A Cumulative Review of the EOC Community Grants Program:

FY2015 – FY2021

Lorin W. Anderson

June, 2021

The author wishes to acknowledge the effort and insights of Jo Anne Craig Anderson.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

On April 12, 2020, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) contracted for a review of the Community Block Grant in Education Pilot Program (CBGEPP) to determine the extent to which the:

- program fulfilled the intent and detail of the enabling proviso;
- ways in which success was defined and measured;
- grantees fulfilled their commitments, and, if not, why not;
- improvements achieved and if they were sufficient relative to the investments made; and
- program elements that should be continued or amended in future grant programs.

The intent of this review is to understand the grants *program* as a whole, not to evaluate or make recommendations relevant to a single grantee. Furthermore, during the review process the wording of some of the purposes of the review (as stated above) was changed to reflect more accurately the findings. However, the meaning and intent of the purposes were not changed.

To conduct the review, the following documents were examined: (1) annual program evaluations conducted either by the EOC or an evaluation collaborative between the University of South Carolina and Clemson University, (2) EOC annual reports, (3) EOC annual budget recommendations to the General Assembly, and (4) minutes of the EOC meetings at which the annual evaluation reports were presented. Descriptions of assessments and data published on the South Carolina State Department of Education (SDE) website were also reviewed. Finally, to gain a better understanding of specific classroom observation and children's assessment instruments, websites of the publishers of these instruments were consulted.

To understand how the grant program did function as well as how the program could function over time, greater attention was paid to districts and consortia funded across multiple years: Cherokee County School District, Chesterfield County School District, Lancaster County School District, the Pee Dee Consortium, the Spartanburg Consortium, and York County School District One. Finally, because of COVID-19, there are neither reports nor available data to examine the operation or effectiveness of the programs in Fiscal Years 2020 or 2021.

CRITICAL QUESTION 1: Did the grant program fulfill the intent and detail of the enabling proviso?

The General Appropriations Act of 2014-2015 (Proviso 1.94 shown in Appendix A) provided $1 million for the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program (CBGEPP). Directives for the purpose, definition of terms, criteria for awards, limitations on awards, dissemination, and the role of the EOC were detailed in the proviso.

Purposes. In the Proviso four purposes of the CBGEPP were mentioned:

- Encourage and sustain partnerships between a community and its local public school district or school;
- Implement innovative, state-of-the-art education initiatives and models to improve children's learning;
- Encourage public school and district communities and their entrepreneurial public educators to undertake state-of-the-art initiatives; and
- Share the results of these efforts with the state's public education community.

These purposes were modified in the 2015-2016 General Appropriations Act to focus only on early childhood education for a targeted population of at-risk four-year-old children. The modification was intended to accomplish the following:

- Support measurable, high-quality, child-teacher interactions, curricula, and instruction which maximized return on investment, assisted in the transition to kindergarten, improved early literacy and numeracy, and engaged families.

Other language detailing the expectations and requirements for the CBGEPP remained the same as the prior year and continued as such through the life of the program, ending in FY2021.

The General Assembly did not define the characteristics of innovative or state-of-the-art learning. During the first year (FY2015) districts identified local needs and chose models aligned to district priorities. These models focused on elementary or middle schools with curricular emphasis on mathematics and science. Models included AVID (a developmental guidance program), multi-agency neighborhood out-of-school time enrichment and tutorial programs, STEM curricula reinforcement, and participation in the Robotics League. When the CBGEPP was limited to the state education priority of early childhood, however, the phrase "high quality" was used to

describe the current regulations and guidelines. Implementation activities shifted to teacher professional development, utilization of classroom observation instruments, and parent-child language interactions to heighten the impact of current teaching and learning strategies. From this perspective, in year two of the program (FY2017), the CBGEPP made two dramatic shifts: from *district-defined* priorities to a *state-defined* priority and from *innovation to new practices to improvement of current practices.*

Definition of Terms. The General Assembly provided definitions of three terms to be used in the award, implementation, and evaluation of grants. *Community* was defined as a group of parents, educators, and individuals from business, faith groups, elected officials, non-profit organizations, and others. School faculty and School Improvement Councils were also included. As stated in its name, the CBGEPP was philosophically and pragmatically built upon a belief in community-school-district partnerships. An overwhelming majority of education programs nationally and in South Carolina include a partnership component. South Carolina's school improvement councils were established in 1977 in the Education Finance Act (59-20-60.) Almost all subsequent legislation includes a partnership component. Most notable among these are the Education Improvement Act, the Early Childhood Development and Academic Assistance Act, the Education Accountability Act, the Education and Economic Development Act and the Read to Succeed Act. The General Assembly did not define qualities, establish expectations, or delineate responsibilities of partnerships.

Partnerships are neither easily formed nor easily used. Based on a meta-analysis of 20 studies, Henderson and Mapp (2002) identified three critical characteristics of effective partnerships. They are (1) building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members, (2) recognizing, respecting, and addressing family needs, as well as class and cultural differences, and (3) sharing power and responsibility.

