
PROJECT ABSTRACT

South Carolina requests the state's maximum available allocation (\$1,628,299) in ARRA funding from the Office of Head Start to support the start-up activities of the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC) over the next three years.

In February 2010, Governor Mark Sanford signed an Executive Order designating the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. The SC-ECAC's first action was to establish an inclusive process for creating the state's preliminary Strategic Report, upon which this funding request is based. In June 2010, the SC-ECAC ratified the Strategic Report as the Council's plan for the state and identified two overarching categories to direct federal funding:

1. **Data Driven Decision Making:** Use data to improve access and quality of early education and care programs at the state and community level, and develop and pilot an indicators-based measure of school readiness.

2. **Development of the Early Childhood Workforce:** Assess the needs of the state's early childhood workforce; increase access and remove barriers to participation by the early childhood workforce in quality professional development; and improve the early childhood workforce's ability to meet the critical developmental needs of high-risk children.

Within these categories the SC-ECAC intends to advance both state-level systems improvements and meet the needs of local communities desiring positive change in how early childhood stakeholders work together to maximize resources for children, particularly those at highest risk. South Carolina First Steps certifies the required 70% non-federal match using state funds targeted to expanding preschool access for low-income children.

INTRODUCTION: STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL STRATEGIC REPORT

Governor Sanford’s February 2010 *Executive Order 2010-06* designated the SC First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees as the state’s Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC). Following an orientation to their new duties and statutory obligations, the Council’s first action (April 2010) was the **launch of a broad leadership team structure by which all stakeholders and citizens could become involved in the SC-ECAC’s work from the beginning**. Leadership team members were recruited from outside the SC-ECAC’s membership and represented the broad range of early childhood service providers and stakeholders: state and local, public and private. Additionally, anyone who wished to serve could join one or more of the four teams listed below. The initial task for these leadership teams was to prepare South Carolina’s preliminary Strategic Report for ratification by the SC-ECAC. This preliminary report is intended to be an initial assessment and recommendations relative to the scope of duties for State Advisory Councils as outlined in the 2007 Head Start Act, as well as additional objectives for South Carolina’s Council included in the 2010 Executive Order.

Leadership teams were seated by the Council in May 2010, each charged with a cluster of objectives from the 2007 Head Start Act and 2010 Executive Order. The Scope of Work for each team was as follows:

| Team 1: | State Needs Assessments and Unified Data |
|---------------------|--|
| Federal Objectives: | <p>Conduct a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including an assessment of the availability of high-quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children in the State.</p> <p>Develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the State.</p> |
| State Objectives: | Incorporate within its periodic needs assessments data related to the capacity and efforts of private sector providers, Head Start providers and local school districts to serve children aged birth to four, including fiscal, enrollment, and capacity data. |

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| Team 2: State and Federal Coordination and Increasing Participation | |
| Federal Objectives: | Identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among Federally-funded and State-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among State agencies responsible for administering such programs. Develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing Federal, State, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations. |
| Team 3: Professional Development System and Higher Education Supports | |
| Federal Objectives: | Develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in the State. Assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in the State toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or pre kindergarten program. |
| Team 4: Early Learning Standards and Readiness Measurement | |
| Federal Objectives: | Make recommendations for improvements in State early learning standards and undertake efforts to develop high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate. |
| State Objectives: | Develop and publish, using available demographic data, an indicators-based measure of school readiness at the state and community level. |

Each team was asked to frame their section of the Strategic Report document to include the following:

1. Summary of team proceedings
2. What's working well in South Carolina within the focus area(s) studied
3. What are the challenges to be addressed, including short-term and long-term recommendations that will guide the future work of the SC-ECAC

Co-convening the leadership teams were the Director of SC First Steps - named by the Executive Order to coordinate the activities of the SC-ECAC - and the President of the SC Head Start Association. To support each team, experienced team leaders and staff were recruited from state and local, public and private child-serving agencies, and began to organize for the aggressive timeline. The State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Coordinator

served as an advisor to the process, attended team meetings, and provided resources to the teams including the State ECCS Plan. In addition to the team leaders and staff, the Council benefitted from the direct involvement of key state level dignitaries, or ombudsmen, recruited to support each of the teams. These individuals provided vision and guidance to the groups as they met to review existing reports, discuss current needs and opportunities, and come to consensus on preliminary recommendations. A listing of team members and their roles is included in the Appendices.

Technology and stakeholder networks are essential to create the expansive communication and involvement desired by South Carolina's Council, and were critical to the process from the outset. In addition to utilizing regular agency communications to support their work (i.e., email, intranet, website, conference calls, webinars), the Council sought to increase the avenues by which (1) public input on early childhood priorities could be sought, and (2) involvement of all stakeholders and interested citizens could be achieved. To this end, the Council built on an existing partnership with SC Educational Television and Radio (SCETV), creating a SC-ECAC page on their website, which allowed for news updates, proceedings, meeting announcements, resource documents, etc. (<http://moodle.scetv.org/course/category.php?id=3>). These same proceedings and announcements are also found on the Council's page of the SC First Steps to School Readiness website (<http://www.scfirststeps.org/ecac.html>). Both forums for publication have been utilized successfully by the state, maximized by partner agencies posting links to the Council web pages and by the creation and expansion of a Council listserv.

Over a very focused period of five weeks, leadership teams skillfully culled existing reports, reviewed current early childhood initiatives, and prepared inter-agency "cross-walks" of

objectives and plans for the state. Through the active involvement of 150 team members statewide, preliminary recommendations were prepared, shared across teams and presented at a live/webinar celebration event June 17, 2010 recorded by SCETV and available to the public via streaming video. Public input to the Council was received in many ways, including the following:

- Initial Council survey to the public (May)
- Listserv announcements (May-July)
- Web page launches and ongoing electronic forum for team input via web (May-July)
- Email and web announcements of team meetings, conference calls (May-June)
- Presentations via conference call/webinar/public TV streaming video (June)
- Stakeholder priority survey (June)

On June 24, 2010 the SC-ECAC received and ratified the team proceedings and recommendations as the Strategic Report for South Carolina. The report was distributed electronically to all stakeholders and posted on the aforementioned SCETV and SC First Steps web site for public comment and feedback. At 50 pages, the Strategic Report is too large to attach, given the page limits for this grant application. It can be accessed online at <http://www.scfirststeps.org/ecac.html>. Elements of the report have been excerpted and summarized throughout this proposal. The Strategic Report recommendations for each focus area are included in their entirety, where noted in Section A.

SECTION A: OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

Status of quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs

As a relatively small, largely rural state with high percentages of poverty and low education levels, South Carolina faces significant challenges building a high-quality early

childhood system for its 355,000 children under age 6. Despite the classic conundrum of high need and limited - now declining in many instances due to the stressed economy – resources, our state has for more than two decades prioritized investments in early childhood services. Its largest investment in comprehensive early childhood development services is South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness, founded in 1999 as a state-local, public-private partnership modeled after North Carolina’s Smart Start. Its state board of trustees was named by Governor Sanford as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. More information on First Steps and South Carolina’s Advisory Council are included in later sections.

For **four-year-olds**, in 1984 South Carolina established half-day 4K programs in all of its school districts, through the Education Improvement Act. These programs must offer priority enrollment to children scoring below standard on developmental screening measures. Many, though not all, school district programs have evolved to full-day through local funds, including First Steps funding. Twenty years later, the state increased its 4K investment substantially through the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP), the legislature’s response to Judge Cooper’s ruling in South Carolina’s decade-long school funding lawsuit in which 36 rural school districts in 20 counties asserted the state’s constitutional obligations to children in poverty. In this ruling, Judge Cooper obligated the state to “create an educational system that overcomes, to the extent that is educationally possible, the effects of poverty on the very young, to the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, to enable them to begin the educational process in a more equal fashion to those born outside of poverty.” CDEPP expands accessibility of full-day 4K to children living below 185% of poverty who reside in one of the trial or plaintiff school districts from the funding lawsuit. Further, CDEPP takes advantage of existing local capacity by investing in both school district 4K and in preschool programs outside public school settings

(i.e., private child care) through the program’s joint administration by the SC Dept. of Education and First Steps. Below is a summary of the state’s capacity for funding services for four-year-olds in early care and education settings:

| Estimated Number of 4-yr-olds Served in Preschool Programs in SC, 2008-09 <i>(Spreadsheet of capacity by county and information sources included in the Appendices)</i> | | | | | |
|---|--|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| EIA 4K | CDEPP 4K in Public Schools <i>(20 of 46 counties)</i> | CDEPP 4K in Non-Public School Settings <i>(20 of 46 counties)</i> | Head Start 4-yr-olds | Child Care Vouchers for 4-yr-olds | TOTAL 4-yr-olds Served |
| 16,759 | 3,854 | 459 | 5,749 | 2,426 | 29,247 |

Children living where CDEPP funds are targeted have higher access to quality preschool – above 80% in several counties. Preschool access in counties without CDEPP funds range from one-third to one-half of all 4-year-olds, based on population estimates, which translates into sufficient capacity for the majority of low-income children in a given county.

Access in South Carolina to **quality early childhood programs for 0-3**, however, is a far greater challenge for low-income children. Public investments to increase access for children birth to 3 in early care and education settings has not kept pace with those for 4-year-olds. Federal Head Start, Early Head Start, IDEA, and child care block grant funding represent nearly all such investments, with a modest amount of state funding (\$1.3 million projected for 2010-11) provided by county First Steps partnerships for child care scholarships. South Carolina has not invested state funds into Head Start, and limited state dollars for child care vouchers have been lost to budget cuts. Presently, the state’s large – and unfortunately increasing – TANF population means there are no TANF funds available to supplement child care block grant funding, as well as no funding to provide child care vouchers to families above 50% of poverty, outside of special populations such as foster care and special needs. It is estimated that **only one in three** children

0-3 in South Carolina living below 100% of poverty in 2009 had access to either publicly-funded or tuition-subsidized early care and education programs (see Appendices). There are already too few quality programs in the state that serve infants and toddlers, particularly in rural areas; more and more providers are closing their doors due to lack of tuition assistance and the struggling economy. Head Start and Early Head Start expansion funds will fortunately make a significant impact in some counties, though the need remains great.

Program quality in early care and education programs is a key part of the work of many state and local agencies and organizations. Publicly-funded programs, as well as private programs receiving vouchers or First Steps scholarships, are held to quality standards and assessed regularly via environmental rating scale instruments. The state has invested funding in dedicated technical assistance providers for CDEPP sites, and many counties have child care quality enhancement and training programs through First Steps, Success by Six, and Child Care Resource & Referral. More about program quality can be found in other sections.

There are promising developments for other types of early childhood development programs for the at-risk, pre-birth to age 3 population in South Carolina. The state has supported both health-based and readiness-based home visitation programs for many years. Thanks to state education funding, First Steps partnerships and other organizations, there is at least one evidence-based home visitation program in every county: primarily Parents as Teachers, and to a lesser extent Parent-Child Home, Early Steps to School Success, and Healthy Families. South Carolina's home visitation program specifically targeting at-risk children during the transition to school entry – Countdown to Kindergarten – is operated by First Steps in 19 of the state's 46 counties. As the state's largest funder of home visitation, First Steps implemented program standards for model fidelity, frequency of visits, staff competencies, assessments, data collection,

and integrated services in 2007. These added program accountability metrics have resulted in improved program quality across the state. Also in 2007, South Carolina First Steps launched Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) in partnership with the S.C. General Assembly and The Duke Endowment. NFP capacity has grown to 600 families in nine counties thanks to supplemental funding now provided by The Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of S.C., the Children’s Trust of South Carolina (via the ACF’s Evidence Based Home Visitation (EBHV) grant) and other private funders. South Carolina’s NFP sites have been established in the state’s largest population centers through the public health agency (SCDHEC) and local hospital systems, creating opportunities for expansion into rural/contiguous areas at a reduced cost. In summary, South Carolina’s existing home visitation infrastructure provides a strong foundation for increased access to home visitation services and enhancement.

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Assessment of Access and Quality of Early Childhood Programs

The five-week period for conducting the preliminary needs assessment did not allow for team members to conduct an in-depth study of state needs assessments. Rather, the Strategic Report recommendations contain objectives for accomplishing an initial needs assessment study and continuing periodic updates, as follows:

1. A task force selected by the Early Childhood Advisory Council representing key state agencies and other organizations should conduct and review an initial inventory of existing needs assessment studies in South Carolina.
2. Review national and/or state-by-state studies of early childhood systems, as well as what early childhood advisory councils in other states are doing relative to needs assessments.
3. Review and summarize the conclusions of the initial needs assessment inventory, taking into account community contexts, to gain an initial understanding of the scope of the strengths and needs assessed.
4. Build capacity among public and private partners to conduct early childhood needs assessments, and make their findings accessible and useful to stakeholders and the general public through a central repository of needs assessments within a designated public and private entity.
5. Use needs assessment findings to develop targeted research questions for further study. Seek outside private sources for funding future research.
6. Consider seeking the assistance of institutions outside state government to conduct needs assessments for unanswered questions.

