



To: The Honorable Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable G. Murrell Smith, Jr., Chairman of the House Ways and Means
Committee
From: Georgia Mjartan, Director, SC First Steps
Date: March 31, 2020

RE: First Steps 4K Unexpended Funds Report Pursuant to Proviso 1.69

Proviso 1.69 of the General Appropriations Act for FY20 specifies that:

1.69. (SDE: CDEPP Unexpended Funds) For Fiscal Year 2019-20, the Office of First Steps to School Readiness is permitted to retain the first \$1,000,000 of any unexpended CDEPP funds of the prior fiscal year and expend these funds to enhance the quality of the full-day 4K program in private centers and provide professional development opportunities. By August first, the Office of First Steps is directed to allocate any additional unexpended CDEPP funds from the prior fiscal year and any CDEPP funds carried forward from prior fiscal years that were transferred to the restricted account for the following purpose: Education Oversight Committee - \$1,000,000 for the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program.

If carry forward funds are less than the amounts appropriated, funding for the items listed herein shall be reduced on a pro rata basis.

If by August first, the Department of Education or the Office of First Steps determines there will be funds available, funds shall be allocated on a per pupil basis for districts eligible for participation first, who have a documented waiting list, and funded an extended program per this proviso in the prior school year, then to districts to increase the length of the program to a maximum of eight and a half hours per day or two hundred and twenty days per year or to fund summer programs. The department and the Office of First Steps are authorized to target funds to ensure that the schools in which more than one third of third graders scored "Does Not Meet Expectations" on the state English/language arts assessment are serving all eligible four year olds. By August 1, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps must collect the documented waiting lists and determine a process to notify parents of eligible students of available slots in all approved providers. If a district chooses to fund summer enrollment the program funding shall conform to the funding in this act for full year programs, however shall be reduced on a pro rata basis to conform with the length of the program. A summer program shall be no more than eight and a half hours per day and shall be not more than ten weeks in length. The per pupil allocation and classroom grant must conform with the appropriated amount contained in this Act and end of year adjustments shall be based on the one hundred and thirty five day student average daily membership or later student average daily membership for districts choosing to extend the program past one hundred and eighty days. Funds may also be used to provide parent engagement, professional development and quality evaluations of programs.

For Fiscal Year 2019-20, the Office of First Steps may pilot a program to provide higher reimbursement rates to high quality centers in order to increase the numbers of First Steps participants. Utilizing up to \$1,000,000 of carry-forward funding, the reimbursement rate for students enrolled by private providers rated B or higher in the ABC Quality System operated by the Department of Social Services may be increased by up to 10% of the per-student base following guidelines developed by the Office of First Steps.

No later than April first, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps must 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.

Pursuant to the terms of the proviso, I am writing to provide an update on First Steps 4K implementation of Proviso 1A.59 to date. South Carolina First Steps has spent or encumbered \$715,481.82 and anticipates total quality enhancement spending of \$1.11M during FY20. 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 grateful for the General Assembly's enabling of extended 4K service models, which our private providers have enthusiastically embraced. The chart below reflects the options that our current 242 classrooms have elected to provide students for the 2019-2020 term. 81% of our sites have chosen an option that extends the traditional school year.

4K Model Option- All Centers	Centers Selecting This Option
Traditional Calendar (6.5 hours daily x 180 days)	41 (18.81%)
Extended Day (8.5 hours x 180 days)	19 (8.72%)
Traditional Day plus Summer School (6.5 hours x 220 days)	59 (27.06%)
Extended Day plus Summer School (8 hours x 220 days)	99 (45.41%)

We are happy to report 130, out of 218 centers, that are currently rated B or above in the DSS ABC-Q System providing 4K services to our students. These 130 centers serving students in high quality rated centers have received an increased funding of \$791,449.24 to date.