None of these characteristics can be achieved without sufficient time to develop new relationships, recognize other demands upon the partners, explore alternatives, resolve differing priorities, and make joint decisions. Because the CBGEPP operates within the boundaries of a one-year proviso, the legislative expectation that a program or initiative of the breadth and depth anticipated could be accomplished in a single year is impossible to accomplish. Perhaps as a

consequence, most grantees relied on existing groups to satisfy the partnership requirement (e.g., the Pee Dee Consortium was built upon a long-term initiative in Florence 1.) Unfortunately, the annual reports and evaluations do not detail the activities of the partners. Were they providers of information or advice? Were they decision-makers? Did they provide funds? Were they co-implementers? Were they recipients of program services (e.g., joint professional development)? The ambiguity of the term partnership and the inadequate information on the activities in which the partners engaged raises questions about the meaning of the concept of partnership was inferred from the proviso. It also hinders growth of the programs and long-term institutionalization of new practices. As described by a program leader in Cherokee "strong sustainable partnerships are necessary for scaling-up." To this I would add that "partners" and "partnerships" have quite different meanings.

Poverty was defined as the percentage of students eligible in the prior year for the free-and-reduced-price lunch program and/or Medicaid. Although not directed to do so in the legislated criteria, the EOC granted ten points in the grants review process to schools or districts with a poverty index of 90 or above and an accountability rating of Average or below. The program focus on the pre-kindergarten program for four-year-old children and the advantage given to high poverty settings narrows the pool of eligible communities and eligible children. The data reported by the district and those collected and utilized by the annual evaluators were generally not disaggregated; therefore, understanding the program impact on students of poverty distinct from students generally is speculative at best.

Achievement was limited to the report card ratings as established by the EOC. These ratings are dominated by performance on academic assessments of students in grades 3-8 and in high school. Therefore, the use of school ratings for evaluating the effectiveness of 4K programs is highly problematic. With FY2015 grantees, there is not a direct link between the areas of emphasis of the programs and the content standards governing the assessments for a particular grade level. Even if there were linked objectives, extracting the impact of a supplementary program from the primary instructional program and the weight of a particular test at one grade level within the school rating dilutes any inference of causality or impact. The shift in FY2016 to programs and services for pre-kindergarten students exacerbates the program since the

connection between 4K programs and grade 3 test scores can only be examined after following children for at least four years. During that time frame a number of other factors makes it exceedingly difficult to single out the 4K program as a primary cause of increases in test scores and report card ratings.

Criteria for Awards Table 1.1 compares the CBGEPP purposes, criteria for award, and the value assigned for each component in the award process. As you will note, there is general alignment although neither attention nor points are assigned to the dissemination purposes stated by the General Assembly. As we review the implementation and related issues, it becomes overwhelmingly evident that the mandate to disseminate and share results is ignored by the grantees just as it was ignored in the awards process.

Grant Awards Individual grants of state funds are limited to $250,000 and must be supplemented by local district through cash or in-direct costs contributions. Table 1.2 displays local awards and matches by program year.

Dissemination The proviso stated "it is the intent of this proviso to encourage public school and district communities and their entrepreneurial public educators . . . to share the results of these efforts with the state's public education community." The program reports provided no evidence that these activities had taken place at the local school district level. The EOC did reference the program in its annual reports and minutes from a fall meeting each year document the presentation of the annual evaluations. The failure to disseminate the results of the grantees' efforts is an unfortunate missed opportunity for the grantees and the state generally.

Table 1.1
Comparison of CBGEPP Purposes, Criteria, and Value Assigned in Award Process

PURPOSES	CRITERIA	VALUE ASSIGNED
Encourage and sustain partnerships	(1) establishment and continuation of a robust community advisory committee to leverage funding, expertise, and other resources to assist the district or school throughout implementation	A. Needs Assessment--10 points D. Community Advisory Group—20 points
Implement innovative, state-of-the-art initiatives to improve student learning [And beginning in FY2016,	(2) a demonstrated ability to meet the match throughout the grant period	B. Goals and Objectives—15 points C. Initiative Design --25 points E. Management-Implementation—15 points

PURPOSES	CRITERIA	VALUE ASSIGNED
Support measurable high-quality child-teacher interactions, curricula, and instruction which maximized return on investment, assisted in the transition to kindergarten, improved early literacy and numeracy and engaged families]	(3) demonstrated ability to implement the initiative or model Additionally (1) a comprehensive plan to examine delivery implementation and measure impact	
Encourage educators and communities to undertake innovative and state-of-the-art initiatives		
Share the results with the education community	Additionally (2) a report on implementation and problems and successes and impact of the innovation model	
	(4) an explanation of the manner in which the initiative supports the district's or school's strategic plan	
	Additionally (3) evidence of support for the project from the school district when an individual school applies for a grant	
		Poverty –10 points

Notes. The numbers in parentheses in the middle column correspond with the numbers in the enabling proviso. The assigned point values sum to 95, not 100.

Table 1.2
State and Local Project Investments

Grant by Fiscal Year		Project Funds		
		State	Local	Total Funds
FY2015				
Beaufort		163,500	67,400	230,900
Charleston		249,595	370,859	620,154
Clarendon 1		242,237	57,000	279,237
Colleton		144,668	77,000	221,668
Jasper		200.000	61,000	261,000
FY2016				
Cherokee		250,000	44,000	294,000
Chesterfield		250.000	40,000	290,000
Clarendon 2		249,086	167,382	416,468
Florence 1		250,000	102,000	352,000
Florence 2		239,000	245,000	484,000
Jasper		250,000	25,000	275,000
Lexington 3		216,437	76,500	292,937
Spartanburg 7		194,466	25,000	219,466
FY2017				
Cherokee	C	10,000	44,000	54,000
Chesterfield	C	10,000	40,000	50,000
Lancaster		164,000	16,539	180,539
Lexington 4		201,000	33,582	284,582
Pee Dee Consortium	E	250,000	137,000	387,000
Richland 1		118,000	66,570	184,570
Spartanburg Consortium	E	142,000	46,600	188,600
York 1		84,000	25,600	109,600
FY2018				
Cherokee	C	206,857	44,000	250,857
Chesterfield	C	105,613	40,000	145,613
Lancaster		126,923	16,539	143,462
McCormick		147,283	43,395	190,678
Pee Dee Consortium	C	187,350	137,000	324,350
Spartanburg Consortium	C	128,724	25,000	153,724
York 1	C	97,250	25,600	122,850

