



To: The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr., 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: April 1, 2022

RE: First Steps 4K Report Pursuant to Proviso 1.56

Proviso 1.56 of the General Appropriations Act for FY22 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 1.56 to date. Thus far South Carolina First Steps 4K has spent or encumbered \$1.14M total quality enhancement funding during FY22. 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.

You will note that First Steps has also extended its multi-year commitment to *Conscious Discipline*, a leader in classroom management that provides a transformational, whole-school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline, and 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.

We are particularly proud to disclose that 74% of parents whose children are in extended day or extended year First Steps 4K classrooms report being able to work or attend school full time because of their child’s enrollment in First Steps 4K.

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 267 classrooms in 240 centers/schools have elected to provide students for the 2021-2022 term. 83.3% 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)	24 (10%)
Extended Day (8.5 hours x 180 days)	16 (6.7%)
Traditional Day plus Summer School (6.5 hours x 220 days)	62 (25.8%)
Extended Day plus Summer School (8 hours x 220 days)	138 (57.5%)

SC First Steps 4K Quality Enhancement Plan for 2021-2022		
Subject	Notes	Amount
Encumbered and Expended		
The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Guided Edition with ReadyRosie and Online Professional Development and Family Engagment 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	\$543,983.99
Classroom enhancements - Science, Math, Language and Literacy, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, and Diversity	materials for 37 classrooms to develop inquiry and investigation skills of prekindergarteners through engaging and interactive materials	\$370,000.00
LearnERS online module subscriptions for 280 teachers	through Teacher and Coach participation, LearnERS will challenge and develop teachers of every skill and experience level to develop individualized growth and development plans supported through coaching, mentoring and technical assistance.	\$17,895.00
Expanded Resource Curriculum kits & Kindergarten transition kits	40 additional sets of curriculum materials for summer instruction	\$66,490.00
Scholastic Lending Library sets	Scholastic book sets to accompany studies, 233 sets	\$80,403.64
Scholastic Lending Library sets, to add new classrooms	Scholastic book sets to accompany studies, 52 sets	\$17,944.16
Ages and Stages Questionnaires(ASQ-3) kits	50 kits for classroom use to screen stages of student development and accompanying parent licenses	\$14,167.38
Book of the Year for classrooms	student books for SC Read In	\$1,565.20
Creative Curriculum™ Expanded Studies Kit	150 sets of curriculum materials for summer instruction	\$194,525.80
Conscious Discipline© Summer Institute I	Hands-on experiences for two SC 4K Staff and seventeen 4K Lead Teachers to internalize the powers, skills and structures of Conscious Discipline, and the transformational powers of safety, connection and problem-solving.	\$38,427.24
August New Teacher Academy	121 Lead Teachers, virtual training	\$22,000.00
August All Teacher Academy	371 Lead Teachers and Instructional Assistants	\$102,510.00
Winter New Teacher Academy	41 Lead Teachers	\$0.00
New Director Academy	57 new directors/principals, virtual training	\$5,000.00
Leadership Academy	242 directors/principals, virtual training	\$38,450.00
AIM 4 Excellence National Directors Credential, 4th cohort	25 directors/principals through National Louis University, cohort led by FS 4K - to build knowledge, competency, and quality practices	\$47,305.00
Professional Development Day for Teachers, September 24, Building On Creative Curriculum™ Study Units and the new SC Early Learning Standards	273 Teachers: standards based instruction and student documentation, Crosswalk 2 examples of documentation comparing the Creative Curriculum objectives of learning with the SC -ELS.	\$25,250.00
Materials for November 1, 2021 Teacher PD Day	purchase of "The Big Question" books for teachers and to develop PD for teachers to motivate creative thinking skills for students	\$7,140.00
Stipends for Nov. 1, PD day for teachers	stipends for 297 lead teachers and instructional assistants	\$27,900.00
Fall Palmetto PreK Jamboree	virtual PD day for teachers and assistants, stipends for 283	\$29,750.00
Spring Palmetto PreK Jamboree	virtual PD day for teachers and assistants, stipends for 331	\$33,000.00
Natural Learning Initiative course through NC State, in partnership with Grow Outdoors SC	eight 4K staff	0
		\$1,139,723.42

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 Education
Marc Truesdale, House Ways and Means

