



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2021 – 2023





## Mission

**From Day 1 to Grade 1, Richland First Steps empowers our community to nurture children, so they are ready to thrive in school.**

## Vision

**A community committed to ensuring the school readiness of its children.**

## Values

**Trust** – We will foster trust within the organization and the community.

**Love** – “Love is the best motivator for learning and growth.”

*Dr. Becky Bailey, founder of Conscious Discipline*

**Respect** – We value the feelings, wishes, rights and traditions of others.

**Racial Equity** – We will work to change the systems that keep families from having the tools and resources to equip their children for success in school and life.

**Quality** – Quality + Readiness = Success

# Message from the Executive Director



**Marcia W. Bacon**  
Executive Director  
Richland First Steps

What an exciting time it is at Richland First Steps! We have opened our newest Early Head Start center, our staff has gone above the 50 mark, and we have an excited and engaged Board of Directors. We have many new opportunities in the works, and I am thrilled with what is in store for the next three years.

It is a great time to be helping Richland County's children get ready for school, even as we start this year in a pandemic. I hope you will join us!

Wishing you well,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcia Bacon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# Message from the Board Chair



**RITA PAUL**  
Board Chair  
Richland First Steps

There is an old saying about things coming full circle in your life. Twenty years ago I was honored to be a part of the original state level staff in the development and start up of the Office of First Steps. And now, twenty years later I am deeply honored to step into the role of Board Chair of Richland First Steps.

In the past two years we have hired our second only CEO, developed an organization with more than 50 staff and expanded our Early Head Start program!

Because of our dedicated and amazing CEO and staff and an unsurpassed committed and caring Board the next three years will be quite a ride!

With gratitude,

*Rita G. Paul*

# Richland's Overarching Measures of Success

## **INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES**

By the end of FY23, the percentage of children in need who are directly served by Richland County First Steps will increase from 6% to 8%.

## **SECOND MEASURE OF SUCCESS**

### **(MORE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT KINDERGARTEN READY FOR SUCCESS?)**

By 2023, the percentage of children who score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment will increase by 2% each year, **from 37% to 43%.**

# Richland's Objectives for 2021 - 2023

1. Young children are ready for school
2. Advocacy for caregivers, educators and young children
3. Fully engaged RFS Board of Directors and Staff

# 1. Young children are ready for school

## **STRATEGY 1.1**

Early Head Start center-based care

### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY 23, the Ridgewood EHS center will have applied for accreditation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
2. By the end of FY 23, the Virginia Wingard EHS Center will have achieved a Level A rating by ABC Quality.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR**

- SC Association for the Education of Young Children

## **STRATEGY 1.2**

Excellence in Care and Early Learning (ExCEL)

### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY 23, 20% of the childcare centers working with the ExCEL program will increase their ABC Quality Level.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- LENA, ABC Quality and SC DSS

# 1. Young children are ready for school

## **STRATEGY 1.3**

Parents as Teachers

### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY 23, any home visitation program using KIPS will have 75% of the families scoring a 3 or higher.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- **WIC and DSS**



## 2. Advocacy for caregivers, educators and young children

### **STRATEGY 2.1**

Create a community awareness campaign around the meaning and importance of school readiness.

### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY 23, RCFS will have a school readiness platform on social media and other venues that increases our engagement and following by 50%.

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR**

- UofSC Business Community Leadership Fellows

## 3. Fully engage RFS Board of Directors and Staff.

### **STRATEGY 3.1**

RFS Board of Directors

#### **SMART GOAL**

1. In FY 23, 75% of the Board members will have attended three Board committee meetings that year. (Executive, Communications, Governance, Finance and Development Committees)

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- SCFS and Nonprofit Leadership Lab resources

### **STRATEGY 3.2**

RFS Staff members

#### **SMART GOAL**

1. By the end of FY 23, staff turnover will have decreased by 10% from 43% to 33%.

#### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)**

- Terryberry Service Awards, Office of Head Start, SHRM