Table 1.2 (continued)

Grant by Fiscal Year		Project Funds		
		State	Local	Total Funds
FY2019				
Berkeley		113,650	15,150	128,800
Chesterfield	C	114,410	40,000	154,410
Greenwood 50		84,156	12,258	96,684
Lexington 5		106,889	24,000	131,389
Pee Dee Consortium	C	240,050	137,000	377,050
Spartanburg Consortium	C	204,733	46,660	251,333
York 1	C	86,112	8,615	97,727
FY2020				
Charleston		85,580	60,262	145,842
Chesterfield	C	132,100	40,000	172,100
Lexington 1		73,222	7,000	81,222
Pee Dee Consortium	C	221,900	137,000	358,900
Spartanburg Consortium	C		46,600	
York 1	C	77,179	8,615	85,794

Note: C=Continuing Grant and E=Expanding Grant

The EOC staff indicated that, with one exception, districts met the local requirement through in-kind contributions. Using in-kind contributions as a match offers opportunities for districts and partners to account for personnel or other resources reassigned to the new project. This is a common approach and frequently encourages applicants to attempt new ideas; however, it can confound project continuation over time as external funding diminishes and local revenue streams already are assigned to existing activities. The display of financial data in Table 1.3 offers a different perspective on program implementation by examining the data cumulatively, across years.

The limitation of $250,000 per grant award has the potential to deter multi-district applications or, at the very least, financially constrain consortia or multi-district projects. In the Pee Dee Region and in Spartanburg County there is a long history of cross-district collaboration. It is not surprising that the two consortia emerged from these areas.

Table 1.3
Grantees by Fiscal Years and State Dollar Award Amounts

GRANTEE	FY 2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	TOTAL
Beaufort	163,000						163,000
Berkeley					113,650		113,650
Charleston	249,595					85,580	335,175
Cherokee		250,000	10,000	206,587			466,857
Chesterfield		250,000	10,000	105,513	114,410	132,100	612,123
Clarendon 1	242,237						242,237
Clarendon 2	`	249,086					249,086
Colleton	144,668						144,668
Greenwood 50					84,156		84,156
Jasper	200,000	250,000					450,000
Lancaster			164,000	126,923			290,923
Lexington 1						74,222	74,222
Lexington 3		216,437					215,437
Lexington 4			201,000				201,000
Lexington/Richland 5					106,889	57,550	164,439
McCormick				147,283			147,283
Florence 1 Florence 2 Pee Dee Consortium		250,000 239,000	250,000	187,350	240,050	221,900	250,000 239,000 899,300
Richland 1			118,000				118,000
Spartanburg 7		194,466					194,466
Spartanburg Consortia			142,000	128,724	204,733		475,457
York 1			84,000	97,250	86,112	77,179	260,541
TOTAL	999,500	898,989	979,000	1,000,000	847,031	648,531	6,392,020

Both the proviso language and award are limited to one year. Often, however, program expenditures extend or are uneven across years. The EOC accommodated this factor by designating some grantees as "continuing" or "expanding" and allowed funds to be carried over from one year to the next. Grants across the years to Chesterfield County Schools and Cherokee County Schools are examples of funds from one year utilized in the subsequent year.

EOC role: For purposes of sharing the results, the EOC is required to examine the initiatives and models to understand the delivery of services and any contextual factors, identifying recommendations and common challenges, determining a return-on-investment, and sharing the results with the state's public education community. The EOC is charged with administration of the program. Annually the EOC contracted with external evaluators to review the work of each project. Results of these evaluations were presented to the EOC in the fall of each year and

published on the EOC website. Brief summaries of the funded projects were published in the EOC Annual Reports.

Looking across the funded years and the projects, the external evaluators made a series of recommendations to strengthen the program. These recommendations are summarized in Table 1.4. The entries in the table can be organized around four themes.

1. Collect data throughout the program and facilitate end-of-grant data collection, analysis, and utilization;
2. Restructure the program to a multi-year program to permit engagement of partners, adjustments to implementation challenges, and the use of available data;
3. Assist in the development and implementation of a strong evaluation component; and
4. Disseminate results in a purposeful manner to multiple audiences.

Neither the specific recommendations nor the themes were addressed through amendments to the proviso across the years. The EOC did create additional grant statuses to include "continuing" and "expanding" to award the same district or consortia across years and permitted the use of carry-over funds; however, the core structure of the program was not modified.

Return on Investment. The proviso did not outline a particular interest or parameters for the calculation of a return on investment. Three, if not more, questions are embedded in the concept of return on investment:

1. Were the grants implemented as outlined (i.e., was the process implemented as approved)?
2. Were the results what the grantee intended?
3. Is this the best use of the funds to achieve the desired result, particularly in comparison with other uses?

