



LOCAL PARTNERSHIP CORE FUNCTIONS GUIDANCE





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Overview	5
Serve as a Local Portal	6
Community Convener	10
Support State Level Priorities	14
Mobilizing Local Communities	17



INTRODUCTION

Per First Steps legislation, SECTION 59-152-70, First Steps local Partnerships are required to include the following core functions in their comprehensive plan:

1. Service as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children;
2. Service as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families; and
3. Support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board;

In addition, one of the five legislative goals of First Steps (**SECTION 59-152-30**) is considered a Core Function:

4. 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.

In order to implement and budget for Local Partnership Core Functions, this guide provides specific examples of activities that can help inform your practice. Unlike First Steps Partnership and Program Accountability Standards, this guidebook is not all inclusive and is intended as a guide only. All suggested guidance is meant to be used to improve operations, better project staff and activities costs for budgeting, and increase collaboration with community partners.



INTRODUCTION

In using this guide, you can choose what category best applies for your core function activity. Each activity can only be counted as one core function. Lastly, activities for families enrolled in specific strategies (for example, Parents as Teachers) cannot be included here.

For any questions and further details, please email Dione Brabham, data system manager, at dbrabham@scfirststeps.org, or call (803) 521-0012.



CORE FUNCTIONS OVERVIEW

SERVE AS A LOCAL PORTAL

Each Partnership will serve as a Local Portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children.

SERVE AS A COMMUNITY CONVENER

As a component of community mobilization, local partnerships shall serve as a community connector between community supports and families. To enable this, Partnerships will identify and educate key community leaders about the importance of early childhood education and engage them in First Steps services and activities.

SUPPORT OF STATE-LEVEL SCHOOL READINESS PRIORITIES

Local Partnerships will support state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board. Here are examples: education regarding the results of Kindergarten Readiness Assessments (KRA); and promoting First Steps 4K.

MOBILIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Local Partnerships will raise public awareness of First Steps' services/activities to families in their community and educate them on the importance of early childhood education.



SERVE AS A LOCAL PORTAL

OVERVIEW

Each Partnership will serve as a Local Portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children. Services may include and are not limited to:

- Operating an accessible office with advertised office hours and staffed to provide direct service
- Responding promptly to emails and phone calls
- Providing online access to resources via website and/or social media
- Making referrals by phone, online resources, and/or social media
- Connecting to services and programs not provided by First Steps (*E.g. Benefit Bank; Medicaid ; Parent and Family Resource Center ; Federal & State Emergency Aid; Disaster Assistance*); etc.)
- Accessing developmental screenings to prioritize family's needs and referrals

Partnership staff and volunteers who provide these services should have knowledge of community providers to best connect families.



SERVE AS A LOCAL PORTAL

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

Below each heading are specific examples of activities that could be counted as core functions. If your Partnership has completed activities that are not listed below, but could be considered local portal activities, do not hesitate to brainstorm with your Program Officer.

CHILDREN, AGES 0-5, CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE BY LOCAL PARTNERSHIP PORTALS. (Matrix header: Children Served 0-5)

Example

The number of preschool aged children, not enrolled in a First Steps program, referred by your Partnership to affiliated service providers, agencies, and other applicable community resources.

FAMILIES CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES BY LOCAL PARTNERSHIP PORTALS.

(Matrix header: Families Served)

Example

The number of families, not enrolled in a First Steps program, referred by your Partnership to affiliated service providers, agencies, and other applicable community resources.

ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS CONNECTED TO COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES BY LOCAL PARTNERSHIP PORTALS.

(Matrix header: Adult Family Members Served)

Example

The # of adults, per family, referred to community-based services.



SERVE AS A LOCAL PORTAL

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

Referred services, could include, but are not limited to:

- Health and wellness providers
- Adult Education
- Outside agency referral
- Parenting Education and/or Parenting Classes
- BabyNet
- Benefit Bank
- Medicaid
- WIC

OTHER ADULTS SERVED

The subcategory refers to adults who are not a part of a family but are taking advantage of Local Partnership Portals. These adults can include, but are not limited to:

- Teachers
- Staff from Partner Organization

PROVIDERS SERVED

As a result of Local Partnership Portals, community providers received referrals for their services. Providers can include, but are not limited to:

- Childcare Centers,
- Head Start or Early Head Start Centers,
- School Districts, and
- Library-based programs.



