



To: Chairman Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Senate Finance Committee
Chairman G. Murrell Smith, Jr., House Ways and Means Committee
From: Georgia Mjartan, Executive Director
Date: March 29, 2019

RE: First Steps Reporting Pursuant to Proviso 1A.61 of the General Appropriations Act for FY19

Proviso 1A.61 of the General Appropriations Act for FY19 specifies that:

1A.61. (SDE-EIA: CDEPP Unexpended Funds) For Fiscal Year 2018-19, 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. 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 professional development and quality evaluations of programs.

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.

South Carolina First Steps has spent or encumbered \$1.08 million - including \$1M in carry forward from FY18 - and anticipates total quality enhancement spending of \$1.15M during FY19. 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. 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 Regional 4K Coordinator 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 STEM-based curriculum materials and provided for staff and teacher professional development.

We are also 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 228 classrooms have elected to provide students for the 2018-2019 term. 80% of our sites have chosen an option that extends the traditional school year.

4K Model Option	Classrooms Selecting This Option
Traditional Calendar (6.5 hours daily x 180 days)	45 (20%)
Extended Day (8.5 hours x 180 days)	20 (9%)
Extended Year (Traditional Year + 40 days of summer instruction at 6.5 hours daily)	71 (31%)
Summer Option (Traditional Year + 40 days of summer instruction at 8 hours daily)	92 (40%)

Again, we express our thanks for your support of high-quality preschool for South Carolina’s youngest learners. I invite you to contact me directly if you have any questions.

cc: Chip Stanley, Chairman, SC First Steps to School Readiness
 Grant Gibson, Senate Finance Committee
 Kenzie Riddle, House Ways and Means Committee
 Martha Strickland, Director, First Steps 4K
 Mark Barnes, CFO/COO, First Steps

SC First Steps 4K Quality Enhancement Plan for 2018-2019		
Subject	Notes	Amount
Encumbered and Expended		
Classroom refurbishment grants	Refurbishment of 36 aged classrooms that have provided 4K services for over five years	\$344,621.28
SC Early Childhood Association (SCECA) Conference, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 2019	Professional Development Scholarships for 271 SC First Steps 4K Directors, Lead Teachers, and Assistants	\$60,590.26
SC Association for the Education of Young Children (SCAEYC) Conference, Oct. 5-6, 2018	Professional Development Scholarships for eleven teachers and directors	\$1,650.00
Classroom consumable enhancement kits	Materials for 228 classrooms to develop inquiry and investigation skills of prekindergarteners in the arts and sciences	\$208,883.53
Aim 4 Excellence	Scholarships for eighteen 4K directors, online coursework with National Louis University	\$33,105.00
Child's Cup Full	Multiethnic alphabet and numberacy sets for 228 classrooms	\$2,199.00
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. 109 teachers (75% of participating) successfully completed 1st semester growth and development goals.	\$54,500.00
GOLD Plus™ licenses (Digital Curriculum Resources)	228 classrooms to connect individualized student instructional levels with lesson planning tools	\$60,000.00
Ready Rosie parent subscriptions	For the parents in 228 classrooms- video modeling parent engagement with mobile technology in English and Spanish that model everyday interactions in familiar environments with real parents	\$43,600.00
Conscious Discipline© curriculum materials	To support the self regulation skills of social emotional learning in all classrooms	\$80,520.95
High/Scope Curriculum	Letter Links subscriptions for 228 classrooms	\$6,888.50
ASQ-SE materials	Social-emotional student assessment, 228 classrooms	\$72,420.29
Parent Lending Library sets	For family engagement of shared reading , 228 classrooms	\$13,726.82
Teaching Strategies	Coaching and Supporting Classroom Teachers, professional development for 4K staff members	\$5,030.00
Simon and Schuster	Class student books for SC Read In	\$2,331.50
Creative Curriculum™ Expanded Studies Kit	40 additional sets of curriculum materials for summer instruction for newly added summer classes	\$53,960.00
Scholastic Books	Clifford Goes to Kindergarten books for all 4K students	\$7,312.33
Conscious Discipline© Summer Institute I	Hands-on experiences for four 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.	\$27,784.52
		\$1,079,123.98
COMMITTED funds for SFY 18-19		
Re-Accreditation Program for Trainers - Gold™ Assessment Train the Trainer model, June 2019	SC First Steps 4K Team, 2 members	\$9,000.00
Building Learner Outcomes through Opportunities and Models (BLOOM) Teacher Development Program	Through 2nd 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. Projection of completion of 80% of teachers participating.	\$65,000.00
		\$1,153,123.98