The first two questions are addressed in Critical Questions 2 and 3. The final question is addressed in Critical Question 4.

Table 1.4
Summarized Annual Recommendations for the CBGEPP

FY2015	FY2016* These recommendations were offered by grant recipients	FY2017	FY2018
1.To ensure data requested is complete, require school districts to submit final expenditure requests at the conclusion or on an incremental basis throughout grant period			
2.Consider a 2 to 3 years grant program	6.Collect data beyond initial year 7.Work with teachers to explore connections between practices and data 8.Connect outcomes to student data	2.Utilize a longitudinal approach to evaluation to determine impact of project on students and teachers	
3.Review and modify evaluation component to link to measurable goals and detail data needed prior to award		6.Provide technical assistance with data collection, analysis, use, and dissemination	1.Work with district and university researchers to study cohorts of 4K and 5K to understand their development and potential of strategic
4. Modify goal of innovative, state-of-the-art initiatives to achieve both flexibility and specific, targeted initiative	1-2 Continue with assessments but require a minimum number of classrooms to participate	3.Expand focus to include social-emotional learning and mathematical concepts	
5.Align extended learning projects more closely with in-school lesson			
		1.Focus on partnerships as a strategy for implementation	2.Highlight and build partnerships with other 4K providers
	3. Hold in-person or online meetings to facilitate collaboration among teachers, districts, etc.	4.Utilize current grantees as mentors to future grantees	
	5.Encourage district sharing	5. Develop and implement dissemination plans	3.Support districts in scaling initiatives and ideas developed through CBGEPP
	4.Explore additional revenue streams to expand assessments		

Summary Statement

The CBGEPP was implemented in accordance with the provisions of the proviso. The proviso intent was clear. Accommodations were made for districts to carry funds over from one year to the next for districts to be afforded a continuing or expanding grant status. Unfortunately, the proviso did not detail expectations of partnerships or how partnerships function differently from a group of similarly focused agencies or individuals using a common strategy. The dissemination expectation was discounted at both the state and district level and the implication that school or district ratings was uninformed completely. Most of these challenges were evident in the initial and subsequent annual evaluation reports and persisted throughout the years the CBGEPP was funded.

CRITICAL QUESTION 2. In what ways was success defined and measured?

Because of the shift in focus of the grant program to 4K programs after the first year (FY 2015), only the 4K grants will be reviewed in answering the next two questions. Furthermore, since complete reports for the grants are available for only three years (FY2016, FY2017, FY2018) only the projects funded during these years will be considered, with priority given to projects that were funded for two or three years.

The grantees differed in how they defined success and how precise they were in their definitions. In most cases, the definitions of success were included (although not necessarily explicitly) in their major goal statements. The number of goal statements included in the reports ranged from one to four. Almost all the goals focused on the improvement of teachers' or parents' interactions with children and/or improvement in children's behavior, development, or learning. Upon examination of the reports three types of goal statements were identified.

The first is a general statement that includes both teachers/parents AND children but is vague in the meaning of "improve" or "increase." For example, a goal of the Chesterfield project was to "improve current teacher practices to increase meaningful learning in communication, numeracy, and literacy." The project would be successful, then, if (1) teacher practices were improved and (2) children's communication, numeracy, and literacy were increased. However, the magnitude of improvement or increase was not specified. Similarly, a goal of the Lancaster project was to "improve children's readiness for kindergarten by enhancing the quality of 4K programs." Program success would require both improvement in children's readiness and enhanced program quality. Once again, the magnitude of improvement and enhancement that would define success was not indicated.

The second type is a general statement that includes teachers/parents OR students, but not both. For example, the first goal of the Spartanburg consortia was to improve scores on two specified classroom observation instruments. A companion goal was to "improve student-level data." In combination, these two goals address both teachers and students. As a second example of the second type of goal statement is the primary goal of the Cherokee project, namely, to increase the average number of words used by parents in talking with their children in a 24-hour period as well as the number of times that the conversation shifted from parents to children (which were referred to as "conversational turns"). The primary focus is on parents.

The third type of goal statement is explicit in terms of the magnitude of improvement or increase expected in teachers or children. For example, one of the goals of the McCormick project was that 80% of CLASS scores will increase by one point in each of the three domains (i.e., Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support). Similarly, one of the goals of the Pee Dee Consortium was that 95% of children will score within the expected range on all tasks on PALS in the Spring. It is noteworthy that this third type of goal statement was included least often by districts or consortia.

To collect data on teachers and classrooms, three observation measures were used most frequently by participating districts: the Class Assessment Scoring System (CLASS); the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO); and the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT). Three assessment instruments for children also were used most frequently: the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment System (GOLD); the Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDI); and the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS). Table 3.1 describes each of these measures and instruments in terms of the domains (or subscales) included on them. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of districts or consortia that used each measure or instrument during FY2018. Occasionally a district or consortia chose to use more than one in each category.

Before moving to a discussion of how success was determined, we would call the reader's attention to the entries in Table 2.1, particularly the similarities and differences among the observation measures and children's assessments. With respect to the observational instruments, all contain one domain related to the environment of the classroom, including the way the classroom is structured and organized. Both CLASS and TPOT focus on teaching practices and instructional support. However, only TPOT includes teaching practices to be avoided (known as "red flags"). Only CLASS contains a domain focusing on Emotional Support. The point to be made here is that the observation instruments are quite different from one another. Choosing the best instrument requires matching the instrument with the goal or goals of the project.