SERVE AS A LOCAL PORTAL

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

The total number of physical products given to children, families, community leaders, community professionals, and partnering providers, by First Steps staff and volunteers while attending group meetings, training, activities, and events.

**Be sure not to count program materials that are distributed as part of a First Steps program and thus counted under that strategy. **

GROUP MEETINGS, TRAININGS, ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

1. Number of Sessions/Events

(Matrix header: Number of Sessions or Events)

Example

The number of meetings/training/activities/events offered by Local Partnerships that allows FS to act as a local portal.

2. Number of Hours Spent

(Matrix header: Number of Hours Offered)

Example

The total number of hours spent at meetings, focus groups, etc. that are focused on connecting children, families, and the professional community.

3. Total Attendance

(Matrix header: Total Attendance)

Example

The number of people who received referrals from a Local Partnership while attending events, group meetings, training, activities, events, etc.



COMMUNITY CONVENER

OVERVIEW

Local partnerships shall serve as a community convener around the needs of preschool children and their families and create opportunities for collaboration. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Community Engagement
- Collaboration
- Coalition building – Local strategic planning meetings to mobilize community support for early childhood issues, and school readiness. (Attendees can include but are not limited to your First Steps board; your staff; First Steps 4K partners; and local providers/existing community partners.)
- Participating in a local Interagency Council
- Collaborating and sharing resources with other agencies and partnerships to strengthen and expand services, i.e., conference collaboration/co-sponsoring; grant applications
- Providing networking opportunities to build relationships and foster collaboration
- Advocating for agency mission and on behalf of constituents



COMMUNITY CONVENER

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

Below each heading are specific examples of activities that could be counted as core functions. If your Partnership has completed activities that are not listed below, but could be considered community convener activities, do not hesitate to brainstorm with your Program Officer.

CONVENING ACTIVITIES THAT COULD STIMULATE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/NETWORKS:

- Convening of Local First Steps Teams - Including local 4K, and other First Steps stakeholders serving children 0 to 5
- Political convenings - Local Partnership and community professionals have group meetings with legislative members
- Convening of programs and providers who seek a partnership with First Steps Local Partnerships
- Co-agency activities between First Steps Local Partnership and other stakeholders serving children 0 to 5
- Convening of Local First Steps 4K teams
- Forums to promote community education
- Town Halls targeting parents and/or school districts and teachers

CHILDREN SERVED 0-5

N/A



COMMUNITY CONVENER

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

FAMILIES SERVED

N/A

ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS SERVED

N/A

OTHER ADULTS SERVED

Example

Community professionals who participate in community convener activities hosted by First Steps. These adults can include, but are not limited to:

- Teachers
- Staff from Partner Organization

How to count: # of Community professionals in attendance

PROVIDERS SERVED

Providers who participate in community convener activities hosted by First Steps.

Providers can include, but are not limited to:

- Childcare Centers,
- Head Start or Early Head Start Centers,
- School Districts, and
- Library-based programs.

How to count: # of providers in attendance



COMMUNITY CONVENER

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

Materials distributed by Local Partnerships at community convenings to support the promotion of local, regional, and state initiatives to improve school readiness.

GROUP MEETINGS, TRAININGS, ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

1. Number of Sessions/Events

(Matrix header: Number of Sessions or Events)

Example

The number of community convenings offered by Local Partnerships to stimulate community networks and new partnerships with other child serving professionals.

2. Number of Hours Spent

(Matrix header: Number of Hours Offered)

Example

The total number of hours spent at community convenings offered by Local Partnerships to stimulate community networks and new partnerships with other child serving professionals.

3. Total Attendance

(Matrix header: Total Attendance)

Example

The number of child-serving professionals that attended community convenings offered by Local Partnerships to stimulate community networks and new partnerships.



SUPPORT STATE LEVEL PRIORITIES

OVERVIEW

Support of state-level school readiness priorities as determined by the State Board.

Activities may include and are not limited to:

- Sharing KRA results in Partnership board meetings, meetings with stakeholder organizations, parent meetings or trainings, training sessions for teachers (childcare, preschool, Head Start, K-12 educators or staff)
- Promoting First 4K (i.e. Promotion and outreach; enrollment advocacy)
- Participation in PDG funded Needs and Resources activities, not connected to your FY20 Needs and Resources Assessment (Phase I/II)
- Circulating “Profile for the Ready Kindergarten” materials
- Implementing activities that align with the goals of the Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Attending Special Education Committee meetings



SUPPORT STATE LEVEL PRIORITIES

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

Below each heading are specific examples of activities that could be counted as core functions. If your Partnership has completed activities that are not listed below, but could be considered as supporting state level priorities, do not hesitate to brainstorm with your Program Officer.

