Quarter 1 (Oct.  31); 30 days after Quarter 2 (Jan. 31); on or after the published deadline for submitting partnership Renewal  Plans; and the published data deadline for final determination of strategy approvals (June 1). Data will be used to evaluate overall program performance and sustainability. |  |  |
| 1. Do partnership board, staff and contractors participate and cooperate fully in all internal and independent evaluations of the First Steps initiative?
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| 1. a) Does the board assure that an equitable work environment that is supportive of organizational productivity,

 diversity, and stability is provided by the local partnership board and staff? |  |  |
|  b) Does the board assure that unlawful discrimination against any person or category of persons for services or  employment does not occur? |  |  |
| c) Does the board comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding employee  iscrimination and workplace policies, as outlined in the partnership’s annual grant agreement with SC First Steps? |  |  |
| 1. Does the board prohibit preferential treatment and nepotism with regard to hiring, supervision, and

 promotion? |  |  |
| 1. Have the board and staff received copies of the board-adopted Whistleblower Policy?
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| 1. Has the board adopted human resource policies?
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| 1. Does the board assure that the partnership makes every effort to participate in scheduled meetings and teleconferences/webinars with SC First Steps? In the event the partnership executive director is unable to attend, does a board member or staff member attend if possible? Partnerships are responsible for the content presented.
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| 1. Does the board comply with all contractual and legislative deadlines for submitting documents to the State Office of First Steps, including but not limited to: Conduct and submit an Annual Report annually by October 1 and a complete Renewal Plan grant application by the published deadline?
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| 1. Does the board follow the records retention policy contained in their grant agreement with SCFS, as well as the retention policy for Corporate Records contained in the partnership by-laws?
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| 1. a) Does the board assure that the partnership and all its employees, agents, contractors and representatives

 safeguard confidential information and comply with all Confidentiality/Safeguarding Information requirements contained in the partnership’s grant agreement with SCFS? |  |  |
| b) Does the board assure that the partnership keeps on file a Confidentiality Form for each employee and board  member?  |  |  |
| * + - 1. Do board members sign a Confidentiality Form annually?
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| * + - 1. At minimum, do employees sign a Confidentiality Form upon starting employment with the partnership? It is recommended that employees and vendor staff sign a Confidentiality Form annually.
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| The following questions are not reflected directly in the Standards but are recommended as best practices: |  |  |
| Are quorums achieved at all board and committee meetings? |  |  |
| Does the board conduct an annual review of the Executive Director (ED)’s performance? |  |  |
| Does the board have material involvement in the establishment of the ED’s salary and benefits? |  |  |
| Does the board have an approved ED Succession Plan? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership have adequate and appropriate liability insurance to meet its needs? |  |  |
| Has the local partnership meet with its insurance agent to discuss liability insurance needs? |  |  |
| Is the local partnership registered with the SC Secretary of State as a charitable organization? |  |  |
| In terms of human resources/staff development: |  |  |
| Is the annual performance review process in place for all local partnership staff? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership have board-approved human resources policies that are available to personnel? |  |  |
| Does the partnership maintain documented evidence that it is a non-discriminatory workplace?  |  |  |
| Does the partnership maintain documented evidence that it is an Equal Opportunity Employer?  |  |  |
| Does the partnership maintain evidence of a written Whistleblower policy and procedure? |  |  |
| • Has the Whistleblower policy been approved in Board minutes? |  |  |
| Does the partnership have a method for tracking employee leave? |  |  |
| Do all partnership staff complete signed timesheets? |  |  |
| • Are timesheets approved by the supervisor/board chair as appropriate? |  |  |
| Is there a board-approved job description for the Executive Director?  |  |  |
| Are job descriptions, approved by the Executive Director, available for all other staff positions? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership staff participate in professional development opportunities? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership perform background checks on all new hires? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership provide orientation sessions for new staff? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership have an identified second in command in the absence of the Executive Director? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership staff have a code of ethics? |  |  |
| In terms of information technology: |  |  |
| Does the local partnership have IT policies? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership maintain a schedule for regular backups of critical applications and data? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership maintain an IT Disaster Recovery Plan? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership delete accounts and data system logins for employees and vendor staff immediately upon their leaving the organization? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership maintain the proper physical security and network security for its IT infrastructure (e.g., locked doors, fire detection, fire alarm, security systems, firewall, spam filter)? |  |  |
| Does the local partnership have a retention policy for documents, emails, and other forms of communication? |  |  |