Table 2-1
Structure of Most Frequency Used Classroom Observational Measures and Student Assessments

Classroom Observation Measures	Domains
CLASS (n = 4)	Emotional Support Classroom Organization Instructional Support
ELLCO (n = 4)	General Classroom Environment (Classroom Structure, Curriculum) Language & Literacy (Language Environment, Books & Book Reading, Print & Early Writing)
TPOT (n = 1)	Environmental Arrangements Good Practices Practices to be Avoided (Red Flags)

Student Assessments	Domains
GOLD (n = 4)	Socio-Emotional Language Literacy Mathematics Physical Cognitive Science & Technology Social Studies The Arts English Language Acquisition
IGDI (n = 2)	Early Literacy (Picture Naming, Rhyming, Alliteration, Which One Doesn't Belong) Early Numeracy (Counting, Number Naming, Quantity Comparison, 1-to-1 Correspondence)
PALS (n = 3)	Name Writing Alphabet Knowledge Beginning Sound Awareness Print and Word Awareness Rhyme Awareness Nursery Rhyme Awareness

Some of the grantees did a better job in matching the instrument with project goals. A major goal of the Pee Dee consortium was to enhance children's socio-emotional development. Of the three observation measures the only one that included indicators related to socio-emotional development was TPOT, which was chosen by the consortium. On the other hand, the relatively small increases in ELLCO scores in York (0.1 point in general classroom and 0.4 points in language and literacy) may be explained by the disconnect between the structure of ELLCO and the project goals.

With respect to the children's assessments, a similar picture emerges. As its name suggests, PALS focuses exclusively on literacy and thus has the narrowest focus. IGDI has a slightly broader focus, with a conception of early literacy that goes beyond skills and the addition of early numeracy. Finally, GOLD has the broadest focus and, most importantly, includes scores that differentiate literacy from language. Once again, these differences suggest the importance of "matching" the children's assessment instrument to the project goal(s). In this regard, there is an apparent "mismatch" between the project goals and the children's assessment instrument in the Chesterfield project. The single goal was to improve the 4K curriculum and teaching practices to promote meaningful learning in communication, numeracy, and literacy. PALS was chosen as the children's assessment instrument and as mentioned earlier, PALS only provides data on children's literacy. In contrast, the single goal of the Lancaster project was to improve children's readiness for kindergarten. IGDI was chosen as the children's assessment instrument and as mentioned earlier, IGDI is the instrument most aligned with four of the five domains most frequently associated with kindergarten readiness (see Lozano, 2016).

When examining the data reported by the districts or consortia, two conclusions can be drawn. First, for those districts or consortia that stated their goals in terms of improvement or increase but did not specify an acceptable magnitude of improvement or increase, the tendency was to view any improvement or increase as a success. That is, some improvement or increase is better than no improvement or increase at all. Second, for those districts or consortia that did specify a magnitude of improvement or increase, the designated amount of improvement or increase was achieved in some cases, but not in others.

With respect to the classroom observation instruments, increases in scores were noted in all but one of the projects. For the CLASS instrument, the average increase was approximately one-half of a point on a seven-point scale. The lowest scores, by about two points on average, were in the Instructional Support domain. This finding is particularly troubling since the goals of these programs included the need to improve teacher-child academic interactions. For the ELLCO instrument, the average increase was again about one-half of point, this time on a five-point scale. It should be noted that an increase of one-half of a point on a five-point scale is a greater increase than an increase of one-half of a point on a seven-point scale. Finally, with respect to

the TPOT instrument, “positive” teacher behaviors increased by an average of 10 to 15 percent, whereas and “negative” teacher behaviors decreased by an average of 5 percent. This latter decrease is substantial since the percent of negative behaviors initially was quite small.

With respect to the children’s assessments, substantial increases on the IGDI instrument were reported by multiple district/consortia in all four domains. As mentioned earlier, this finding is particularly important since the domains on the IGDI are consistent with a compositive definition of kindergarten readiness. The PALS instrument produced the greatest gains. To properly interpret these gains, however, it is wise to look at the results of the GOLD instrument.

The GOLD instrument is particularly instructive since it separates language from literacy. Language refers to the ability to engage in meaningful communication, both as a sender and a receiver. Literacy, on the other hand, is defined in terms of specific skills such as reciting the alphabet, recognizing letters and numerals, and associating sounds with letters, individually or in combinations. In those districts or consortia that used the GOLD instrument, increases in literacy scores were similar to those reported by the districts or consortia that used PALS. However, the increases in language scores were extremely small. In Cherokee, for example, while literacy scores improved from 24% of students meeting or exceeding national norms to 68%, language scores improved from zero students meeting or exceeding national norms to 1.5%.

The difference in the results for literacy and language should be explored in greater detail in future projects. One interpretation is that literacy is more teachable than language, since literacy is skill-based whereas language in meaning-based and, consequently, takes time to develop. A second interpretation is that the lack of literacy skills makes it extremely difficult for children to succeed in the early years of formal schooling. However, the possession of literacy skills does not guarantee success in those early years.