Option Choices by Centers Rated "B" or Above	
Traditional Calendar (6.5 hours daily x 180 days)	18 (8.26%)
Extended Day (8.5 hours x 180 days)	10 (4.59%)
Traditional Day plus Summer School (6.5 hours x 220 days)	47 (21.56%)
Extended Day plus Summer School (8 hours x 220 days)	55 (25.23%)

We are committed to raising quality in our classrooms through teacher excellence. BLOOM (Building Learners and Outcomes through Observation and Models), is an individualized teacher growth and development system designed as a private sector complement to ADEPT, which is not available to teachers outside of the state's public school districts. Along with completion of specific training and assessment requirements established by First Steps, private 4K teachers participating in BLOOM work closely with their First Steps 4K Coach to set professional development goals and document their attainment throughout the school year.

You will note that First Steps has also extended its multi-year commitment to *Conscious Discipline*, a leader in classroom management and provides a transformational, whole-school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation skills transformative social-emotional curriculum designed to teach self-regulation skills. Additional expenditures have refurbished aged classroom materials, supplied consumables, provided literacy and math-based curriculum materials, and provided for staff and teacher professional development.

cc: David Morley, Chair, SC First Steps Board of Trustees
Mark Barnes, Director of Administration, SC First Steps
Martha Strickland, 4K State Director, SC First Steps
Kenzie Riddle, House Ways and Means
Grant Gibson, Senate Education

SC First Steps 4K Quality Enhancement Plan for 2019-2020		
Subject	Notes	Amount
Encumbered and Expended		
Classroom refurbishment grants	Refurbishment of 33 classrooms that have been 4K providers for over five years	\$182,592.84
SC Early Childhood Association (SCECA) Conference, Feb. 6-8, 2020	Professional Development Scholarships for 142 SC First Steps 4K Directors, Lead Teachers, and Assistants	\$39,949.00
Accreditation and Re-Accreditation Program for Trainers - Gold™ Assessment Train the Trainer model , October 2019	SC First Steps 4K Team, 2 members as new, 1 member re-accredited	\$11,500.00
classroom consumable enhancement kits	materials for 242 classrooms to support teaching staff of prekindergarteners	\$22,974.42
Alphabreaths	multiethnic alphabet books for 242 classrooms	\$2,294.96
Building Learner Outcomes through Opportunities and Models (BLOOM) Teacher Development Program	Through 1st semester participation, BLOOM will challenge and develop teachers of every skill and experience level to change the lives of the children they teach. Individualized growth and development plans for every teacher will be supported through coaching, mentoring and technical assistance, with teacher compensation incentives linked to attainment. 118 teachers (70% of participating) successfully completed 1st semester growth and development goals.	\$59,000.00
GOLD Plus™ licenses (Digital Curriculum Resources)	248 classrooms to connect individualized student instructional levels with lesson planning tools	\$61,500.00
Ready Rosie parent subscriptions	for the parents in 248 classrooms, video modeling parent engagement with mobile technology in English and Spanish that model everyday interactions in familiar environments with real parents	\$48,000.00
Conscious Discipline© curriculum materials	To support the self regulation skills of social emotional learning in all classrooms	\$45,057.20
Raising a Reader professional development	Training for Local Partnership Parent Educators and First Steps 4K Coaches	\$2,000.00
Raising a Reader/Ready Rosie Partnership	Partnership with ten FS Local Partnerships to support parent educating for 28 classrooms serving 345 students	\$172,500.00
Scanner combos	To support the ability of programs to send student applications for approval	\$1,782.20
Creative Curriculum© Expanded Studies Kit	34 additional sets of curriculum materials for summer instruction for newly added summer classes	\$59,731.20
Conscious Discipline© Summer Institute I	Hands-on experiences for six SC 4K Staff and fourteen 4K Lead Teachers to internalize the powers, skills and structures of Conscious Discipline, and the transformational powers of safety, connection and problem-solving.	\$6,600.00
		\$715,481.82
COMMITTED funds for SFY 19-20		
Creative Curriculum© Curriculum Kits	100 kits to replace older and worn curriculum materials	\$226,000.00
Creative Curriculum© Deluxe Curriculum Kits	50 sets of curriculum kits for newly approved providers	\$165,500.00
Aim 4 Excellence	Scholarships for twenty 4K directors, online coursework with National Louis University	\$37,575.00
		\$1,106,981.82