Status of coordination and collaboration

All that South Carolina has managed to achieve, increasing access and quality of early childhood education and development programs and improving school readiness, has been as a result of coordination and collaboration. Further, the early childhood needs assessment and planning processes that have occurred over the past several years in South Carolina point to the necessity of increased collaboration if we are to make any progress in improving school readiness outcomes. A complete inventory of coordination and collaboration instances is too lengthy to describe here; South Carolina's preliminary Strategic Report (<http://www.scfirststeps.org/ecac.html>) provides a preliminary scan of collaboration efforts. Some primary examples include:

First Steps – First Steps is organized as a network of 47 non-profit organizations, consisting of a state partnership board and coordinating office and a network of 46 county partnerships, each with its own partnership board. First Steps legislation requires partnership boards to represent the entire early childhood community, including public education, Head Start, child care, social services, health, business, transportation, faith community, and parents. At the state and community level, First Steps leverages state dollars with federal and private funds to address service gaps for children 0-5 in the areas of healthy start, family strengthening, child care quality, early education, and school transition. Each First Steps partnership board chooses how to allocate its resources based on the specific needs of its local community, and often uses its funding to expand or enhance programs operated by partner organizations, such as school districts (preschool, parenting, family literacy), child care, Head Start, health providers, etc. All programs that receive First Steps funding - whether they are operated internally or by a collaborating partner - must adhere to program standards passed by the state First Steps board that require: programs be research-based and operated with sufficient intensity and fidelity; staff

have appropriate qualifications, training, and supervision; services be comprehensive and coordinated with available community resources; standard assessment instruments that document client outcomes; and targeting services to children at highest risk for not being developmentally ready for school, based on the following risk factors:

| First Steps Targeting Criteria |
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| Low-income, as identified by eligibility for SNAP (food stamps) at 130% of poverty or below; priority services to children eligible for TANF, at 50% of poverty or below |
| Abuse/neglect/foster care |
| Low maternal education |
| Teen parent |
| Low birth weight |
| Developmental disability |
| Exposure to violence within the home |
| Substance abuse, mental illness (including maternal depression), or intellectual disability of a primary caregiver |

In 2010, SC First Steps began requiring its county partnerships to document evidence of local collaboration for delivering early childhood services as a condition for receiving funding.

At the state level, First Steps shares fiscal, human resources, and IT services with the SC Dept. of Education. In addition to CDEPP and NFP inter-agency collaborations, First Steps is the lead agency for the state’s Center for Child Care Career Development, and in 2010 became the first school readiness agency in the nation to be designated as the lead agency for IDEA Part C, known as BabyNet in South Carolina, for serving infants and toddlers with developmental disabilities.

Head Start – For decades, local Head Start programs have served as a model for local collaboration to increase access and quality of early childhood services for low-income children.

In 2010, Governor Sanford named the President of the SC Head Start Association to the First Steps Board of Trustees, continuing a history of appointed Head Start representation at the state and local levels. The State Head Start Collaboration Director and a local Head Start director also serve on the SC-ECAC.

SC Department of Social Services (SCDSS) – Among its many responsibilities, SCDSS is the lead agency for Child Protective Services, Family Support Services such as TANF and SNAP, and Child Care Services including child care block grant funds for licensing, vouchers, and quality improvement. SCDSS also houses the Head Start Collaboration Office and funds the Center for Child Care Career Development through First Steps. Among its many collaborations, SCDSS has helped the state lessen the impact of budget cuts to early childhood services by granting TANF dollars to First Steps for child and family support services. A recent collaboration between SCDSS and First Steps uses \$200,000 of ARRA child care block grant funds to leverage \$600,000 in scholarships to help high-risk children receive quality care: \$1 in private funds raised by local First Steps partnerships, matched by \$1 in ARRA funds and \$1 in additional private funds by SC First Steps. SCDSS also uses federal funds to provide wrap-around care for Head Start children.

Children's Trust of South Carolina – A product of a recent merger of several prevention and advocacy organizations, the Children's Trust is both an EBHV and a PIRC (Parent Information and Resource Centers) grantee, the state's lead agency for CBCAP, and the lead agency for federal home visitation funds. Through a public-private collaboration among stakeholders, state and private funding for NFP in South Carolina has flowed through the Children's Trust in order to draw down additional CBCAP funds to support the program.

South Carolina's Early Childhood Professional Development System – Described in greater detail below, our state benefits from strong coordination among two- and four-year institutions for standardizing coursework and creating a standard credentialing system.

While the above examples highlight effective collaboration resulting in increased access to high quality early childhood programs for low-income children, South Carolina has a long way to go to achieve systemic coordination and collaboration at the state and local level. The Strategic Report identified four major areas where better coordination would make a demonstrable impact on increasing access and quality:

1. **Make the most of available funding.** Learn from successful braided funding efforts, such as those mentioned above and Children's Place, Inc., a center-based program with intensive parenting and health supports and supported by a combination of federal (including Medicaid), state, United Way, and other private funds.
2. **Improve access to services through single points of contact.** Incorporate infrastructure already in place, such as United Way's 2-1-1 call system, as well as community referral systems such as Help Me Grow and The Benefits Bank.
3. **Share services among agencies,** to include operational support (co-location, resource sharing), professional development, data sharing, and services management (intake assessment, care coordination, and referral).
4. **Coordinate care to manage vulnerable early childhood transitions,** including transitions between service providers (IDEA Part C to Part B, entering or exiting foster care, entering 4K or kindergarten) and traumatic or disruptive events that impact social emotional development (experiencing domestic violence, delays that do not meet IDEA eligibility criteria).

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Increasing Coordination and Collaboration to Improve Access and Quality

1. Designate a neutral convener for prioritizing children's services and decision-making statewide in order to promote cooperation and coordination.
2. Work together to ensure that all available federal funding is accessed and that state match requirements are met. Actively advance/promote the development of new federal funding opportunities for comprehensive early learning services statewide.
3. Document the landscape of private funders and foundations to clarify their early childhood funding priorities, geographical targets, and flexibility with blended and braided funding.
4. Work across service agencies to maximize available federal funding and assure that matching dollar requirements are met through state or private dollar coordination.
5. Advocate at the federal level for funding opportunities that reduce requirements for burdensome state matching dollars.
6. Establish a governance process for collaborative leadership among program experts resulting in a shared services system which enhances the quality, affordability and access of SC's early childhood services.
7. Plan and provide professional development for early childhood practitioners by establishing quality, accessible, cross-system training.
8. Formalize the way specific needs and risk factors are targeted by multiple service providers to enable shared services planning and delivery.
9. Utilize diagnostic-prescriptive programming/intervention to address the unique needs of children and their families (*one size does not fit all*).
10. Create means of sharing client records or integrated data banks with protected access among service points, avoiding duplicate data entry.
11. Utilize data warehouse sharing to better plan and target services based on families' needs and to review and address outcomes through evaluation and data analysis.
12. Co-locate services to increase access and fit for meeting child/family needs.
13. Pilot the use of wrap-around family service plans for complex child/family needs and cross-agency "universal staffing" for clients who need multi-system services.
14. Establish a care coordination system at the community level which serves families and children as critical developmental needs emerge (ex: Part C-eligible children receive care coordination. Children ineligible or aged out of Part C may continue to have challenges that require support in the form of care coordination).
15. Develop a well-coordinated database to assist in referrals of children who have developmental issues, but are not eligible for typical care paths such as early intervention through Part C.
16. Link parents and child care providers/teachers to resources and services needed to identify and address issues related to social emotional development, especially for those children with multiple risk factors.
17. Support cross-agency training on social emotional development and topics effecting children most at risk (emerging language and early literacy, strengthening families, children with special health care needs).
18. Fully develop a statewide call center through public -private partnerships (United Way 2-1-1 System) to improve access to services and information.

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Increasing Coordination and Collaboration to Improve Access and Quality

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| 19. Develop a comprehensive statewide directory of current resources using statewide call center information to easily connect parents and caregivers to resources they need. |
| 20. Use data from a statewide call center to gain information about service needs, gaps, and utilization to inform decision making about how programs are implemented and resources deployed. |
| 21. Establish 2-1-1 in every county (currently 65%). |
| 22. Utilize natural networks within community and organizational settings to aid in referrals and service connections. |

Status of professional development and higher education support

South Carolina’s early childhood professional development system has many strong integrated components, including Early Learning Standards, an Early Care and Education (ECE) Career Ladder, and common core competencies. Its higher education system includes college coursework and articulation agreements across the two- and four-year higher education system. 13 of the state’s 16 technical colleges have NAEYC-accredited early childhood departments. Scholarships for early childhood professionals through T.E.A.C.H. are available at all levels - Credential, AA, and BA.

Introduction to Early Childhood Development (ECD 101) is an entry level course available at all 16 technical colleges in the state that serves as the Early Childhood Credential on the ECE Career Ladder. ECD 101 serves as a gateway to early care and education coursework for college credit and is available without admission to college. More than 7,500 Early Childhood Credentials have been awarded to date for completion of this course. ECD 101 has been newly revised with updated information on brain research and emergent literacy, early learning standards for 3-5 and 0-3, and many teacher resources.

The state's credentialing system/ECE Career Ladder is integrated with child care quality standards set by SCDSS. Quality Standards tied to Bonus Awards at two voluntary levels (above licensing) include enhanced staff qualifications to incentivize professional development.

The Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD) provides a central administrative system for professional development, including: 1. Training registry system that manages annual training required by SCDSS child care regulations (16,000 individuals received training in 2009); 2. Credentialing system which includes credentials for early childhood, directors, infant-toddler, and school-age care; 3. Voluntary trainer certification for higher quality training (650 currently certified); 4. Technical assistance certification system; 5. Online access to training transcripts; 6. Management of the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program; and 7. Professional development for trainers and technical assistance providers.

Outside the higher education system, the state's network of certified trainers and technical assistance providers work for a variety of agencies and organizations, including Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), First Steps, Head Start, school districts, Success by Six, and others. There are also networks of technical assistance providers within the state's voluntary ABC quality monitoring system, the state's pre-K pilot program (CDEPP) and USC's Program for Infant Toddler Caregiver (PITC) specialist network. CCCCDD certifies training offered to providers, certifies the competencies of personnel conducting the training and technical assistance, and maintains records of staff training hours for child care licensing compliance. Therefore, CCCCDD has the potential to become the state's centralized system for ensuring equitable access to quality training and technical assistance in the topic areas needed by the state's early childhood workforce. Availability and accessibility of high quality training and professional development varies widely depending on geographic location. In addition to access,

significant economic, educational, and other barriers exist that prevent staff from pursuing professional development.

| <u>Strategic Report Recommendations:</u> |
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| <i>Improving Professional Development Systems and Higher Education Supports</i> |
| Accessibility of Training and Education: |
| 1. Leverage participation in high quality training and education to meet current early childhood professional needs. |
| 2. Expand the accessibility of high quality training and education in underserved areas/populations of the state. |
| 3. Survey the early childhood workforce statewide to determine barriers to high quality training |
| 4. Work through existing entities to establish a centralized system for publishing information regarding training and professional development opportunities occurring across the state (i.e., CCCCD). |
| 5. Educate underserved populations as to availability of training opportunities. |
| 6. Create a methodology for evaluating the articulation of high quality professional development into the technical college system for college credit. |
| Core Competencies: |
| 7. Strengthen universal understanding of core early childhood competencies necessary to create positive learning environments for children. |
| 8. Implement SC's newly developed Early Childhood Development Core Competencies document as a model self-assessment reference. |
| 9. Assist practitioners in understanding each competency, and help teachers transfer knowledge to practice. |
| 10. Plan/distribute newly developed Early Childhood Core Competencies document to include all practitioners that work in the field (including 2- and 4-year institutions). |
| Staff Qualifications: |
| 11. Ensure mechanisms are in place to provide quality credentials to early childhood professionals. |
| 12. Increase the number of high quality, certified training opportunities across the state. |
| 13. Increase incentives encouraging higher staff education levels. |
| 14. Explore the possibility of a Birth to 5 teacher certification. |

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Improving Professional Development Systems and Higher Education Supports

15. Explore which incentives are working well in the state (i.e. ECD 101-Introduction to Early Childhood Development, T.E.A.C.H.) and develop a plan to expand the current career ladder and professional development system to include professionals employed in early childhood settings other than child care.

16. Explore the possibilities for individual Licensure/Credentialing as a means of an incentive (i.e., Home Visitor).

Leveraging the Existing Professional Development Infrastructure:

17. Seek information from providers and other sources on how to strengthen the SC early childhood workforce.

18. Use applicable information from the Cost of Quality Study to support the existing infrastructure in the development of a long-term plan to encourage individuals to pursue career advancement in early education.