As mentioned earlier, very few districts or consort specified the magnitude of improvement or increase that would define success. It also was mentioned that the results in the districts that specified targeted levels of improvement or increase were mixed. In McCormick, for example, the goal was that 80% of the teachers would increase their CLASS scores by one point in each of the three domains. At the end of the year, 67% of the teachers increased their CLASS scores by this amount. Similarly, in the Pee Dee consortium, one goal was for 95% of children to score

within the expected range in all PALS tasks in the spring. Across the participating districts within the consortium, the percent of children achieving this goal ranged from 64 to 95, with most districts failing to reach the specified level. On the other hand, two other goals of the Pee Dee consortium that also included explicit standards were achieved. Increases in the teaching of social-emotional skills using TPOT as the measure did increase by at least 10% in all districts in the consortium. Also, 95% of teachers did meet a minimum of one goal related to TPOT implementation each month.

The lesson to be learned here is that stating explicit levels of improvement or increase is a complex, often difficult task. Consequently, they should be set only after careful consideration of the importance of specific levels and the likelihood of attaining them within the resources allocated, including the time frame. On the other hand, goals without explicit standards leave the determination of success to those reporting the results or reading the reports.

Beginning in FY2017, participating districts began including scores on the statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). By the FY2018, all participating districts were reporting children's scores on the KRA. The domains are Language/Literacy (35%), Mathematics (26%), Social Foundations (25%) and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development (14%). The KRA is administered during the first 45 days of a child' kindergarten year. Students' scores fall into one of three levels of performance: Demonstrating, Approaching, and Emerging. In terms of kindergarten readiness, "Demonstrating" means the child is ready for kindergarten, whereas "Emerging" means the child is not ready for kindergarten (at the present time). "Approaching" means the child may or may not be kindergarten ready. The Bookmark method (Karantonis and Sireci, 2006) was used to set the cut-scores between the adjacent performance levels. The key distinction between the performance levels focused on the degree of remediation or support that a student required. Students in the approaching readiness level were described as those who could often demonstrate skills and behaviors with some adult assistance or support. Students in the demonstrating readiness were described as those who could demonstrate skills and behaviors independently and fluently, requiring little to no remediation.

Two questions can be asked about the KRA. First, if the KRA is used to determine kindergarten readiness, what do the scores contribute to our understanding of the meaning of program

success? Second, should scores on the KRA be used to evaluate the success of 4K programs? Let us consider each in turn beginning with an examination of the KRA scores of the districts or consortia that received grants in FY2018. Across the five districts and two consortia, the percent of students in the "Emerging" category ranged from 19 to 36 with a median of 25. Twenty-five is also the percentage of public-school students in South Carolina whose scores placed them in the "Emerging" category. Based on these data, then, we can conclude that at present about one-fourth of public-school students in both the State and in the participating districts and consortia are not ready for kindergarten. Should these data be considered when defining project success? With respect to the second question the inclusion of the KRA in district or consortium summary reports is problematic for at least two reasons. First, the KRA scores included in the summary reports were district-level scores. In those districts in which only students in a few schools were included in the project, district-level scores are inappropriate and can be misleading. Second, because the KRA is administered during the kindergarten year we cannot be certain that the data pertain to the children who were included in the funded 4K programs. If KRA scores are to be used as part of the evaluation of 4K programs, longitudinal data (that is, data that follow the children over time) are needed.

Summary Statement

In simplest terms, the process of defining success requires answering the question, "How much is enough?" Is an increase of one-half of a point on a 5-point observational measure enough to justify calling the program successful? Is an increase from 23% to 83% of students meeting the "rhyming awareness" benchmark on PALS sufficient to justify calling the program successful? Does not the answer to this second question depend on how high the benchmark is set?

The degree of improvement or increase needed to say that a program was successful in achieving its goals was not made explicit in most of the projects. When it was made explicit, the results were a mixed bag, sometimes meeting the standard and other times falling short. In determining success, it is necessary to consider both the level and increase in scores. In one district, scores on the Instructional Support subscale of the CLASS instrument improved from 2.0 to 3.6 on a 7-point scale. Although the increase was substantial, the ending score was still exceptionally low relative to the other two domains. Should we judge this project to be successful? Finally, in

determining success, we should consider a variety of data and not rely on a single source. In one district, scores on the chosen student assessment instrument increased substantially; however, a student achieving an average score on the instrument would still be operating about one grade level below grade-level expectations. Would this project be considered successful?

CRITICAL QUESTION 3. Did the grantees accomplish what they set out to accomplish?

This question is related to (and overlaps a bit with) the previous question. As emphasized in Critical Question 2, judging the accomplishment of the projects depends a great deal on how success is defined. The schematic shown in Figure 3.1 enables us to examine the relationships among the various funded projects. The schematic contains four columns. To understand the schematic, it is best to move from right to left. We begin with the assumption that ultimate goal of the 4K grants is to increase kindergarten readiness (Column 4). To achieve this goal, grantees emphasized one or more of three areas of learning and development: increased literacy (selected by most grantees), language development, and social-emotional development (Column 3). To achieve growth in these areas, grantees chose to improve teacher-child interactions in the classroom (selected by most grantees) or improve parent-child conversations. A few grantees chose to enhance home and school environments with books and other print material (Column 2). Finally, teachers or parents must be helped to develop the knowledge and skills needed to improve their interactions and conversations with children (Column 1).

To illustrate how the schematic improves understanding of the project, consider Cherokee. The Cherokee project focused on language development (Column 3). The vehicle for improving language development was improving parent-conversation via the "Talk to Me" model (Column 2). Family Literacy Coaches were employed to help parents improve their communication skills (Column 1). If all these elements were implemented successfully, it was believed that the result would be an increase in kindergarten readiness of the most disadvantaged children in the district (Column 4).

