

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2021 – 2023



Mission

Collaborating with other entities, Lancaster County First Steps helps Lancaster 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.

Vision

Every Lancaster County child will enter school ready to succeed.

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.

Message from the Executive Director



Lora Bryson

Executive Director

Lancaster County First Steps

At Lancaster County First Steps, we are committed to the future and meeting the goals of our programs. We have detailed a comprehensive plan that includes all stakeholders as we continue to work towards ensuring all Lancaster County children are ready for school and beyond. We approach this task by analyzing our community needs and responding to those needs. We have a multi-faceted approach that includes many different programs that will meet the needs and reach the highest number of children and families in our communities. As a convener of resources in the community, we are also able to match families with other resources that are available in our community. We look forward to reaching the goals for the upcoming years and more!

Lora P Bryson

Overarching Measure(s) of Success

INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES

By FY23, Lancaster County First Steps will increase the number of children who are directly served by increasing Early Head Start and/or 4K services in the county.

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HIGH INTENSITY PROGRAMS FUNDED BY FIRST STEPS

By FY23, Lancaster County First Steps will increase the number of children who are enrolled in Early Head Start and/or 4K services which are high intensity programs.

Objectives

- 1. PROVIDE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FAMILIES AND ENSURE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.**
- 2. SERVE AT RISK CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.**
- 3. INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND COLLABORATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS.**

OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR FAMILIES AND ENSURE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

STRATEGY 1.1

Incredible Years

SMART GOAL(S)

- By the end of FY21, families will report use of more effective communication and use of non-corporal discipline with children by 50% via pre and post survey.
- By the end of FY23, families will report a 50% increase in quality time spent with children via pre and post survey.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with First Steps 4K, the public school 4K program, Early Head Start/Head Start, DSS and other community agencies to recruit families for Incredible Years.

STRATEGY 1.2

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY23, we will increase the number of families served by 100.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with Lancaster County School District, local businesses and individuals, Early Head Start/Head Start, United Way, the Literacy Council, local public library, Partners for Youth and the Prevention Coalition.

1. Objective *continued*

STRATEGY 1.3

Weekend Backpack Feeding Program

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY23, increase the number of educational materials and community resources shared in backpacks by 50%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with the Lancaster County School District, local businesses and individuals, Second Harvest Food Bank and the Springs Close Foundation.

STRATEGY 1.4

Early Identification and Referral

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY23, we will increase the number of children served by 25%.
2. By FY23, we will increase the number of families that complete the referral process by 25%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with BabyNet, the local disabilities board, Lancaster County School District, local pediatricians, the Children's Council, DSS, DHEC and child care centers

OBJECTIVE 2: SERVE AT RISK CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT SCHOOL READY TO LEARN.

STRATEGY 2.1

Early Head Start Child Care Partnership

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY23, we will have at least 75% of children meeting widely held expectations on their Teaching Strategies Gold developmental assessments.
2. By FY23, we will have our child care partners reaching an “A” level child care license.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will collaborate and partner with DSS, DHEC, United Way, Carolina Community Action, A Father’s Way, BabyNet, ABC voucher program, local pediatricians, Lancaster County School District, Catawba Mental Health and local child care center partners.

STRATEGY 2.2

4K in Kershaw

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY21, the new 4K site will be open.
2. By FY23, we will be serving the funded enrollment.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with SC First Steps, the Town of Kershaw and the Lancaster County School District.

2. Objective *continued*

STRATEGY 2.3

Countdown to Kindergarten

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By FY23, we will increase the number of parents involved with their child's school experience via Parent Teacher Conferences, PTO participation and other school enrichment events by 85%.
2. By FY23, we will increase the number served by 25%.
3. By FY23, 90% of parents will report via pre and post survey an increase in time spent reading to their child and assisting their child with school work and assignments at home.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with the Lancaster County School District, United Way and The Springs Close Foundation.

OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND COLLABORATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS.

STRATEGY 3.1

Community Awareness and Outreach Services

SMART GOAL(S)

- By FY23, we will attend and participate in 4 local fairs/activities per year.
- By FY23, we will present to 4 community agencies per year.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with the University of SC- Lancaster, Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, City of Lancaster, County Services, DSS, DHEC, BabyNet, local businesses and individuals, A Father's Way, the Children's Council, Promise Neighborhood Committee, Lancaster County School District and local child care centers.

STRATEGY 3.2

Community Education

SMART GOAL(S)

- By FY21, we will enhance webpage and print materials to include more information and resources on school readiness.
- By FY21, we will increase our presence on social media by 25%.
- By FY21, we will increase our distribution of school readiness materials by 25%.

3. Objective *continued*

STRATEGY 3.2 *continued*

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will partner with the University of SC- Lancaster, Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, City of Lancaster, County Services, DSS, DHEC, BabyNet, local businesses and individuals, A Father's Way, the Children's Council, Promise Neighborhood Committee, Lancaster County School District and local child care centers.

STRATEGY 3.3

Local Portal and Convener

SMART GOAL(S)

1. LCFS will lead the Early Education Initiative for the Promise Neighborhood Project. By FY23, we will convene monthly meetings.
2. By FY21, we will complete a needs survey of 2,000 families.
3. By FY23, we will utilize the needs survey to develop community engagement committees and increase our outreach by 50%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Identify the community partners that will be involved.