



Expanding 4K in Underserved Communities, Provider Grant Application 2021-2022

Deadline to submit is November 5, 2021 by 11:59 pm.

1A.29. (SDE-EIA: Full-Day 4K) For the current fiscal year, the Office of First Steps may expend up to \$100,000 to provide one-time supplemental, needs-based incentive grants in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for newly created and/or newly approved private providers proposing to expand service to ten or more **CERDEP** eligible children in communities unable to enroll all eligible students in a public, private, or Head Start setting during the prior fiscal year. These grants are designed to address building renovations, documented as necessary to bring proposed classrooms into compliance with licensing regulations, materials and staffing costs, and/or other obstacles currently preventing their participation in the program. The First Steps Board of Trustees shall develop and approve an application process that incorporates formal review and fiscal safeguards designed to ensure grant funds are used solely to address documented barriers to program participation. Providers receiving this one-time supplement shall be expected to participate in the program and provide high-quality, center-based programs as defined herein for a minimum of three years. Failure to participate for three years shall require the provider to return a portion of the supplemental allocation at a level determined by the Office of First Steps to School Readiness.

Eligible applicants include center-based child care providers as well as churches, community centers, non-profit organizations, private and charter schools, colleges and universities, hospital systems, and others. **Public schools and school districts are not eligible for this First Steps 4K funding.**

These one-time funds are intended to support providers in overcoming obstacles currently preventing their participation in the 4K program. Such needs may include, but are not limited to, building renovations documented as necessary to bring proposed classrooms into compliance with licensing regulations and materials/equipment.

Those interested in this funding opportunity should email Martha Strickland, SC First Steps 4K State Director (mstrickland@scfirststeps.org) to request an appointment to discuss their proposed project. Prior to the application deadline, applicants may also submit drafts of their application responses via email for the First Steps 4K team to review and provide feedback.

Once submitted, applications will undergo an initial staff review for eligibility and completeness, followed by an interview and site visit by a member of the First Steps 4K staff. Award selection criteria include:

1. Located within a priority area for 4K expansion (see below)
2. Quality of the application
3. Geographic distribution of awards

Note that \$30,000 is the *maximum* award, smaller awards are considered. Requests should be limited to

those costs/items necessary to overcome specific participation barriers, and grant funds can only be used to address documented barriers to program participation.

If you have any questions, contact Martha Strickland, SC First Steps 4K State Director, at mstrickland@scfirststeps.org.

Center/School Name

School District located in

Does your proposed 4K classroom meet one of the following priority areas for 4K expansion (select one):

The county where my center is located has one or fewer First Steps 4K providers active for the 2021-22 school year: Abbeville, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Chester, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Edgefield, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Marlboro, McCormick, Newberry, Saluda, Union.

My center is located in one of the newly-eligible CERDEP school districts for 2021-22: Anderson 1, Charleston, Dorchester 2, Lancaster, Lexington 1, Lexington/Richland 5, Pickens, Spartanburg 2, Spartanburg 5, York 3.

The school district where my center is located is not participating in CERDEP for 2021-2022, but it is an eligible CERDEP district for private providers: Anderson 4, Beaufort, Greenville, Horry, Spartanburg 1, Union, York 2, York 4.

Not applicable

Name of Center/School Owner

Is your building leased or operator owned? If leased, the property owner must sign as well.

Leased Property Owned by Operator

Name of Center/School Director

Physical Address of Center/School

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Zip Code

Mailing Address, if different

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

Zip Code

Center/School Phone

Director Email

Director Cell Phone

For the remaining questions, please describe **in detail** what issues need to be addressed at your proposed First Steps 4K classroom site that, if addressed, will enable your site to expand 4K services to ten or more 4K children annually. These issues might include one or more of the following: building renovations necessary to make your space compliant with DSS licensing regulations; kitchen or food service needs; transportation barriers; classroom size or configuration; bathroom facilities; and/or health and safety needs.

Describe the facility where you propose to expand First Steps 4K services, and how the facility is a good site for First Steps 4K (the amount of indoor/outdoor space, its condition, location, accessibility, etc.). Then, describe the changes and/or renovations needed to enable your site to provide high quality 4K services to at least 10 additional children annually. Attach photos of each area described in your application, including but not limited to the proposed classroom space and outdoor play space.

List an amount and provide a description of the cost associated with each need described above, and provide an estimate from at least one vendor for each item you are requesting grant funding. Written quotes from vendors must be attached to this application and be dated within 90 days of this application.

Upload all site photos, cost estimates and documentation from contractors or vendors.

Actual quotes must match the needs for funding **and be dated within 90 days of this application.**

Total funding request of \$_____.

\$

Remember: All building renovations will require a bid submitted by a licensed and bonded contractor. Renovations may require architectural plans to be submitted to DSS and the Fire Marshal prior to any renovations being started. SC First Steps will work with grantees to document and ensure that funds are used only for approved items.

I, acknowledge that:

0-11-14

As a recipient of grant funds it is my intent to become an approved SC First Steps 4K provider – serving a minimum of 10 eligible 4K children annually - and to adhere to all requirements established for participating providers. I recognize that this entails provision of a high-quality, center-based program - including use of a state approved curriculum and documentation of student assessment with GOLD® by Teaching Strategies.

CC

By receiving grant funds, I am agreeing to participate in the SC First Steps 4K program for at least 3 years.

CC

Failure to participate for three years will require the provider to return the materials purchased and/or a portion of the grant funded expended at a level determined by SC First Steps.

CC

Signature of Business Owner/Operator:

Signature of Property Owner (if applicable):