As a second example, consider the Pee Dee consortium. This project focused on social-emotional development (Column 3). The vehicle for improving social-emotional development was adopting the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) (Column 2). To learn about and properly implement the Pyramid Curriculum and TPOT, teachers participated in an initial 4 days of professional development with a professional Pyramid consultant, followed by monthly refresher sessions (Column 1). Again, if all these elements were implemented successfully, the result should be an increase in kindergarten readiness (Column 4).

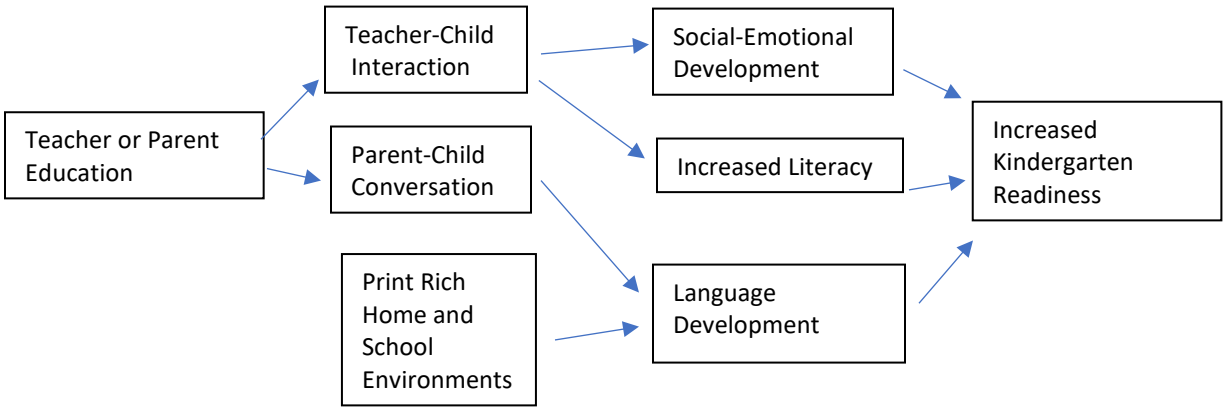

Figure 3.1. Graphical Representation of the Composite of 4K Projects (2015 – 2018)

As a third example, consider Chesterfield. This project focused primary on improving children's language and literacy (Column 3). Books were purchased and distributed to improve both home and school libraries. Family literacy events were held to encourage children's reading at home (Column 2). In addition, district leaders were educated in using the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation tool (ELLCO). These leaders then taught principals, literacy coaches, 4K and 5K teachers, and teaching assistants to use ELLCO (Columns 1 and 2). Finally, if all these elements were implemented successfully, the result should be an increase in kindergarten readiness (Column 4).

In summary, then, every funded project can be mapped onto Figure 3.1. This mapping makes it possible to gain a more complete understanding of what each grantee intended to accomplish, how it was accomplished, and to extent to which it was accomplished.

In the discussion of Critical Question 2, the data on improvements in teacher-child interactions and, to a lesser extent, on increases in children's literacy and socio-emotional development were examined. Although there were increases in the classroom observational data in virtually every district or consortium, the increases in language development were quite small, sometimes non-existent. The data obtained from the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), which was reported by some participating districts beginning in FY2017 and by all participating districts in FY2018, were summarized and the problems involved in using the KRA to evaluate the success of single year 4K projects were discussed.

The "Talk to Me" program, teacher professional development activities, or the extent to which increases in teacher-child interactions are associated with increases in literacy skills, language development, or socio-emotional development were not discussed. These three issues are discussed in what follows.

<u>"Talk to Me" and LENA</u>

Beginning with the second year of the project, the Cherokee district offered two ways of implementing the "Talk to Me" program: LENA Start and LENA Home. [Only LENA Home was available during the first year]. The names come from the primary instrument used to evaluate increases in parents' communication with their children, the Language Environment Analysis (LENA) device. In LENA Start, participants met in a group setting, which allowed for an increase

in the number of families served and helped participating families connect with one another. In LENA Home, facilitators traveled to participant homes to work individually on weekly "Talk to Me" activities and lessons. The LENA device is a small, child-safe recorder that children wear for a day at a time. The LENA device yields two sets of data on parent-child communication: the number of words spoken during a 24-hour period and the number of conversational turns (from parent to child, then child to parent is one conversational turn).

It should be possible to use these two pieces of data to determine the extent to which Cherokee accomplished what it intended to accomplish. This turned out to be more difficult than anticipated because the district focused on aggregated data. For example, the total daily word count in Spring, 2018 increased by 2,369 and the total number of conversational turns per day increased by 38. Fortunately, the number of (n = 13) participating families (n = 13) was also displayed in the tables. Dividing the two totals by 13 provides a much clearer picture of the results. The total daily word count per family increased by 182 in 13 weeks and the total daily number of conversational turns per family increased by almost 3 during this same time frame.

To illustrate how aggregated data can be misleading consider one of the tables in the FY2018 report that compared the data from FY2017 with the data from FY2018. The table in the report suggests that the average number of daily words decreased from 4,033 in FY2017 to 2,369 in FY2018. To see this is a decrease is misleading because the number of families also decreased, from 30 to 13. On a per family basis, then the increase in the average number of daily words in FY2017 was 134. What initially looks like a decrease from 2017 to 2018 is, in fact, an increase (from 134 to 182).