19. Seek input from teachers and administrators in Head Start, child care, and public school settings.

20. Expand the existing professional development system to include training in comprehensive services of early care and education (i.e. Head Start model, home visitation.)

21. Educate parents on components of quality care in order to increase provider participation in the ABC incentive system.

22. Work with state professional organizations to develop a network/consortium to work on higher education articulation issues.

Status of early learning standards

South Carolina has committed a great deal of time and energy to the development of early learning standards. In addition to academic content standards for five-year-old kindergarten, the state authorized an inter-agency, public/private workgroup that developed and published the early learning standards for 3-, 4-, and 5-year olds under the leadership of SCDSS (as the state administrator of federal child care block grant dollars) to comply with the federal Good Start, Grow Smart initiative. More recently, SCDSS led the inter-agency workgroup charged with the development and publishing of the state’s Infant-Toddler Guidelines.

Preparation for training and distribution of the Infant-Toddler Guidelines is underway for 2010 and beyond.

While the state's early learning standards can be described as an area of strength for South Carolina, the addition of the Infant-Toddler Guidelines will require a review of the three documents to ensure alignment across the standards. In addition, the state must ensure that high quality training is available on the standards and helpful to front-line providers.

South Carolina's efforts to measure school readiness present a greater challenge. After two, now defunct, efforts to measure readiness at the child level (using the Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery, CSAB, and the South Carolina Readiness Assessment, SCRA), the state currently has no statewide measure of readiness. In recent years, First Steps has worked to develop a multi-dimensional, policy-level School Readiness Index (SRI) concept. Under Executive Order 2010-06, Governor Sanford assigns the SC-ECAC responsibility for developing and publishing an indicators-based measure of school readiness at the state level. While an indicators-based measure of available *demographic* data may be most feasible, given available resources, the team recommends exploring means through which to supplement this largely measure with *child outcomes* (on a sampled basis) and *program quality measures* as resources can be identified (in an effort to fulfill First Steps' original vision of a more comprehensive SRI, encompassing all three strands).

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Improving Early Learning Standards and Readiness Measurement

1. Revisit (via the SCDSS Early Learning Standards Workgroup convened in June 2010) the state's Good Start Grow Smart early learning standards to explore the feasibility of either incorporating existing 5K academic standards or making more explicit reference to these additional areas within the updated draft of the GSGS document.
2. Charge the established inter-agency SCDSS Early Learning Standards Workgroup with

Strategic Report Recommendations:

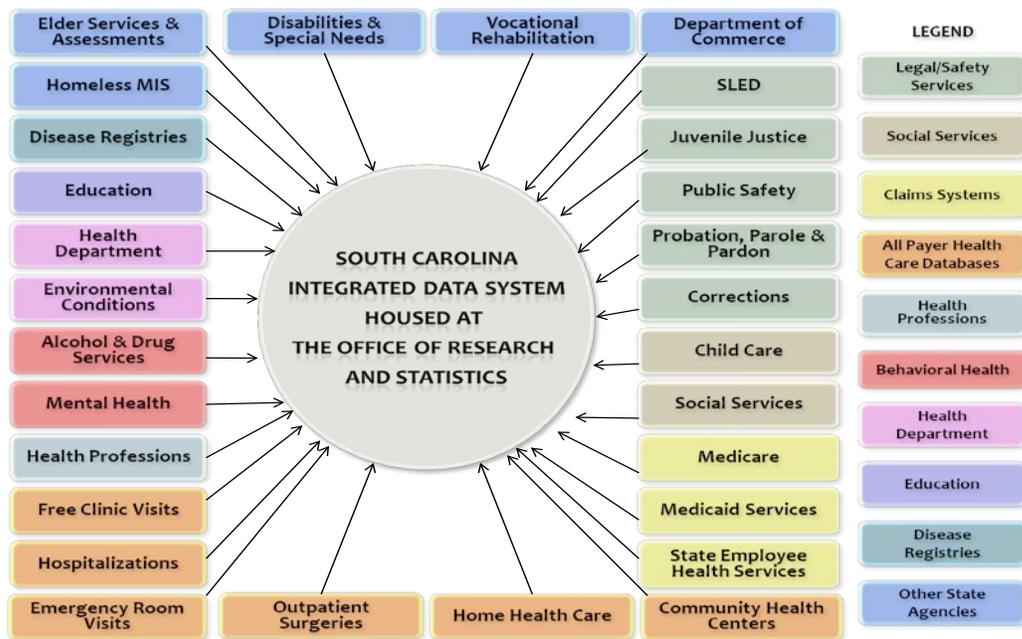
Improving Early Learning Standards and Readiness Measurement

ensuring the vertical alignment of the state's infant-toddler guidelines, early learning standards and 5K academic content standards. Charge this team with making alignment recommendations to the respective source agencies, to include voluntary horizontal alignment recommendations linking standards and appropriate methods of assessment for training.

3. Develop an aligned dissemination and training plan (across standards) to include planning for regular cyclical review and the evaluation of training delivery.
4. Develop methods to evaluate the extent to which standards are understood and utilized by front-line providers.
5. Establish a technical team charged with exploring and recommending to the SC-ECAC by Feb 1, 2011:
 - The most sound/appropriate means through which to identify demographic indicators linked to early school success.
 - The pros and cons of different approaches to weighting these factors within the state's proposed demographic School Readiness Index (SRI).
 - Exploring the potential costs and benefits associated with incorporating direct child assessments and program quality indicators, within supplemental strands of the SRI.
 - Developing a detailed SRI work plan with a goal of launch during FY12.
6. Launch an indicators-based School Readiness Index at the state and community levels during FY12.
7. Seek the resources required to supplement this indicators-based measure with both child outcome and program quality measures as soon as feasible in an effort to fulfill the multi-dimensional intent of the original SRI concept.

Status of early childhood data systems

The state has established itself as a leader in the data sphere. Unique to the state is the **Data Warehouse** (a robust inter-agency data repository housed within the SC Budget and Control Board's Office of Research and Statistics) through which client participation and outcomes can be traced across a wide variety of statewide data sets ranging from health to education to juvenile justice. The following diagram illustrates the Data Warehouse's current scope:



In addition, improving the collection and integrity of agency-level data has been a key focus for the state’s child-serving agencies in recent years, with First Steps, the SC Department of Education, and SC Department of Social Services all working to upgrade their capacities to inform agency policy using reliable data.

These developments have clearly strengthened the state’s emphasis on data-driven decision-making at the agency level. In recent years First Steps, for example, has made wide use of child demographic and program participation data to assist both the SC General Assembly and First Steps’ local community partnerships in assessing service gaps for children 0-5 – resulting in

both new investment and the redirection of existing resources. (More about this state and local planning process is detailed in Section B.)

Likewise, First Steps has transformed its own internal program delivery, based on the use of integrated data sets. In 2007 the capabilities of the Data Warehouse enabled the state’s Kids Count Director to conduct research comparing the educational outcomes by third grade for an entire birth cohort of South Carolina children, noting the characteristics present prior to school entry. These findings, summarized below, inform First Steps program standards, which require targeting services to children identified (on the basis of newly accessible client data) to be at **highest risk of early school failure** (retained one or more grades or scoring far below standard on state NCLB assessment for ELA/Math):

| Percentage of Children Possessing <i>This Risk Factor</i> “Not Succeeding by 3 rd Grade” | <u>Readiness Risk Factors</u> | Percentage (and Estimated Number) of Children Under Six Possessing <i>This Risk Factor</i> |
|---|---|--|
| 53% | Abused, Neglected, or in Foster Care | 3% (10,173) |
| 52% | Extremely Low Birth Weight (under 3.3 lbs. /1500 g.) | 2.11% (7,170) |
| 48% | Low Maternal Education (Less than High School) | 24.13% (81,852) |
| 45% | Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) (50% of Federal Poverty) | 8.4% (28,690) |
| 43% | Very Low Birth Weight (3.4-4.4 lbs. / 1500 – 2000 g.) | 2.77% (9,390) |
| 43% | Teen Mother (Under 18) | 4.6% (15,618) |
| 42% | Food Stamps (130% of Federal Poverty) | 20% (67,897) |
| 37% | Mother (age 18 – 20) | 8.83% (29,946) |
| 36% | Low Birht Weight (4.4-5.5 lbs. / 2000–2500 grams) | 5.53% (18,780) |

The state Data Warehouse is housed at the Office of Research and Statistics who, together with the Department of Social Services, have taken the lead on linking early childhood

data sets. These agencies have used a CCDF Research Capacity Grant to create a **web-based data cube** reflecting the demographics of South Carolina's licensed child care providers. SCDSS intends to further develop a child level cube which will incorporate information from the following data systems: Child Care Vouchers, TANF, Food Stamps/SNAP, Human Services, and Medicaid, if permitted. SCDSS hopes to eventually expand the cube to include data from the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, First Steps, and the Department of Education.

In a related data development, the SC Department of Education will soon be expanding its own education data warehouse through a Longitudinal Data Systems grant from the US Dept. of Education (\$14.9m) that will allow for the creation of, among other products, a longitudinal data system (LDS) for students in P-12 education that will link to higher education. Among the innovative features of the LDS is a unique ID system for programs – both programs for students and professional development programs for staff – that can then be tied to individual students and teachers to track whether program participation improved student or teacher performance. These unique identifiers for students, teachers, and programs will be utilized in the “next generation” Curriculum Management System (CMS), which will synthesize data statewide in a way that helps teachers make informed decisions about curriculum, teaching practices, interventions, training programs, and the like. The CMS will direct teachers to areas of academic progress needing attention; academic resources that may help students; and teachers who have had success addressing instructional needs of similar students. The SLDS will also compare each student's record against a list of conditions that place a student at-risk of academic failure. Data from the SLDS will be nested within the state's Data Warehouse to match education data longitudinally with other data sets.

Though these recent improvements have vastly increased the state’s ability to inform policy – *particularly at the individual agency level* – the increased focus on data has raised new questions and potential limitations within South Carolina’s current data systems. While both promising and robust, the state’s Data Warehouse structure – primarily a data repository, with growing capacity as an analytic tool – is not readily accessible to researchers or practitioners. Both additional resources and data sharing agreements are necessary to make data available to key constituencies.

Strategic Report Recommendations:

Unified Early Childhood Data Systems

1. Formalize standard processes that will guide cross-agency and cross-organization data sharing. In no case may data be used or shared without the express permission of the host agency or organization (building on processes already in place with the State's Data Warehouse).
2. Expand and enhance data in the State's Data Warehouse at the Office of Research and Statistics to include additional child/client level and program-level data from agency data sets not currently represented.
3. Augment the State Data Warehouse with additional early childhood data by organizing and readying linkages for new data sets for the 0 to 5 year-old population (including adults/caregivers). The development of this “Early Childhood Data Mart or Mini-Warehouse” nested within the State’s Data Warehouse would aid in the creation of early childhood integrated data products such as analytical data cubes.
4. Provide necessary resources to the Office of Research and Statistics to facilitate data linkages and analyses.
5. Create an inter-agency data strategy initiative to coordinate both the development, and use, of early childhood data across systems (particularly the P-20 state longitudinal data system (SLDS)).
6. Use linked early childhood data to provide analyses to a variety of stakeholders (as approved by all parties).
7. Support the agency-approved public sharing of maternal and early childhood data to evaluate connections between risk factors, intervention, and outcomes.
8. Plan for the integration of client and/or provider level data from non-public institutions.

SECTION B: APPROACH

South Carolina's Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC)

As stated above, *Executive Order 2010-06* establishes the South Carolina First Steps to Readiness Board of Trustees as the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC), with the following modifications:

1. All members of the First Steps board (voting and non-voting) will be voting members of the SC-ECAC. (First Steps' legislation mandates voting members appointed by the governor and legislature, with all child-serving agency heads mandated to serve as non-voting members.)
2. The state's Head Start Collaboration Director has been appointed to the SC-ECAC. The Executive Order also calls for migrant and tribal Head Start providers to be represented to the extent possible.

