

Annual RFI
Recommendation Implementation Status

Agency Responding: First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.
Date of Submission: 10/30/2018

Agency Name	Internal Agency Recommendations	Date Full Committee Study Completed	Type	Did agency agree with recommendation?	Status of Implementation	If Implemented, date 100% implemented	If not 100%, anticipated date of 100% implementation	Benefits obtained from implementing recommendation, if any	Financial savings realized this year from recommendation, if any (dollar figure)	Financial savings anticipated in the future from recommendation, if any (dollar figure)	Negatives from implementing recommendation, if any	Additional Comments from agency (optional)
First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.	Determine the feasibility of instituting a sliding fee scale for BabyNet services	5/6/2016	Internal Agency Operation	Yes	Not yet started	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lead agency status for the BabyNet program was transferred from SC First Steps to the SC Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to Executive Order 2016-20 on July 1, 2017.
First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.	Work in collaboration with the SC Department of Education to study and depict the comprehensive costs of public and private sector 4K service provision	5/6/2016	Internal Agency Operation	Yes	In process		Spring 2019	The results of a study, currently being undertaken by the RAND Corporation on behalf of the Education Oversight Committee, promise to help provide new insights for policy makers as to the true costs of the CERDEP 4K model for both the public schools (who must frequently subsidize the program using other public funding sources) and private sector providers, who are responsible for significant operating costs (rent, utilities, taxes, technology) unreimbursed by any other source.	N/A	TBD	N/A	
First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.	Develop a pilot project designed to provide startup funds for potential private 4K providers in underserved areas. The development of the pilot project should consider best practices in other states and nontraditional funding mechanisms (eg Social Impact Bonds)	5/6/2016	Internal Agency Operation	Yes	Complete	6/16/2017	N/A	In an effort to implement the Oversight Committee's recommendation, First Steps requested proviso language (ultimately enacted as Proviso 1.86 for FY18) which enabled a pilot program through which qualifying programs could apply for up to \$30K in grant funding designed to overcome barriers to program participation and enable the creation of new community-based classrooms. Already one innovative new program, Compass Point 4K - a collaborative undertaking between Chesterfield County First Steps and Northeastern Technical College in Cheraw - has resulted, creating new classroom capacity for the children of Chesterfield County.	This pilot program is designed to support the creation of new classroom capacity and expand services to high-risk children. No short-term savings are anticipated.	Long-term savings of approximately \$9 for each \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programming have been documented across a variety of longitudinal studies. These savings take the form of reduced retention and remediation, decreased participation in special education, and a host of other societal benefits extending into the years of adulthood.	N/A	Original proviso language limited participation to providers in which fewer than 80% of eligible children are being served. Given the challenges of working with census estimates and inconsistent enrollment reporting among public, private and Head start providers, this 80% threshold proved difficult to measure with accuracy. First Steps has requested updates to proviso language for FY20 permitting the flexibility to provide grant funding in any community able to document its failure to serve all eligible children.
First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.	Work with its local partnerships to establish 4K classrooms in communities where no other providers are available	5/6/2016	Internal Agency Operation	Yes	In process	N/A	Ongoing	This is an ongoing effort, resulting in innovative partnerships like the Compass Point expansion described above. First Steps' 45 day enrollment figures are up 8.64% from FY18 with the addition of 31 newly approved 4K providers for the current school year.	As an expanding, direct-service program, the First Steps 4K program is not intended to achieve short-term cost savings.	Long-term savings of approximately \$9 for each \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programming have been documented across a variety of longitudinal studies. These savings take the form of reduced retention and remediation, decreased participation in special education, and a host of other societal benefits extending into the years of adulthood.	N/A	

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First Steps to School Readiness, S.C.	Continue investment in a comprehensive, results-oriented initiative for improving early childhood development by providing, through local partnerships, public and private funds, and support for high-quality early childhood development and education services for children by providing support for their families' efforts toward enabling their children to reach school ready to succeed. Also recommends that SC First Steps continue to operate that initiative.	5/6/2016	Internal Agency Operation	Yes	Complete	4/12/2018	N/A	Act 152 of 2018 codified First Steps' reauthorization for a period of seven years.	By providing a durable reauthorization for the state's early education initiative, lawmakers will allow First Steps to focus 100% of its efforts around the agency's school readiness mission. While this is not a cost savings, per se, a multi-year reauthorization prevents the significant burdens placed on state and local agency leaders involved with annual discussion of the agency's long-term stability and allows local partnerships to seek grant, private and philanthropic resources with greater certainty of the initiative's ongoing existence.	Long-term savings of approximately \$9 for each \$1 invested in high-quality early childhood programming have been documented across a variety of longitudinal studies. These savings take the form of reduced retention and remediation, decreased participation in special education, and a host of other societal benefits extending into the years of adulthood.	N/A	
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