



To: The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr., Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee
 The Honorable Bruce W. Bannister, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee

From: Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director, SC First Steps

Date: March 31, 2023

RE: First Steps 4K Report Pursuant to Proviso 1.55

Proviso 1.55 of the General Appropriations Act for FY23 specifies that:

No later than April first, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps shall report to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee on the expenditure of these funds to include the following information: the amount of money used and specific steps and measures taken to enhance the quality of the 4K program and the amount of money used for professional development as well as the types of professional development offered and the number of participants. The Office of First Steps is directed to determine if the provision of extended programs in private centers improves the ability of parents to enter the workforce or to pursue postsecondary training or industry credentials.

Pursuant to the terms of the proviso, I am writing to provide an update on First Steps 4K implementation of Proviso 1.55 to date. Thus far South Carolina First Steps 4K has spent or encumbered \$1.26M total quality enhancement funding during FY23. We are deeply grateful for the General Assembly's commitment to 4K quality and pleased to provide the attached table, detailing First Steps' spending on Quality Enhancement efforts within South Carolina.

We are committed to raising quality in our classrooms through teacher excellence. LearnERS is an individualized teacher growth and development system. Along with completion of specific training and assessment requirements established by First Steps 4K, teachers work closely with their First Steps 4K Coach to set professional development goals and document their attainment throughout the school year. Additional expenditures have refurbished aged classroom materials, supplied consumables, provided literacy and math-based curriculum materials, and provided for staff and teacher professional development.

We are particularly proud to disclose that, according to the Spring 2023 First Steps 4K Family Engagement Survey, 78% of parents/caregivers whose children are in extended day or extended year programs report being able to work or attend school full-time because of their child's enrollment in First Steps 4K.

We are most grateful for the General Assembly's enabling of extended 4K service models, which our private providers have enthusiastically embraced. The chart below reflects the current options that our 278 classrooms in 249 centers/schools have elected to provide students for the 2022-2023 term. 88% of our programs have chosen an option that extends the traditional school year.

4K Model Option- All Centers, 2022-2023	Centers Selecting This Option
Traditional Calendar (6.5 hours daily x 180 days)	29 (12%)
Extended Day (8.5 hours x 180 days)	21 (8%)
Traditional Day plus Summer School (6.5 hours x 220 days)	61 (25%)
Extended Day plus Summer School (8 hours x 220 days)	137 (55%)

SC First Steps 4K Quality Enhancement Plan for 2022-2023		
Subject	Notes for FY 23	2023 Amount
	Encumbered and Expended	
The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition with ReadyRosie and Online Professional Development and Family Engagement Portal	300 classrooms to connect instructional levels with lesson planning tools, Ready Rosie subscriptions, video modeling with mobile technology in English and Spanish that model everyday interactions in familiar environments with real parents	\$249,606.46
Classroom enhancements - Science, Math, Language and Literacy, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, and Diversity	materials for 27 classrooms to develop inquiry and investigation skills of prekindergarteners through engaging and interactive materials	405,000
Consumable kits	50 classroom sets, consumable Kits	66,296.34
Conscious Discipline	materials for 27 new classrooms to support self regulation skills	9,706.00
LearnERS online module subscriptions for 280 teachers	through Teacher and Coach participation, LearnERS will challenge and develop 280 teachers of every skill and experience level to develop individualized growth and development plans supported through coaching, mentoring and technical assistance.	\$58,125
Expanded Resource Curriculum kits & Kindergarten	40 additional sets of curriculum materials for summer instruction	47,414.00
Scholastic Transition books for students	Scholastic books for kindergarten transition	\$6,810
Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3) kits	30 kits for classroom use for screening stages of student development and accompanying parent licenses	\$8,500
Book of the Year for classrooms	student books for SC Read In	4,407
KEVA Planks	300 class set of Keva planks to include training and resources	54,640
Letter Links	230 classroom licenses, Letter Links for phonemic awareness	\$8,500
August New Teacher Academy	95 New Lead Teachers, virtual training	\$23,750
August All Teacher Academy	391 Lead Teachers and Instructional Assistants	122,835.00
Winter New Teacher Academy	46 Lead Teachers	\$0.00
Leadership Academy	182 directors/principals	\$36,270
AIM 4 Excellence National Directors Credential, 4th	33 directors/principals through National Louis University, cohort led by FS 4K - to build knowledge, competency, and quality practices, remainder of funding provided by our Preschool Development grant	\$8,851
Professional Development Day for Teachers, September 26, Building On Creative Curriculum™ Study Units and the new SC Early Learning Standards	308 Teachers: standards based instruction and student documentation, Crosswalk 2 examples of documentation comparing the Creative Curriculum objectives of learning with the SC -ELS.	\$30,550
Stipends for Nov. 4, PD day for teachers	298 lead teachers and instructional assistants	\$29,700
SC Early Childhood Association (SCECA)	130 scholarships for PD conference attendance for teachers	\$23,490
Fall Palmetto PreK Jamboree	virtual PD day for teachers and assistants, stipends for 309	\$29,950
Spring Palmetto PreK Jamboree	virtual PD day for teachers and assistants, stipends for 332	\$32,950
		\$1,257,350.80

cc: David Morley, Chair, SC First Steps Board of Trustees
Martha Strickland, 4K State Director, SC First Steps
Mark Barnes, Director of Administration, SC First Steps
Kaitlyn Richards, Government Affairs Liaison, SC First Steps
Grant Gibson, Senate Finance Committee
Marc Truesdale, House Ways and Means Committee