With these modifications SC's ECAC is consistent with the requirements of The Head Start Act. A copy of the Executive Order is included in Section D. More information on the ongoing work of the Council is included later in this section.

| South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council Membership | |
|---|--|
| Susan DeVenny | SC First Steps, Director (Staff Liaison) |
| Governor Mark Sanford | Governor (Chair) |
| Dr. Jim Rex | Superintendent of Education |
| Senator Mike Fair | SC Senate |
| Senator John Mathews | SC Senate |
| Representative Rita Allison | SC House of Representatives |
| Representative Jimmy Neal | SC House of Representatives |
| Lewis Smoak | Business Community (Vice Chair) |
| Henry Parr, Jr. | Business Community |
| Nicky Wallace | Business Community |
| Dr. Floyd Creech | Early Childhood Educator – public education |
| Julia-Ellen Davis | Early Childhood Educator – local Head Start |
| Evelyn Patterson | Early Childhood Educator - SC Head Start Association |
| Rev. Reece Yandle | Early Childhood Educator – faith-based provider |
| Judith Aughtry | Parent of Young Child |
| Katherine Davis | Parent of Young Child |
| Lisa Van Riper | Parent of Young Child |
| Linda O'Quinn | Medical/Childcare Provider |

| South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council Membership | |
|--|---|
| Dr. Francis Rushton | Medical/Childcare Provider |
| Marileen Chapman | Medical/Childcare Provider |
| Mary Lynne Diggs | SC Head Start Collaboration Office, Director |
| Dr. Kathleen Hayes | SC Department of Social Services, Director |
| John Magill | SC Department of Mental Health, Director |
| Earl C. Hunter | SC Dept. of Health and Environmental Control, Director |
| Emma Forkner | SC Health and Human Services, Director |
| Beverly Buscemi | SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, Director |
| Lee Catoe | SC Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse, Director |
| Susan Jones | SC Department of Transportation, Designee |
| Bobby Bowers | SC Budget and Control Board, Director |
| Barry Russell | SC Technical College System, Director |
| Jim Griffith | Transportation Association of SC, Director |
| David Goble | SC State Library, Director |
| Nancy Freeman | Regulatory Advisory Committee, Director |
| Garrison Walters | SC Commission on Higher Education, Director |
| Paul Krohne | SC School Board Association, Director |
| Tim Ervolina | United Way Association of SC, Inc., Director |

Rationale for Proposed Approach

The SC-ECAC’s inclusive planning effort, in which public and private stakeholders were invited to participate in a real-time early childhood needs assessment on behalf of the Council, resulted in the comprehensive set of recommendations – 65 in all - outlined at various points in Section A. The SC-ECAC on June 24, 2010 ratified these recommendations in their entirety to become the Council’s Strategic Report for the state, and in the coming months will develop action plans for each recommendation and identify what additional resources, if any, are needed. Many of the recommendations can, and will, be accomplished using existing resources of state and local early childhood partners.

Following the posting of the state’s Strategic Report, the SC-ECAC held informational conference calls for its members and other stakeholder groups to provide a forum for discussing the teams’ recommendations. These calls were followed by a work-session of the Council’s Executive Committee, team ombudsmen and staff. Recommendations were prioritized based on:

- Common themes emerging across teams within the Strategic Report
- The need for additional financial resources

- The potential for sustainability/fit with use of one-time funds
- Results of SC-ECAC Public Comment Survey
- Alignment with other recent state and local assessments and planning efforts:
 - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems – a one-page summary of the state’s ECCS Plan is included in the Appendices
 - Vision 2013 Strategic Plan - findings from Regional Early Childhood Summits (see below)

Vision 2013 – First Steps’ strategic planning process began with regional early childhood summits in Fall 2008. County delegations (8-12 people) convened in regions of 6-7 counties to study local data on key readiness risk factors; map their county’s early childhood services; and discuss key questions about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and priorities for their county and the state. Each delegation’s discussion was transcribed and analyzed for common themes across counties and regions. The key findings were:

| Themes from Vision 2013 Regional Early Childhood Summits (October 2008) |
|--|
| Cookie-cutter approaches don’t work - have to customize approaches to the unique needs of each community. |
| Families with young children need a comprehensive approach in order to meet their needs and foster optimal child development. Such an approach requires everyone to work together. |
| Collaboration and partnerships are paramount. State leaders must model collaboration, and integrate and incentivize collaboration and innovation in local communities. |
| We must remove barriers to access for families (bureaucracy, location, etc.) and barriers to service providers working together. |
| Early childhood stakeholders in communities need more data to drive responsible decision-making, and need to learn more about the services available in their communities. |

Taking all of the above sources into account, the Council’s Executive Committee approved two overarching categories to direct start-up funds:

- 1. Data Driven Decision Making**
- 2. Development of the Early Childhood Workforce**

The proposed activities within each of these categories are intended to advance South Carolina’s ability to meet the mandates named in The Head Start Act and Executive Order. **Moreover, this approach invests start-up funding in two key resources necessary to ensure that the child, not a particular program or agency, is the focus of service delivery:**

| Data Driven Decision Making | Development of the Early Childhood Workforce |
|---|---|
| <p>Improves collaboration and coordination across organizations and systems in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • target children most at-risk; • prioritize resources where they are most needed; achieve cost savings so that more children can be served; • assess whether programs are of sufficient quality and whether interventions are impacting readiness; and • identify priorities for additional funding. | <p>Increases staff competencies across programs and providers so that those who serve children 0-5 and their caregivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have the requisite skills to meet children’s developmental needs; • strengthen families; • connect children and families to services they need; and • effectively manage children’s key transitions among caregivers and service providers. |

Further, within each of these categories the SC-ECAC intends to advance both state-level systems improvements and meet the needs of local communities desiring positive change in how early childhood stakeholders work together to maximize resources for children, particularly those at highest risk. To that end, the proposed categories for funding will include two focus areas:

1. Advancement of strategic state-level priorities lacking existing resources
2. Creation of three community-based ECAC pilot/incubator sites in which the practicality and impact of these state-level efforts may be assessed prior to full-scale implementation.

The proposed pilot sites include:

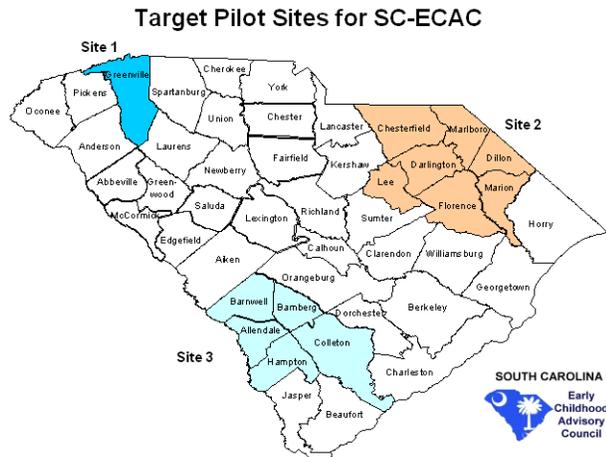
- a. ECAC Pilot 1: Large City
(Greenville - specific census tract(s) to be determined)
- b. ECAC Pilot 2: Rural Region, with Mid-Size City (Florence)
(Counties: Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Lee, Marion, Marlboro)

c. ECAC Pilot 3: Rural Region, without City

(Counties: Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton, Hampton)

The rural regions were selected due to their location within the high-poverty I-95 corridor. These regions also contain the majority of the school districts designated in the school funding lawsuit ruling requiring action to mitigate the detrimental school readiness effects of poverty.

These areas have early childhood infrastructure supports within Head Start grantees, First Steps and other community partnerships, school districts and higher education institutions. The City of Greenville was selected for its strong early childhood collaborations in place and



notable pilots via ECCS. For more information, detailed demographic data are included in the Appendices showing the prevalence of major readiness risk factors in children 0-5 by county, as well as estimated capacity by county for publicly-supported early care and education services.

In summary, the plans described in this section incorporate the common refrains from multiple needs assessment and planning efforts. These plans propose concrete strategies to improve both data-driven decision making and the early childhood workforce, through an implementation strategy that relies, to an unprecedented level, on coordination and collaboration across system silos. State-level system enhancements will be tested and implemented in three different South Carolina communities, urban and rural, so that the SC-ECAC can closely

examine the effects of system changes on local service delivery, particularly access to and quality of early education and care programs.

SC-ECAC Priority Area 1: Data Driven Decision Making

Across the four work teams, data - and its use in informing both policy and direct service provision - emerged as a common priority, whether explicitly (discussion of state data systems, the development of an indicators-based measure of school readiness) or implicitly (use of data to identify high-risk families and link them to available services, collection of workforce data to focus and improve the state's professional development efforts). Accordingly, improving the integrity, accessibility and connectivity of the state's early childhood data systems has been identified as a key grant priority.

State-Level Focus: Data Integration and Analysis to Inform Policy, Collaboration and Resource Allocation

South Carolina possesses a tremendous resource in the form of its State Data Warehouse (Budget and Control Board, Office of Research and Statistics), a repository of linkable agency data sets. Along with these notable strengths, however, come challenges stemming from the lack of optimal data connectivity and analysis capacity among child-serving agencies. What South Carolina has not been able to accomplish through its data integration and analysis to date is: 1) connecting, on a system-wide basis, data which shows that participation in early interventions leads to positive outcomes for children; or 2) the provision of real-time data to local practitioners seeking to inform practice.

While building upon this capacity is both a team recommendation and likely priority for subsequent Council funding, it is proposed that initial grant resources be allocated for collaborative planning, expert consultation and support staffing designed to:

- Facilitate the inter-agency (and community-level) identification of **key policy questions** to be answered through the use of linked and/or improved data sets. (What do we want to know, and how will knowing it improve policy and/or service delivery to high risk families?)
- Identify the specific data linkages, permissions and/or new data elements required to answer these key questions.
- Test the local utility of existing analytic tools.

South Carolina is fortunate to be **one of three states** receiving technical assistance from the Children's Defense Fund for building state early care and education data systems, based on the work of the **Early Childhood Data Collaborative** and its 10 Essential Elements of a Coordinated State Early Care and Education Data System. The expertise provided through this effort will help frame more detailed consultation to an inter-agency early childhood data team that will study the following questions:

1. What are the pros, cons and potential costs associated with creation of a unified, inter-agency early care and education data system for South Carolina? In the absence of a single, inter-agency system, how can the capacities of the State Data Warehouse at the Office of Research and Statistics be tapped to enable inter-agency data sharing and analysis? South Carolina recognizes that there are many potential avenues by which to accomplish its broader goal of robust data integration. While the creation of a single, unified data system is one idea worthy of consideration, we also recognize that a single system may present financial and/or

administrative obstacles too significant to overcome. Bearing this in mind, the group proposes exploring the capacity of the State Data Warehouse as a venue through which agencies can maintain specific, client-level early childhood data sets that interface and integrate with agency partners. Of particular interest is expanding on the work accomplished thus far using cube technology within the state's child care data systems.

2. What are the current obstacles to fully capturing South Carolina's early childhood data within the Data Warehouse structure and how might these obstacles be overcome? While the State Data Warehouse captures a large amount of agency data, certain key data sets – including Head Start, Early Head Start and IDEA Part C - are not incorporated. The group proposes to explore the issues currently precluding inclusion of data from these programs, with the goal of building a more comprehensive repository through which to inform and shape statewide policy. In addition, the group proposes integrating the Department of Education's new State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant as a vehicle through which early childhood data can be tracked for long-term analysis.

3. What standardized processes must be established to further guide cross-agency and cross-organization data sharing in an effort to better inform both agency-level and public policy in South Carolina? In exploring both the addition of supplemental data sets and the inter-agency use of existing sets, the state recognizes inter-agency data sharing agreements as key to fulfilling its desires in the area of data integration. We are eager to explore structures used successfully by other states.

4. How might the state plan for the integration of client and/or provider level data from non-public institutions? How have other states approached this issue? Finally, we recognize that much of South Carolina's investment in young children exists within the private

sector, especially in child care and health services. How we might plan for the incorporation of this critical “missing piece” of South Carolina’s early childhood data puzzle is prominent in our minds.

Upon completion of this consultation phase (designed to identify the specific benefits and challenges associated with linking and improving early childhood data), it is proposed that grant funds be allocated in years 2 and 3 (sooner if feasible) to support the technical work necessary to do so.

Additionally, the Council is charged with the development of an indicators-based measure of school readiness for South Carolina (the proposed SC School Readiness Index, to be published at the state and community levels). It is also proposed that limited grant funds be allocated in support of both consultation for – and subsequent staffing of – this important Council mandate.

Local-Level Focus: Effective Needs and Resources Planning to Increase Access and Quality through Collaboration

As a companion to the state-level data needs described above, it is proposed that resources be devoted for:

1. The planning and development of a web-based, community-level early childhood needs and resources planning tool for use in the three ECAC pilot areas.
2. The provision of community-level technical assistance to the pilot communities designed to assist each in connecting this data – including the initial community-level results of the SC School Readiness Index - to the identification of barriers to child/family success and potential solutions designed to increase access and outcomes.

Data systems, data cubes, data warehouses ... all are important tools, but have no real usefulness unless they provide meaningful information to those trying to make a difference in the lives of young children. Communities are empowered to take action when they have the information they need to identify both barriers to child success and potential solutions. Therefore, one of the best investments to increase coordination and collaboration among early childhood development programs is to make meaningful data, and the appropriate tools to interpret and use that data, available to local decision makers.