CHILDREN SERVED 0-5

The total number of children who have received 4K referrals.

FAMILIES SERVED

(Matrix header: Families Served)

The total number of families who have received 4K referrals.

ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS SERVED

N/A

OTHER ADULTS SERVED

N/A

PROVIDERS SERVED

The number of providers offered information regarding First Steps 4K.

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

4K promotional materials given to children, families, community leaders, community professionals, and partnering providers, by First Steps staff and volunteers



SUPPORT STATE LEVEL PRIORITIES

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

GROUP MEETINGS, TRAININGS, ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

Number of Sessions/Events

(Matrix header: Number of Sessions or Events)

Example

The number of state-level activities attended by Local Partnership Executive Directors, board members, and/or staff.

Number of Hours Spent

(Matrix header: Number of Hours Offered)

Example

The total number of hours spent at state-level activities attended by Local Partnership Executive Directors, board members, and/or staff.

Total Attendance

N/A



MOBILIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

OVERVIEW

Local Partnerships will identify activities that will raise awareness of First Steps mission, activities, and priorities, educate the public and families about the importance of early childhood education and reach out to identified populations to engage them in First Steps services and activities. You and your staff should consider service projects, events, and activities that may be attractive to families, and local professionals. A wide variety of strategies and activities can be used to accomplish this Core Function including but not limited to:

- Developing, producing and/or distributing public education materials to promote the partnership's mission and inform the public of available resources
- Sponsoring, co-sponsoring, and/or participating in community events that promote school readiness
- Using website and/or social media to communicate, inform and activate
- Mobilizing volunteers for special events; targeted outreach; etc.



MOBILIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

Below each heading are specific examples of activities that could be counted as core functions. If your Partnership has completed activities that are not listed below but could be considered public education and community outreach activities, do not hesitate to brainstorm with your Program Officer.

CHILDREN SERVED, 0-5/ FAMILIES SERVED/ ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS SERVED

(Matrix headers: Children 0-5 Served/Families Served/Adult Family Members Served)

Examples

Children/ Families Served can be quantified as:

- The number (#) of children and/or families who received promotional items at a First Steps booth or table.
- The number (#) of children and/or families who received educational materials from First Steps staff and volunteers while at a First Steps sponsored activity or community-wide event.
- The number (#) of families referred to First Steps services while interacting with a Local Partnership during a community activity or event.

The same criteria apply when counting **Adult Family Members Served**. Be sure to avoid duplicate counts!

Unduplicated vs. Duplicated Count: If your parent training event (not tied to a First Steps specific program strategy) held 15 sessions during the year and one parent came to 5 sessions, count the parent once, not 5 times. If you do not have exact numbers, please estimate as best as possible an unduplicated count.



MOBILIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

OTHER ADULTS SERVED

Example

The number of community professionals with increased awareness of First Step program services after interacting with Local Partnership at a community event or other outreach activity.

How to count:

- *How many community professionals received promotional material about First Steps at a community event or activity?*
- *How many community professionals signed up to hear more about First Steps after attending community event or other outreach activity?*

PROVIDERS SERVED

Example

The number of providers attending a community-based event or other outreach activity promoting school readiness.

Providers can include, but are not limited to:

- Childcare Centers,
- Head Start or Early Head Start Centers,
- School Districts, and
- Library-based programs.

TOTAL NUMBER OF MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED

The number of physical products distributed at a community-based activity or event.

****Be sure not to count materials counted as one of your program strategies. ****



MOBILIZING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

NUMBERS SERVED ENTRY GUIDE

GROUP MEETINGS, TRAININGS, ACTIVITIES, EVENTS

1. Number of Sessions/Events

(Matrix header: Number of Sessions or Events)

Example

The number of group meetings/training/activities/events offered by Local Partnerships during community-based activities and events (i.e., information table at community event; FS training at a Job Fair and/or library event).

2. Number of Hours Spent

(Matrix header: Number of Hours Offered)

Example

The number of hours spent in group meetings/training/activities/events offered by Local Partnerships during community-based activities and events.

3. Total Attendance

(Matrix header: Total Attendance)

Example

The number of people who attended Local Partnership group meetings/training/activities/events while at community-based activities and events.