

CHAPTER 152
South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness

Editor's Note

2018 Act No. 152, Section 8, provides as follows:

"SECTION 8. Section 20B. of Act 287 of 2014 [reauthorizing the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Act until July 1, 2016] is repealed. Act 99 of 1999, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Act, as amended by this act, is reauthorized until June 30, 2025."

SECTION 59-152-10. First Steps to School Readiness initiative established; permanent enactment.

(A) There is established the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness, 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.

(B) The provisions of the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Act, as enacted by Act 99 of 1999, and as subsequently amended, and this chapter are permanently enacted, and future reauthorization is not necessary.

HISTORY: 1999 Act No. 99, Section 2; 2014 Act No. 287 (H.3428), Section 6, eff June 18, 2014; 2023 Act No. 81 (H.4023), Section 9, eff June 19, 2023.

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Effect of Amendment

2014 Act No. 287, Section

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Effect of Amendment

2014 Act No. 287, Section 9, inserted "and be accountable for".

SECTION 59-152-50. Office of South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness established; duties.

Under supervision of the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees, there is

- (a) Department of Social Services;
- (b) Department of Health and Environmental Control; and
- (c) Head Start or early Head Start.

(4) The county public library system staff located within a particular First Steps Partnership coverage area shall recommend one employee of the system for appointment by its county council to serve as a member of the partnership, and the council either shall make the appointment or reject the appointment and ask the library staff to make another recommendation.

(5) Each public school district board located within a particular First Steps Partnership coverage area shall appoint one of its employees to serve as a member of the local First Steps Partnership.

SECTION 59-152-90. Local partnership boards; grant funding.

(A) A local partnership's grant may be funded annually by the First Steps School to Readiness Board of Trustees and must be contingent on the General Assembly's appropriation of funds to use for offering grants.

(B) To obtain a grant, a First Steps partnership must qualify by meeting the grant requirements established pursuant to subsection (C). A First Steps Partnership shall submit (a)-1(. A)47Tj(4(s)-2.4 (t)-4.6 1p6a (oc)-1.

(2) in-kind donated resources.

Only in-kind donations, as defined by the standard fiscal accountability system provided for in Section 59-152-

(C) All private and nonstate funds sought by local partnerships must be used exclusively for meeting the goals and purpose of First Steps as specified in Section 59-152-20 and Section 59-152-30. Private funds received by a First Steps partnership must be deposited in a separate fund subject to review by the Office of First Steps and the State Board.

(D) Disbursements may be made only on the written authorization of the individual designated by the partnership board and only for the purposes specified. A person violating this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined five thousand dollars or imprisoned for six months, or both.

(E) The offenses of misuse, misappropriation, and embezzlement of public funds apply to this chapter.

HISTORY: 1999 Act No. 99, Section 2; 2014 Act No. 287 (H.3428), Section 18, eff June 18, 2014; 2023 Act No. 81 (H.4023), Section 3, eff June 19, 2023.

Editor's Note

2018 Act No. 152, Section 8, provides as follows:

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Effect of Amendment

2014 Act No. 287, Section 18, in subsection (A), inserted "South Carolina" following "The Office of", inserted "local" following "develop and require", and twice deleted "county" before "partnership"; in subsection (B), substituted "local First Steps partnership" for "County First Steps Partnership", and substituted "local partnership" for "County First Steps Partnership"; rewrote subsection (C); in subsection (D), deleted "county" before "partnership"; and in subsection (E), inserted a comma following "funds".

2023 Act No. 81, Section 3, rewrote (A).

SECTION 59-152-160. Internal evaluation policies and procedures.

(A) The South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Board of Trustees shall establish internal evaluation policies and procedures for local partnerships for an annual review of the functioning of the partnership, implementation of strategies, and progress toward the interim goals and benchmarks. In instances where no progress has been made, the Office of First Steps to School Readiness shall provide

collaboration provisions as required in this chapter, the final report must reflect that information. Each program evaluation report must be reported to the General Assembly no later than three months after