Vision 2013's mission - *connect South Carolina's high-risk children 0-5 to coordinated, individualized interventions designed to improve their educational and developmental trajectories* – requires that stakeholders have accurate information about who and where are the high-risk children; where are the services that can help them; how can these children be connected to needed services; and whether these services have improved children's educational and developmental readiness. As the Vision 2013 plan entered implementation in 2010, First Steps piloted a basic needs and resources assessment tool among its county partnerships that compared the prevalence of risk factors in children 0-5 in their county with program capacity data in home visitation and family strengthening, early education for preschool and 0-3, child care, child care training, early intervention, and health services, in order for partnerships to prioritize strategy funding and collaboration opportunities for the coming year. Further, the process included examining, through First Steps and partner data systems, which risk factors were most underserved currently in local early childhood programs and interviewing local providers who would be the most likely collaborators for finding and serving those children. Several partner agencies, including Head Start, Center for Child Care Career Development, SCDSS and Dept. of Education provided data on numbers served at both the state

and county level. For many local partnerships, this marked the first time that they had access to such a comprehensive set of data and a guide to help them ask substantive questions, draw conclusions, and make program and policy decisions based on the information.

The positive results of this initial effort – reallocation of resources, innovative collaborations, and new funding opportunities – led the SC-ECAC to devote start-up funds to enhance and expand this basic model, to become an interactive, web-based needs and resources planning tool. This tool will enable real-time, data-driven early childhood planning in order to implement Strategic Report recommendations in the areas of:

- Prioritizing children’s services
- Improving access to quality programs
- Linking children and families to services
- Sharing resources
- Supporting cross-agency training and workforce development
- Braiding multiple funding streams and pursuing new funding opportunities
- Compiling initial results of the School Readiness Index

The “engine” powering this tool will be the increased integration and connectivity of state-level data systems, including program, client, and workforce data. The pilot communities will, in effect, be “field testers” for the real-world utility of state data system improvements.

One important lesson learned from this initial First Steps pilot is that without sufficient training and technical assistance, this type of planning tool can become more of a staff-driven exercise than a true collaborative process. Staff and consultant expertise will develop the web-based product and provide ongoing training and facilitation within the three pilot communities to implement this tool as the foundation for coordinated planning to meet the needs of children and

families. Community referral tools such as the United Way's 2-1-1 system and Help Me Grow will be assets to this process, and will be utilized to the extent feasible to assist families in accessing services from early childhood providers. Once developed, this process can be expanded statewide within the existing network of First Steps county partnerships, which must bring early childhood stakeholders together for needs and resources planning on an annual basis.

ACTION PLAN:
Data Driven Decision Making

Objectives:

- Use data to improve access and quality of early education and care programs at the state and community level.
- Develop and pilot an indicators-based measure of school readiness.

| Activities: | Timeline | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----|----|----|--------|----|----|----|--------|----|----|----|
| | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Select inter-agency Data and Measurement Team (DMT) members, to include representation from the Office of Research and Statistics and the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hire Data and Evaluation Specialist to staff school readiness index, implement recommendations from the DMT and support the SC-ECAC's data and evaluation needs | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hire Community Facilitator to design local planning tool, train local stakeholders, and facilitate local collaborative planning | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Participate in technical assistance from the Children's Defense Fund on the recommendations of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Select consultation service provider(s) to assist the DMT with determining the content and statistical framework of a School Readiness Index (SRI), including demographic data, direct child assessment and program quality indicators | X | X | X | | | | | | | | | |
| Select consultation service provider(s) to work with the DMT on data policy questions and developing an early childhood data integration and analysis plan for the state | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Develop web-based interactive planning template for local communities | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Present data integration and analysis plan to the SC-ECAC | | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Develop a SRI work plan for approval by the SC-ECAC | | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Present web-based local planning template to the SC-ECAC | | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Train local pilot communities to use web-based template | | | | | | X | X | | | | | |
| Facilitate collaborative planning in pilot communities | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Implement South Carolina's data integration and analysis plan | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Allocate Advisory Council grant resources to agencies as recommended by the data integration plan, through Third Party Agreements as necessary | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

ACTION PLAN:
Data Driven Decision Making

Objectives:

- Use data to improve access and quality of early education and care programs at the state and community level.
- Develop and pilot an indicators-based measure of school readiness.

| Activities: | Timeline | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----|----|----|---------------|----|----|----|---------------|----|----|----|
| | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Add data elements to the local planning template as they become available | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Implement SRI work plan | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Develop mechanisms for sharing data with stakeholders | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Field test child assessment portion of the SRI | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X |
| Gather local community feedback on pilot template and activities. | | | | | | | | | | X | | |
| Modify pilot tools/activities on the basis of local feedback | | | | | | | | | | X | X | |
| Expand use of collaborative planning tools in other areas of the state | | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Desired Outcomes for Each Project Year: | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
| Identify key policy questions to be answered through the use of linked and/or improved data sets. | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Identify the specific data linkages, permissions and/or new data elements required to answer these key questions. | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop inter-agency data sharing agreements. | | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Create a School Readiness Index (SRI) framework for South Carolina. | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Develop web-based local planning template. | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Integrate early childhood data sets. | | | | | X | | | | X | | | |
| Answer policy questions regarding access and quality of early education and care programs using integrated data. | | | | | X | | | | X | | | |
| Increase inter-agency planning, program access and quality in pilot communities through data sharing and collaborative planning. | | | | | X | | | | X | | | |
| Achieve baseline measure of school readiness in pilot communities. | | | | | | | | | X | | | |

SC-ECAC Priority Area 2: Developing the Early Childhood Workforce

With limited new resources anticipated over the next several years, and in order to strengthen an existing asset within the state's early childhood system, the SC-ECAC chooses to focus significant resources on supporting, integrating, and expanding the state's longstanding commitment to the professional development of its early childhood workforce.

South Carolina's proposal seeks funding to maximize and link existing professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals across workforce areas. With leadership for early childhood present within the state's two- and four-year college system, South Carolina has mobilized the expertise necessary to redouble our efforts to integrate and align quality early childhood training and professional development experiences. Together with the administrative hub at the Center for Child Care Career Development, our colleges and agencies have instituted core elements of an early childhood education career development system (including training, mentoring, credentialing, personnel training registry, T.E.A.C.H. scholarships, etc.). Current state efforts to align early learning standards with core competencies are endorsed and strongly supported by the Council.

Along with an intentional focus on meeting the needs of at-risk children, a plan to integrate training and professional development efforts across agencies and service sectors, and a robust understanding of current workforce needs, South Carolina is poised to:

- Gather and use data on characteristics of the early childhood workforce in order to set appropriate goals for improving staff and program quality, as well as remove barriers for participation in quality professional development;
- Expand the existing professional development system to improve access to professional development opportunities;

- Develop and implement research-based training modules aligned with state early learning standards and supported with local technical assistance;
- Enhance connections between existing early childhood career pathways and the state's higher education system and increase high quality, community-based professional development opportunities that potentially lead to credit-bearing education experiences and credentialing.

The Council's preliminary action plan works across programs and through both public and private sectors to identify critical workforce issues, coordinate professional development and training, and create cross-system training efforts that address children's critical early learning and developmental needs. These strategies also serve as initial steps toward development of a comprehensive early childhood professional development system as proposed in the state's ECCS Plan.

State-Level Focus: Improve Coordination in Delivering Quality Professional Development that Meets the Needs of the State's Early Childhood Workforce

1. Early childhood workforce study and needs assessment

Utilizing expertise within the state's college and university system and in partnership with early childhood associations such as SCAEYC, SCECA and the Child Care Association, South Carolina will implement a comprehensive early childhood workforce study to assess the current needs, strengths, and barriers within the state's early childhood professional development system. This study will complement the successful workforce studies conducted by SCDSS and SCDHHS over the past several years as a part of the state's child care block grant, as well as similar studies by First Steps to profile the needs of parent educators within the state's early childhood system. The workforce study and needs assessment is intended to profile the current early childhood workforce in order to determine current education levels, compensation, training

needs, and barriers to formal education stemming from limited finances, geographical distance, transportation, English language proficiency, and other factors. This study differs from other past workforce surveys in that it does not focus on a particular service sector (such as early education or child care) but on the entire system – early education teachers, home visitors, family support providers, early interventionists, and health professionals. Data will be used to target and improve participation in professional development initiatives across all early childhood systems, public and private. Shared access to data about the workforce, historical participation in professional development, and understanding barriers will foster collaboration among early childhood programs and better connect the state systems of higher education to existing efforts.

2. Statewide training plan and calendar

South Carolina has built a strong system to certify and track child care professional development through the South Carolina Center for Child Care Career Development, and currently documents professional development within other programs (i.e., public education, IDEA, Head Start). To enhance coordination among the state's many early childhood professional development providers, the SC-ECAC will designate an inter-agency team, representing early childhood professionals and professional development providers across all systems, who will use the findings from the workforce study to develop a state training plan. The SC-ECAC will work closely with ECCS leaders on this strategy, as it represents initial steps to meet the ECCS recommendation for a Consortium for Comprehensive Early Childhood Professional Development for South Carolina.

Additionally, an appropriate consultant or agency designee will enhance the current web-based infrastructure for training certification to serve as a common training calendar for the state, which can be maintained at CCCCD.

Local-Level Focus: Pilot Cross-System Training on Core Competencies for Meeting the Developmental Needs of High-Risk Children 0-5

- 1. Develop and deliver, across local early childhood systems, training on South Carolina’s early learning standards that address critical core competencies for serving high-risk children.**

Per the Strategic Report, alignment of the state’s multiple early learning standards (Good Start, Grow Smart Early Learning Standards, which include Head Start Performance Standards; new Infant-Toddler Guidelines, and 5K Academic Content Standards) with the soon-to-be published Early Childhood Core Competencies will be completed this year. Representing the physical, cognitive, language, and social emotional competencies we desire for our children to attain prior to school entry, South Carolina must provide training on these standards to providers and parents alike. Building on current training strengths within the public sector (public school preK, Head Start, and licensed care providers), the Council seeks to ensure that all members of the early childhood workforce be offered “core competency” training to recognize and perform their role in developing school readiness in children they serve. This extends beyond the traditional workforce of teachers, home visitors, and early interventionists, but also those in the medical field (particularly nurses), health and human service providers, mental health professionals, faith-based services, and especially parents.

For this start-up phase, training on the soon-aligned early learning standards will address critical areas identified in the cohort study previously described in section A (*Status of Early Childhood Data Systems*), in which Dr. Baron Holmes, Director of South Carolina Kids Count, linked longitudinally children’s demographic characteristics at the time of birth and the first years of life, their results on the state’s kindergarten readiness instrument used at the time of the study, and educational outcomes by grade 3. Two of these areas directly address developmental

needs of South Carolina's children that research has shown are highly correlated with early school failure:

1. Low language and literacy development - One dimension of early childhood development of greatest concern to educators and parents is language and literacy. To a significant extent, the academic achievement gap begins through the limited oral language and literacy of too many poor, disabled, and limited English language children. Language and literacy have long been a focal point of training efforts for workers in early care and education, parenting/family literacy, and even medical homes. However, these workers enter their jobs with little or no training regarding language and literacy; and the training available to them during their employment is limited in its amount and effectiveness. To deal with the serious deficits of children's early reading proficiency, all possible stakeholders in South Carolina have been invited to participate in an Early Reading Proficiency grant project funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Partners in this effort have expressed enthusiasm for assisting the SC-ECAC in piloting high quality, accessible language and literacy training in the local communities targeted by this proposal. These pilot efforts would serve as a first step toward statewide language and literacy training through the Consortium for Comprehensive Early Childhood Professional Development (CCECPD) proposed by ECCS. Language and literacy training is recommended through the CCECPD for all appropriate members of the early childhood workforce, delivered in the most accessible manner by highly qualified trainers and coaches.

2. Social emotional development, including managing vulnerable transitions - Many young children arrive at the schoolroom door with distinct disadvantages that impede their opportunities for learning. Through no fault of their own, they experience frustrations that place them at risk for school failure. The behaviors exhibited in school are often the results of

problems they bring with them as they enter school for the first time. Some children may have already experienced 5 years of life within a vulnerable family affected by depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, inadequate health care, poverty, other difficult family situations, lack of English language skills, violence in the neighborhood, inconsistent parenting and physical abuse and neglect. Crises and emergencies, life transitions and the toxic stresses of daily living create additional psychosocial problems that impede successful learning and place children at risk for not maturing into responsible adults. Healthy social emotional development provides protection and support for children as they begin their school years. Early intervention is critical because social and emotional problems, left untreated, have consequences as long lasting and severe as serious physical illnesses or injuries.

Key professional development topics will be fostering children's positive social emotional development, early identification of children in need, strategies for managing challenging behaviors, and ultimately, linkage to systems of referral. Training developers will build upon the pilot work of SCECCS in the area of social emotional development training, using the widely accepted Pyramid Model and resources from CSEFEL and TACSEI.

The third critical workforce training area focuses on supporting the caregivers of young children:

3. Strengthening families - The Strengthening Families model builds the protective factors of parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and children's social emotional development. Children who are abused, neglected, or in foster care represent the highest probability for early school failure in South Carolina; the majority of these children will be retained or test significantly below grade level by third grade. The Strengthening Families approach is widely accepted as a best practice

for preventing child abuse and neglect, and is at the core of all programs supported by the Children's Trust of South Carolina, the state's lead agency for CBCAP and home visitation funding. South Carolina has worked with the Center for the Study of Social Policy and Zero to Three to implement workforce training with child care providers on how to strengthen protective factors among families they see every day. First Steps is also the lead agency for a research grant from the Quality Improvement Center on Early Childhood; part of this research study uses Zero to Three's Strengthening Families-based curriculum for early care and education providers and tests its effectiveness with a different early childhood workforce, namely service coordinators within the BabyNet (IDEA Part C) system.

Curriculum Development - A state team of higher education and workforce experts will lead this effort, joined by representatives from all target populations and the state's training providers. Using research-based curricula, the team will align curriculum with state early learning standards and create modules for the early childhood workforce on how to work with children and families, as well as modules directed at parents on how to support their child's healthy development. The three pilot communities will field test the curricula by training the early childhood workforce, related professionals (health care, etc.) and parents in each area, and will also deliver a train-the-trainer model with local providers so they can incorporate parent training into their programs. The pilot will coordinate with the state's common training calendar as part of its recruitment strategy, take advantage of existing training and technical assistance providers already working in the target areas, and document trainings offered and participants trained. Follow-up technical assistance in each pilot community will:

- Visit with local service providers at least three times, at regular intervals following training, to determine the impact of training on (1) the workforce, (2) local training providers, (3) the community, and (4) families.
- Survey families of local early childhood providers

Evaluation of training impact on child development will be measured, in part, by child assessments piloted in these same communities in Year 3 for the state's School Readiness Index. Lessons learned from the training and follow-up evaluation will inform expansion of the training statewide. Key to this effort will be state-level professional development systems coordinating their in-service training requirements so that these core competencies become integrated into each system (i.e., Child Care Licensing, public education, Head Start, IDEA Part C, etc.), as well as developing on-line/video streaming versions of the modules for universal access. In this manner, improvements in the state's early childhood professional development system can be sustained long-term using existing resources and infrastructure.

ACTION PLAN:
Developing the Early Childhood Workforce

Objectives:

- Assess the needs of the state's early childhood workforce
- Increase access, and remove barriers, to participation by the early childhood workforce in quality professional development
- Improve the early childhood workforce's ability to meet the critical developmental needs of high-risk children

| Activities: | Timeline | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|----|----|----|--------|----|----|----|--------|----|----|----|
| | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Select inter-agency, public-private team to oversee workforce study | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Select contractor(s) to conduct workforce study, to include data analysis, focus groups, surveys, etc. | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Select curriculum development team to develop curriculum modules for early childhood workforce and parents, based on core competencies/standards and identified risk areas. | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | | | |
| Select contractor(s) to design interactive, web-based training calendar for the state | | X | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| Present workforce study findings to the SC-ECAC | | | | X | | | | | | | | |
| Select early childhood professional development leadership (PDL) team to make recommendations based on workforce study findings | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| Hire provider(s) to pilot curriculum modules in the SC-ECAC pilot communities | | | | | X | | | | | | | |
| Train early childhood workforce in the pilot communities | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Provide follow-up technical assistance within pilot communities | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Implement common training calendar | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Professional Development Leadership Team presents state training plan recommendations to the SC-ECAC | | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| Implement state training plan, beginning with pilot communities. | | | | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Present results to date of training pilots to the SC-ECAC | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Develop web-based training modules, as feasible, to support state training plan | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X |
| Expand curriculum module training to other areas of the state | | | | | | | | | X | X | X | X |

| Desired Outcomes for Each Project Year: | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Complete comprehensive workforce study | X | | |
| Develop curriculum modules based on core competencies in early literacy, social emotional development and strengthening families, aligned to state early learning standards. | | X | |
| Increase access to quality professional development for the early childhood workforce, particularly those in rural areas | | X | X |
| Increase provider knowledge of training opportunities | | X | X |
| Reduce both duplication and gaps in quality professional development offered around the state | | X | X |
| Increase knowledge and use of early learning standards among the early childhood workforce | | X | X |
| Increase the ability of the early childhood workforce to positively impact the early literacy, social emotional development, and protective factors of children they serve | | X | X |
| Improve children's social emotional and literacy/language readiness | | | X |

Plan for Conducting the Required Periodic Needs Assessment and Supporting the Council's Ongoing Work

The SC ECAC Strategic Report serves as the state's preliminary needs assessment, examining short- and long-term recommendations on the current state of South Carolina's early childhood system and the state's capability to provide quality early childhood education and development programs for children from birth to school entry. Included in the Strategic Report are plans to conduct periodic state needs assessments:

Short-term Recommendations (within the next 12 months):

1. The SC-ECAC will select a task force to conduct an initial inventory of existing needs assessment studies in South Carolina that are either being prepared or have been completed, ideally over the past five years, and publish these studies online in order to facilitate access. The task force will then prepare a meta-analysis of these studies, beginning with strengths within the system, while identifying existing gaps in services and strategies to address those gaps. This inventory will include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - ECCS Plan for South Carolina
 - State Child Care Development Fund plan
 - Title V Needs Assessments from 2007 and 2010
 - Maternal, Infant, and Child Home Visiting Needs Assessment (to be completed in 2010)
 - Children's Hospital Collaborative studies
 - Office of Rural Health studies
 - Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Needs Assessment

- State Head Start Needs Assessment
 - South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) inventory and 2009 facilities inventory
 - Commission for Minority Affairs' Student Achievement and Vision Education (SAVE) Report
 - Research and studies by state higher education institutions
2. Review national and/or state-by-state studies pertaining to service gaps or best practice recommendations to determine needs in South Carolina relative to other states. As needed, consult federal Office of Head Start to determine what needs assessments have been completed by Advisory Councils in other states.

Long-term Recommendations:

1. Review the conclusions of the initial needs assessment inventory and analysis, taking into account community contexts, to gain an initial understanding of the scope of the needs assessed as well as the conclusions from the studies. Gaining insight into these aspects of current needs assessments will inform future plans to address needs assessment gaps.
2. Build capacity among state agencies and public/private partners to conduct early childhood needs assessments, to include maintaining a central repository of needs assessments within a designated public and private entity and incorporating future studies of South Carolina's early childhood systems as appropriate.
3. Use needs assessment findings to develop targeted research questions for further study. Seek outside private sources for funding future research.

4. Consider seeking the assistance of institutions outside state government to conduct needs assessments for unanswered questions, such as higher education and the South Carolina Institute for Child Success.

The SC-ECAC will also incorporate into its needs assessment inventory the future capabilities of our state's early childhood data systems and School Readiness Index measurement to better understand how early childhood development programs and services are impacting readiness, particularly for low-income and other high-risk children.

As previously stated, in the coming months the SC-ECAC will develop Action Plans for each recommendation within the state's Strategic Report, in a similar fashion to the plans for data driven decision making and workforce development provided in this proposal. Staff support for plan implementation will be shared across multiple partner agencies and organizations, at both the state and regional level. It is anticipated that the Leadership Teams charged by the SC-ECAC to develop the Strategic Report, described in the Introduction section above, will continue as work teams to implement the report's recommendations, as well as serve on the inter-agency work teams responsible for implementing the Action Plans funded by this proposal. Relying on the state's existing infrastructure and workforce expertise to advise and guide the Council's implementation efforts will enable sustainability within the system after start-up funding ends, through existing resources and other funding as needed. A complete list of SC-ECAC Leadership Team members is included in the Appendices. While the SC-ECAC has not yet approved a formal process for soliciting ongoing public input on its work going forward, the Council will likely adopt a similarly inclusive process to that which helped develop the Strategic Report, including:

- a broad-based team infrastructure for supporting and monitoring the Council's recommendations
- soliciting public input at regular intervals and decision points
- involvement of broadcast partners such as SCETV
- online posting of SC-ECAC agendas, meeting minutes, plans, reports and publications and offering a dedicated email address for questions and feedback
- public notification of SC-ECAC meetings, which are open to the public

The SC-ECAC will meet at least four times annually to review the state's overall progress relative to its responsibilities as defined in the Head Start Act and Executive Order, as well as monitor progress and results of the Action Plans benefitting from federal Advisory Council funding. It is likely the Council as a whole or committees of the Council will meet virtually (conference call/webinar) in between quarterly meetings. Its work teams will meet more frequently, particularly during project start-up, either in person or by conference call or webinar.

In order to provide sufficient staff support to the SC-ECAC and its associated teams, a part-time staff person will be hired to assist the Coordinator in supporting the work of the Council. Susan DeVenny, Director of South Carolina First Steps and Coordinator of the SC-ECAC, will supervise this position. Additional information on this position can be found in Section C below. The State Office of First Steps will serve as the lead agency for federal Advisory Council funding, and will provide significant in-kind support to the SC-ECAC in terms of grant management, fiscal administration, budgeting, establishing and administering contracts and third party agreements, providing conference line and webinar services, and other staff support. Partner organizations with major roles in project implementation include:

SC Office of Research and Statistics – This agency serves as the state’s central data repository and analysis for health/demographic data (including SC Kids Count), economic research, geodetic survey, digital cartography and related services. Federal Advisory Council funding will enhance the state’s ability to integrate and interpret early childhood data through the State Data Warehouse.

Higher education partners – Early childhood faculty and researchers at Clemson University, University of South Carolina, Francis Marion University, and the state’s technical college system will lead the effort to create a comprehensive early childhood professional development system for South Carolina that meets the needs of the current workforce, and will be important advisors on the application of integrated early childhood data and the creation of the School Readiness Index.

SC Center for Child Care Career Development – Will have an important role as the state’s administrative hub for professional development and training in early care and education.

SC Department of Social Services – Will play a key role in project implementation and sustainability as the state’s administrator of child care block grant funds – which include funding for the Center for Child Care Career Development - as well as the convener of inter-agency teams that oversee the state’s early learning standards.

Head Start – The project will rely on the expertise of state and local Head Start personnel for developing and implementing standards-based training, piloting school readiness measurements, and modeling effective local needs and resources planning.

First Steps County Partnerships – Will serve as local conveners of early childhood providers for grant-funded activities within the pilot communities and organizers of community-based planning.

SECTION C: STAFF AND POSITION DATA

Susan DeVenny, Director of South Carolina First Steps, is the governor-assigned coordinator of the South Carolina's Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC). A biographical sketch of Ms. DeVenny is included in the Appendices. Assisting Ms. DeVenny's support to the SC-ECAC will be a part-time **Coordinator**, to be hired. This position will be housed at SC First Steps and will provide day-to-day administration the state's Advisory Council start-up grant; provide administrative and communications support to all SC-ECAC committees and work groups; assist in preparing SC-ECAC reports and publications; and help disseminate the work of the Council to stakeholders and the general public. This position will require a bachelor's degree and relevant experience in program management; preferred qualifications include a bachelor's degree in early childhood (master's preferred) and five years of experience managing an early childhood, child or family support program.

An **Early Childhood Data and Evaluation Specialist** (to be hired) will provide project management for the SC-ECAC's efforts to develop an indicators-based school readiness index and enhance the ability of state and local stakeholders to plan and make program decisions using client, program and workforce data. Duties will include analysis and support for the linkage of multiple data sets to facilitate the development and piloting of integrated early childhood planning tools and the SC School Readiness Index. This position will coordinate the work of the inter-agency Data and Measurement Team and will oversee the implementation of the team's data integration and analysis plan, to be developed in Year 1 with significant technical assistance provided by the Children's Defense Fund and other national experts. Qualifications include a preferred doctorate in a related field with experience in statistics, data management and analysis - preferably in early care and education or human services - and with multi-agency/entity

systems; possess excellent facilitation skills; and the ability to access technical expertise as needed from other early childhood systems experts.

This proposal also reserves grant resources in Years 2-3 for additional personnel, if necessary, in the area of data programming and support within partnering agencies. The SC-ECAC will determine the resources needed based on the state data integration plan developed in Year 1 of the project, and will submit appropriate documents, including position description(s), to the Office of Head Start for approval.

The proposed plan also requires that resources be allocated within select geographic areas in order to assess the impact of state-level systems changes on early childhood service delivery at the local level. A part-time **Community Facilitator** (to be hired) will enhance existing needs assessment processes to increase real-time, data-driven early childhood planning for select pilot sites in three areas of the state (13 counties), at both a county and regional level. This position will design and facilitate an iterative process in cooperation with cross-functional community groups to ensure the web-based product meets multi-agency/entity needs, and interfaces appropriately with state level data systems. Qualifications include a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in an education, human services, or related field and experience with organization or community-based planning, training, and facilitation. Starting in Year 2, an **Early Childhood Specialist** (to be hired) will be responsible for planning, organizing, and delivering standards-based training to the early childhood workforce in the designated pilot communities (13 counties), and for supervising follow-up technical assistance to local early childhood providers on integrating training principles into daily interaction with children and caregivers. This position will have a master's degree or higher in early childhood education, be a certified trainer and technical assistance provider with the Center for Child Care Career Development, and have

significant experience training adults with a wide range of education backgrounds. The SC-ECAC will determine which state agency (or agencies) will supervise these positions during the first quarter of the project.

SECTION D: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES

Lead agency responsible for SC-ECAC management – South Carolina First Steps is the state’s public-private initiative for improving school readiness that consists of a state coordinating office and a network of county partnerships (46), each 501(c)3 non-profit organizations led by a board of early childhood stakeholders. Now in its 11th year of operation, First Steps has proven its impact through strong program and fiscal accountability and independent evaluations every three years - a requirement of its enabling legislation. The State Office of First Steps and its director, Susan DeVenny, will be responsible for managing and coordinating the activities of South Carolina’s Advisory Council, per the attached Executive Order. Additional information about First Steps can be found in Section A, *Status of Coordination and Collaboration*.

First Steps has the appropriate infrastructure, fiscal controls, and accounting procedures to manage this project and bear the project costs per a reimbursement mechanism. In 2008-09, First Steps managed \$4.3 million in federal funds from a variety of sources, including: child care block grant (CCDF), TANF, Early Reading First, Early Head Start, ACF Home Visitation, and Workforce Investment Act funds. All funds received by First Steps at either the state or county level are tightly controlled and allocable by program, vendor, funding source, and type of expenditure. At the state level, the Department of Education serves as the fiscal agent for First Steps and the human resources provider for the state First Steps office. Therefore, project expenditures will be subject to all applicable state procurement and accounting procedures and

will be processed by First Steps and Department of Education staff through the state government's accounting and finance system. As an entity of state government, the Office of First Steps is audited by the Office of the State Auditor and included in the statewide single audit of federal funds. The last state audit completed for the Office of First Steps can be found at: <http://osa.sc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/71C47472-8752-49A0-86AC-C05794594222/0/H6308FirstSteps.pdf>.

State of South Carolina
Executive Department

FILED

FEB 10 2010

Mark Hammond
SECRETARY OF STATE⁸



Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO.

2010-06

WHEREAS, the future success of South Carolina's children correlates with early learning, which fosters optimal development;

WHEREAS, South Carolina's quality of life and economic prosperity depend upon the presence of a well-educated work force;

WHEREAS, positive early learning outcomes yield substantial long-term savings to taxpayers;

WHEREAS, the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness (First Steps) initiative was created in 1999 to "develop, promote, and assist efforts of agencies, private providers, and public and private organizations and entities, at the state level and the community level, to collaborate and cooperate in order to focus and intensify services, assure the most efficient use of all available resources, and eliminate duplication of efforts to serve the needs of young children and their families." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-152-20;

WHEREAS, the South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees was created to promote and ensure these ends by coordinating efforts among multiple state agencies;

WHEREAS, the federal Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, 42 U.S.C. § 9837b(b)(1), requires the governor of each state to designate or establish a State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (Advisory Council) as part of a parallel federal effort to ensure coordination and collaboration within the states; and

WHEREAS, the governor is further required to designate an individual charged with coordinating the activities of the State Advisory Council;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 9837b(b), I designate the members of the First Steps Board of Trustees to serve as South Carolina's Advisory Council, and I designate the State Director of First Steps to coordinate the activities of the Advisory Council.

Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 9837b(b)(1)(D)(i), the Advisory Council shall:

(I) conduct a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children from birth to school entry, including an assessment of the availability of high-quality pre-kindergarten services for low-income children in the state;

(II) identify opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally-funded and state-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among state agencies responsible for administering such programs;

(III) develop recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to underrepresented and special populations;

(IV) develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a unified data collection system for public early childhood education and development programs and services throughout the state;

(V) develop recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood educators in the state;

(VI) assess the capacity and effectiveness of 2- and 4-year public and private institutions of higher education in the state toward supporting the development of early childhood educators, including the extent to which such institutions have in place articulation agreements, professional development and career advancement plans, and practice or internships for students to spend time in a Head Start or pre-kindergarten program;

(VI) make recommendations for improvements in state early learning standards and undertake efforts to develop high-quality comprehensive early learning standards, as appropriate.

(VII) develop and publish, using available demographic data, an indicators-based measure of school readiness at the state and community level;

(VIII) incorporate, within its periodic statewide needs assessments required in 42 U.S.C. § 9837b, data related to the capacity and efforts of private sector providers, Head Start providers, and local school districts to serve children aged

birth to four. This shall include fiscal, enrollment, and capacity data to the extent feasible; and

(IX) perform all other functions, as permitted under federal and state law, to improve coordination and delivery of early childhood education and development to children in South Carolina.

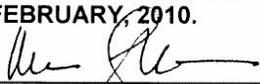
While parallel in membership, the Advisory Council shall act as a distinct entity for the purpose of fulfilling the responsibilities outlined here. Each member of the First Steps Board of Trustees (both voting and non-voting) shall be considered a voting member of the Advisory Council. First Steps Board minutes shall explicitly distinguish actions and votes of the Advisory Council, and the Advisory Council must officially adjourn prior to acting as the First Steps Board. This order shall not be interpreted as conferring voting status upon any First Steps trustee not granted this privilege under state law. Each Advisory Council member's term shall be concurrent with his/her service to the First Steps Board of Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED THAT, to ensure adequate communication and coordination with the state's Head Start providers, the Director of the South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office shall be seated as a voting member of the Advisory Council. To the extent possible, the migrant and tribal Head Start providers shall be represented in the work of the Advisory Council.

In order to facilitate the work of the Advisory Council, South Carolina's public agencies shall, to the extent permissible under state and federal law, assist in providing all data necessary to fulfill the Advisory Council's duties.



GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE
GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS 10th DAY OF
FEBRUARY, 2010.



MARK SANFORD
Governor

ATTEST: 

MARK HAMMOND
SECRETARY OF STATE

SECTION E: THIRD PARTY AGREEMENTS

The proposed Action Plans described in Section B utilize expert contracted providers for a range of one-time, time-limited services to provide the needed data integration and analysis, web-based programming, workforce assessment, and professional development services. All contractual agreements will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. The SC-ECAC will make available to ACF any pre-award review and procurement documents as requested. The SC-ECAC anticipates developing third party agreements for the following services:

- Curriculum Development – A task force of higher education faculty and certified training providers will develop accredited training modules in Years 1-2, based on the state’s early learning standards and the results of the state's Early Childhood Workforce Study, that will cross-train members of the early childhood workforce in core competencies for supporting the optimal development of children 0-5, particularly those at high risk. Much of the associated cost will be provided by higher education partners.
- Early Childhood Workforce Study – A comprehensive study in Year 1 of the professional development needs, and barriers to professional development, of the state's early childhood workforce - ECE providers 0-5 in public and non-public settings, home visitors, early interventionists, medical and health care personnel, and other providers - relative to achieving optimal child outcomes across all domains of development.
- Workforce Technical Assistance – Following initial training, the SC-ECAC will contract from within each community’s local network of certified trainers and technical assistance providers to assist providers with integrating best practices into their work with children

and families. Possible providers include First Steps county partnerships, university and technical college faculty, and Child Care Resource & Referral.

- Data Policy Consultation – Expert consultation in Year 1 to assist the SC-ECAC with identifying key policy questions to be answered through the use of linked and/or improved data sets, and developing an early childhood data integration and analysis plan for the state based on the principles of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative.
- School Readiness Index – Expert consultation in Year 1 to advise the SC-ECAC on the development and weighting of indicators-based measures of school readiness at the child, program, and population level; and for conducting random sampling of child assessments within the three pilot communities in Year 3.
- Programming Services – Programmer services for developing interactive, web-based tools for state and local early childhood systems, including: providing early childhood data, integrated from multiple systems, in a form that enables data driven decision making at the state and community level; developing an online community-based planning tool for allocating early childhood services; and creating a common early childhood training calendar.

SECTION F: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| PERSONNEL (ALL STATE AGENCIES) | | | | |
| SC-ECAC Coordinator: 0.5 FTE, 12 months/year. This position will be housed at the lead agency (SC First Steps) to assist the State Coordinator for the Early Childhood Advisory Council (S. DeVenny) to coordinate all activities, communications and reporting for the SC-ECAC, including progress monitoring according to the goals, objectives and timeline of the state's Advisory Council grant and Strategic Report. Salary = midpoint of state pay band 6. Est. 2% COL in Years 2-3. | | | | |
| Early Childhood Data and Evaluation Specialist: 1.0 FTE, 12 months/year. This position will provide analysis and support for the SC-ECAC in several areas, including the linkage of multiple data sets to facilitate the development and piloting of integrated early childhood data systems and the SC School Readiness Index; community-based planning for early childhood service delivery; and analysis of the state's early childhood workforce. Salary = midpoint of state pay band 7. Est. 2% COL increase in Years 2-3. | | | | |
| Data Integration Services: Based on data integration plan developed in Year 1, expand existing state resources in Years 2-3 for linking multiple data sets and expanding use of data cube technology within the state's early childhood system. Est. 1.0 FTE, 12 months at the midpoint of state pay band 7. Est. 2% COL in Year 3. | 0 | 63,000 | 64,260 | 127,260 |

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| Early Childhood Specialist: 1.0 FTE, 12 months/year in Years 2-3. Agency to be designated. Will provide training and supervise technical assistance and support to the early childhood workforce in the three pilot communities designated by the SC-ECAC. Salary = midpoint of state pay band 6. Est. 2% COL increase in Year 3. | | | | |
| Community Facilitator: 0.5 FTE, 12 months/year. Agency to be designated. Will develop a comprehensive needs and resources planning process designed to maximize local investments for increasing access to and quality of early childhood services for high-risk children, facilitate and evaluate its use in three pilot communities, then expand to other areas of the state over the life of the project. Salary = midpoint of state pay band 6. Est. 2% COL increase in Years 2-3. | | | | |
| <i>Total, Personnel</i> | \$115,500 | \$233,310 | \$237,976 | \$586,786 |
| FRINGE BENEFITS | | | | |
| 31% state government fringe rate includes all employer fringe benefit costs, including retirement, workers compensation, unemployment, and health/dental insurance. | 35,805 | 72,326 | 73,773 | 181,904 |
| <i>Total, Fringe Benefits</i> | \$35,805 | \$72,326 | \$73,773 | \$181,904 |

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| TRAVEL | | | | |
| Out of State Travel: SC-ECAC Coordinator will attend all required federal meetings (est. one 3-day meeting during the project period) and additional travel by SC-ECAC members and delegates for professional development and site visits to innovative programs in other states: est. 12 three-day trips per year. Per person travel costs = \$500 airfare + \$150/day lodging + \$50/day food + \$150 ground transportation. | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 45,000 |
| Local (In-State) Travel: Mileage and overnight lodging for SC-ECAC members, staff and delegates for meetings, professional development, and working with the three pilot communities. Est. 1,500 miles/month x 12 months x \$0.50/mile + \$2,500/year lodging. | 11,500 | 11,500 | 11,500 | 34,500 |
| <i>Total, Travel</i> | \$26,500 | \$26,500 | \$26,500 | \$79,500 |

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | |
| NONE | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| <i>Total, Equipment</i> | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| SUPPLIES | | | | |
| Technology: Year 1 purchases: laptop system (\$1,000) for grant-funded Personnel + portable DVD player (\$100) for training. | 4,100 | 0 | 0 | 4,100 |
| Curriculum and Training Supplies: Est. \$12,500/year to support curriculum development in Year 1 and dissemination/training in Years 2-3. | 12,500 | 12,500 | 12,500 | 37,500 |
| SC-ECAC Supplies: Est. amount for general supplies and meeting expenses. | 4,682 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 12,682 |
| <i>Total, Supplies</i> | \$21,282 | \$16,500 | \$16,500 | \$54,282 |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | |
| Curriculum Development: A task force of higher education faculty and certified training providers will develop accredited training modules in Years 1-2, based on SC's early learning standards and the results of the state's Early Childhood Workforce Study, that will cross-train members of the early childhood workforce (ECE providers in public and private settings, home visitors, early interventionists, and health providers) in core competencies for supporting the optimal development of children 0-5, particularly those at high risk. Much of the associated cost will be provided by higher education partners. | 35,000 | 10,000 | 0 | 45,000 |

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|---|---------|--------|--------|-----------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| Early Childhood Workforce Professional Development Study: A comprehensive study in Year 1 of the professional development needs, and barriers to professional development, of the state's early childhood workforce - ECE providers 0-5 in public and non-public settings, home visitors, early interventionists, medical and health care personnel, and other providers - relative to achieving optimal child outcomes across all domains of development. | 100,000 | 0 | 0 | 100,000 |
| Workforce Technical Assistance: Following training, technical assistance to the early childhood workforce within the three pilot communities to assist providers with integrating best practices into their work with children and families. \$25,000 per community in Years 2-3. | 0 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 150,000 |
| Programming Services: Programmer services for developing interactive, web-based tools for state and local early childhood systems, including: providing early childhood data, integrated from multiple systems, in a form that enables data-driven decision making at the state and community level; developing a community-based planning tool for allocating early childhood services; and creating a common early childhood training calendar. | 75,000 | 75,000 | 25,000 | 175,000 |
| Data Policy Consultation: Expert consultation in Year 1 to assist the SC-ECAC with identifying key policy questions to be answered through the use of linked and/or improved data sets, and developing a plan for creating the data linkages, permissions, and other elements required. | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 50,000 |

| | YEAR 1 | YEAR 2 | YEAR 3 | TOTAL YEARS 1-3 |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Federal Funds | | | | |
| BUDGET CATEGORIES | | | | |
| School Readiness Measurement: Expert consultation in Year 1 to advise the SC-ECAC on the development of indicators-based measures of school readiness, and for conducting random sampling of child assessments within the three pilot communities in Year 3. | 30,000 | 0 | 30,000 | 60,000 |
| <i>Total, Contractual</i> | \$290,000 | \$160,000 | \$130,000 | \$580,000 |
| OTHER | | | | |
| Mobile Phone Service: \$75/month x 3 in Year 1, 4 in Years 2-3. | 2,700 | 3,600 | 3,600 | 9,900 |
| Provider Training Costs: Expenses in Years 2-3 related to professional development in the three pilot communities, such as mileage costs, substitute pay, training stipends, etc. | 0 | 35,000 | 35,000 | 70,000 |
| Community-Level Training Costs: Expenses related to local, inter-agency planning and training (mileage, stipends, etc.) | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 30,000 |
| Conference Registration Fees: Est. \$3,000/year. | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 9,000 |
| <i>Total, Other</i> | \$15,700 | \$51,600 | \$51,600 | \$118,900 |
| DIRECT COSTS, FEDERAL FUNDS | \$504,787 | \$560,236 | \$536,349 | \$1,601,371 |
| INDIRECT CHARGES: Lead Agency (SC First Steps) shares the negotiated indirect cost rate of its fiscal agent, the SC Dept. of Education. 2% restricted rate negotiated through the US Dept. of Education on non-equipment expenditures and the first \$25,000 each contract. | \$6,796 | \$10,005 | \$10,127 | \$26,927 |
| DIRECT+INDIRECT COSTS, FEDERAL FUNDS | \$511,582 | \$570,241 | \$546,476 | \$1,628,299 |

| Non-Federal Match | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <p>Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP): In response to Judge Thomas Cooper's 2005 ruling in the school funding lawsuit, <i>Abbeville County School District et al vs. South Carolina</i>, the state invests funds annually to increase access to quality full-day 4K for low-income children residing within the 20 trial and plaintiff counties. SC First Steps operates the portion of CDEPP funding allocated to increasing the number of low-income children attending quality preschool outside of public school programs, such as Head Start and private child care. Approximately 520 low-income children annually attend quality full-day 4K in non-public school settings through this program. The match allocated to SC-ECAC represents increased access to early care and education for approximately 250 low-income children.</p> | \$1,266,455 | \$1,266,455 | \$1,266,455 | \$3,799,364 |
| <p>TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (FEDERAL REQUEST + MATCH)</p> | \$1,778,037 | \$1,836,695 | \$1,812,930 | \$5,427,663 |

COPY

INDIRECT COST RATE AGREEMENT
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

ORGANIZATION:

South Carolina Department
Of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

DATE: OCT 20 2008
AGREEMENT NO. 2008-109
FILING REFERENCE: This replaces
previous Agreement No. 2007-055(A)
dated July 18, 2008

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish indirect cost rates for use in award and management of Federal contracts, grants, and other assistance arrangements to which Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87 applies. The U.S. Department of Education negotiated the rates pursuant to the authority cited in Attachment A of OMB Circular A-87.

This Agreement consists of four parts: Section I - Rates and Bases; Section II - Particulars; Section III - Special Remarks; and Section IV - Approvals.

Section I - Rate(s) and Base(s)

| TYPE | Effective Period | | Rate | Base | Coverage | |
|---------------|------------------|----------|-------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| | From | To | | | Location | Applicability |
| Predetermined | 07-01-08 | 06-30-11 | 2.00% | <u>1/</u> | All | All Programs |

1/ Total direct costs less items of equipment, alterations and renovations, flow through funds, and each sub-contract in excess of \$25,000.

Treatment of Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as direct costs, however, pursuant to OMB Circular A-87-Attachment B, Paragraph 8.d. (3), terminal leave payments for separating employees will be allocated as an indirect cost and will not be charged as a direct cost to Federal programs.

Capitalization Policy: Items of equipment with a cost of \$5,000 or more, and a useful life in excess of three years are capitalized.



July 28, 2010

Richard F. Gonzales
Senior Advisor for Early Childhood Development and Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of the Deputy Asst. Secretary and Inter-Departmental Liaison for Early Childhood Development
Aerospace Building
901 D Street, SW
7th Floor West
Washington, D.C. 20447

Dear Richard:

As the administrator of Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) funds appropriated to South Carolina First Steps by the South Carolina General Assembly, I assure that these funds are not currently designated as match to any other federal grant. Attached is a copy of the 2010-11 state general fund ledger appropriating CDEPP funds to South Carolina First Steps to support expanded access for low-income children in quality preschool programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan DeVenny".

Susan DeVenny
Director

| 06/30/10 | | OFFICE OF STATE BUDGET SUMMARY CONTROL DOCUMENT | | /fer | | |
|----------|--|---|--|-------------------|--|---|
| Line | | | FY 2010-11 Agency Beginning Base | Part 1A H.4657 | Nonrecurring Transfers Provisos 89,143, 90,15, 90,17 | Increased Enforcement Collections Proviso 90,16 |
| 1714 | 1714 EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT * | * FY 2010-11 Appropriation Bill, H.4657 * | | | | |
| 1715 | | <i>The Summary Control Document is the State Budget Office's attempt to maintain a historical record in summary form reflecting the recommendations/actions taken at each stage of the budget process. It is not intended to be construed as a binding, legal document.</i> | | | | |
| 1716 | Revenue | | | | | |
| 1717 | | | | | | |
| 1718 | Recurring Revenue: | | | | | |
| 1719 | Revenue Forecast, FY 2009-10 (BEA Forecast 11/10/09, 2/11/10, 4/14/10) | | | 521,794,107 | | |
| 1720 | Interest Earnings Forecast, FY 2009-10 (BEA Forecast 11/10/09, 2/11/10, 4/14/10) | | | 440,000 | | |
| 1721 | | | | | | |
| 1722 | Less: FY 2009-10 Appropriation Base (After BEA 11/10/09, 2/11/10, 4/14/10 Revised Est.) | | | (532,044,107) | | |
| 1723 | | | | | | |
| 1724 | Total "New" Recurring EIA Revenue | | | (9,810,000) | | |
| 1725 | | | | | | |
| 1726 | Total EIA Revenue | | | (9,810,000) | | |
| 1727 | | | | | | |
| 1728 | Appropriations | | | | | |
| 1729 | | | | | | |
| 1730 | Alloc EIA - Other Entities | | | (21,223) | | |
| 1731 | Alloc EIA - Other Entities | | | (352) | | |
| 1732 | Other Agencies | | | (11,628) | | |
| 1733 | Adult Education | | | 4,149,720 | | |
| 1734 | Middle School Initiative (Funded in Part 1A) | | | (3,576,330) | | |
| 1735 | Credits High School Diploma (Funded in Part 1A) | | | (17,117,711) | | |
| 1736 | Young Adults Education | | | (1,189,365) | | |
| 1737 | Competitive Teacher Grants | | | (956,728) | | |
| 1738 | EAA Technical Assistance | | | (3,000,000) | | |
| 1739 | External Review Teams | | | (1,019,880) | | |
| 1740 | CDEPP - SCDE | | | 17,300,000 | | |
| 1741 | CDEPP - DFS | | | 2,187,950 | | |
| 1742 | Salary Supplement Principals (Funded in Part 1A) | | | (2,244,030) | | |
| 1743 | Clemson Agriculture Teachers | | | 304,200 | | |
| 1744 | Service Learning Engagement | | | (48,452) | | |
| 1745 | Teacher Grant Program | | | | | |
| 1746 | National Board Certification (NBC) | | | | | |
| 1747 | Palmto Gold & Silver Awards Program | | | | | |
| 1748 | Arts Curricula Instruction | | | | | |
| 1749 | Instructional Materials | | | | | |
| 1750 | School Improvement Council Project (H27) | | | | | |
| 1751 | Education Oversight Committee (Transfer \$250,000 to Teacher Supplies per Proviso 1A.45) | | | | | |
| 1752 | Teacher Supplies (Transfer \$250,000 from Education Oversight Committee per Proviso 1A.45) | | | | | |
| 1753 | | | | | | |
| 1754 | | | | | | |
| 1755 | Total EIA Appropriations | | | (9,810,000) | | |
| 1756 | Residual Balance | | | | | |
| 1757 | | | | | | |



- State Advisory Council Supplemental Funding Request -

South Carolina requests the maximum available allocation (\$200,000) in supplemental State Advisory Council funding to support the start-up activities of the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council (SC-ECAC) over the next three years. This supplemental funding will be used as additional resources to the state's original Advisory Council application within the two overarching themes selected by the SC-ECAC for funding:

1. Data Driven Decision Making
2. Development of the Early Childhood Workforce

Within these categories, the SC-ECAC intends to advance both state-level systems improvements and meet the needs of local communities desiring positive change in how early childhood stakeholders work together to maximize resources for children, particularly those at highest risk. To that end, the SC-ECAC will use start-up funding to both: 1. Advance state-level priorities lacking existing resources; and 2. Create three community-based ECAC pilot/incubator sites in which the practicality and impact of these state-level efforts may be assessed prior to full-scale implementation.

Data Driven Decision Making: Within this focus area, objectives for SC-ECAC funding are: a) Use data to improve access and quality of early education and care programs at the state and community level; and b) Develop and pilot an indicators-based measure of school readiness. Supplemental funding will advance these objectives at the state and local level by both taking advantage of existing early childhood data sets and collecting and analyzing new data on local readiness for collaboration. Specifically, supplemental funding will:

- **Create an initial data cube on early childhood data sets**, currently residing within the state data warehouse, the state's P-20 longitudinal data system, and early childhood partners in order to provide community-level risk profiles for children 0-5. Existing data will be integrated or "cross- tabbed" and analyzed and mapped instantaneously through an access-controlled web application. This data will include, at minimum, vital records information (including maternal education, birth weight), Medicaid data (qualifying category, ICD-9 Diagnosis Code) and social services data (poverty, foster care, child protective services) that will then be compared with program and educational outcomes data to show which communities have children most likely to not be ready for school. The data cube will enable mapping so that communities can tap into the natural infrastructure of neighborhood-based interventions to serve geographic concentrations of high-risk children. This activity will require Third Party Agreements with the South

Carolina Budget and Control Board's Office of Research and Statistics and the South Carolina Department of Education, which will be developed during the first quarter of the project period.

- **Complete a study identifying the local capacity for collaboration and establishing “communities of practice” within the SC-ECAC pilot communities.** South Carolina must increase the access and quality of early childhood education and development services for high-risk children, and it must do so with little/no additional funding. Using information mined from the data cubing process, local early childhood systems will be analyzed to determine where the greatest potential for collaboration exists for increasing the number of high-risk children served by quality early childhood programs. Top priority will be determining the most likely communities to benefit from collaboration among public school, Head Start, and child care to create blended models for service delivery.

Development of the Early Childhood Workforce: Objectives for workforce development using SC-ECAC funding are: a) Assess the needs of the state's early childhood workforce; b) Increase access and remove barriers to participation by the early childhood workforce in quality professional development; and c) Improve the early childhood workforce's ability to meet the critical developmental needs of high-risk children. Supplemental funding will provide additional resources at the local level for workforce development, particularly training and collaborative planning, specifically:

- **Increase resources for developing Communities of Practice within SC-ECAC pilot communities.** Supplemental funding will enhance support and technical assistance for local collaboration, including increased staff support and additional travel and supply funding. These additional resources will help “jump start” communities' efforts to enhance services and support at the local level by a) Assembling a core of committed local stakeholders who provide services and can make decisions about services and supports; b) Nurturing collaborative planning along with ongoing coordinated efforts across time (i.e., 2-3 years); c) Working on an initial assessment of who does what, with whom, and where are strengths and weaknesses; d) Addressing those issues that can be addressed while understanding some issues may be longer term and some may simply not be solvable; and e) Having outside, state-level collaborative support to assist with ongoing problem solving. Enhanced data availability and utility, including newly-developed readiness measurements, will be key to this process.