Although examining the data on a per child or per family basis is far more meaningful than the examining aggregated data, we are still left with the question raised in Critical Question 2. Is an increase of 20 to 25 words per family per week sufficient to judge the program as successful? In answering this question, one should keep in mind that we are talking about total words, not new words.

Cherokee did present some data on language development using the Language Development Snapshot tool. However, the data included in the report applied to children under the age of 36 months, an age group that was not the target of the 4K project.

Fortunately, Cherokee conducted a survey of the parents to determine their reaction to the LENA programs, pre- and post. The end results were quite positive, with 100% of parents saying they often read with their children, 97% reporting they often use songs and rhymes with their children, 91% indicating they often add language into everyday activities, and 88% stating that they often add new vocabulary words in their conversations.

Overall, then, the results included in the Cherokee report are mixed with respect to Critical Question 3. Although there were increases in the number of words that parents use with their children, the increases in the number of conversational turns were more modest. Parents expressed satisfaction with the program and reported engaging in language and literacy activities with their children more often at the end of the programs than they did when the program began. However, no data were presented linking greater parent-child verbal interactions with the child's improvement in language or literacy.

Teacher Professional Development

In general, data on teacher professional development should provide answers to two questions. First, how much professional development is needed for teachers to master the knowledge and skills needed to implement the chosen program (e.g., CLASS, ELLCO, or TPOT)? Second, what is the cost, per teacher, of providing the needed professional development?

As in the case of the LENA program, only aggregated data are presented in the reports. Chesterfield, for example, reported 17 professional development activities and 240 teacher participants. Lancaster, on the other hand, reported 25 professional development activities and 35 teacher participants. In both districts, there are more teacher participants than professional development activities. In contrast, McCormick reported 55 professional development activities and 21 teacher participants. What do these numbers mean? Making sense of these numbers requires the computation of professional activities on a *per* teacher basis (for example, there were 21 teachers with each teacher participating in an average of 5.3 professional development activities.

Although providing per teacher data is more meaningful than aggregated data, it still does not answer the two questions mentioned earlier. Answers to these questions require that we examine all data within the context of the "big picture" (Figure 3.1) and that we cost out

professional development on a per teacher basis. With respect to the latter issue, some data on return on investment (ROI) are presented in Critical Question 4.

Connecting classroom interactions with children's growth in literacy, language, and social development

Although every project collected data on both changes in classroom interactions and increases in children's growth in literacy, language, and/or social-emotional development, the relationship between the two was reported in only one project. In Chesterfield, the correlation between the classroom ELLCO scores and the average PALS scores of children in those classrooms was reported to be 0.83. A correlation this large suggests a strong relationship between teacher-child classroom interactions and children's literacy, on average. Calculating a correlation coefficient is a useful first step in solving the "how much is enough" problem. Correlation coefficients are the basis for developing regression equations. Regression equations, in turn, produce regression lines which allow us to predict the increases in PALS scores that could be expected for specific increases in ELLCO scores. Thus, if our goal is to have 4K children reach the established PALS benchmark of 83 (of 102) at the end of the school year, we might find that a teacher with an ELLCO score of 4.6 (of 5) is predicted to have most of her children reach that benchmark.

Almost every year the project evaluators emphasized the need to connect classroom data with student outcomes. In the FY2017 report, for example, the evaluators recommended that a longitudinal (i.e., multi-year) approach to evaluation should be utilized to "determine the impact of the project on students and teachers." If, in fact, the overall goal of 4K programs is to improve children's likelihood of success in kindergarten, the construction and use of longitudinal data bases are sorely needed.

An Alternate Perspective

There is another way of considering whether the grantees accomplished what they set out to accomplish, one quite consistent with the perspective expressed by the grantees in their annual reports. Perhaps it is sufficient to help parents improve their conversations with their children regardless of their impact on children's language or literacy. If this is the case, then expanding the opportunities for parents to participate in the LENA program indicates not only that

educational leaders in Cherokee believe the program to be successful but they may also believe that it will eventually pay off in terms of improved kindergarten readiness.

Similarly, it may be sufficient to use ELLCO as a common framework for helping teachers learn and work together to improve their classroom environments, including their interactions with children. If so, this unstated goal was accomplished in Cherokee over the multiple years in which they were funded. In fact, by the fifth year, the expressed intent was to explore vertical articulation of the curriculum (4K and K) and to include kindergarten teachers in the ELLCO professional development activities.

One lesson to learn from this alternative perspective is that rather than assume the intentions of the grant participants, it would be wise to have them make explicit what those intentions are and, as discussed in Critical Question 2, what they believe constitutes program success. In this regard, however, educational leaders in these districts and consortia as well as the State must move away from a "more is better" view of evaluation to a perspective of evaluation as the need to determine whether "more is enough" to increase the quality of teaching and/or parenting and, perhaps more importantly, children's chances of kindergarten success.

Summary Statement

As suggested in the previous three paragraphs, what one sees as accomplishment is often quite subjective. The position taken in responding to this question is that (1) both the intentions and accomplishments should be made explicit at the outset, and (2) defensible answers to this question are only possible within the context of multi-faceted models such as the one shown in Figure 3.1. Although these two criteria will not remove subjectivity, they establish parameters within which informed decisions about program success can be made.

CRITICAL QUESTION 4: What improvements were achieved and were they sufficient relative to the investments made?

As was discussed in response to Critical Question 3, the grantees did implement the programs outlined in their proposals. Some grantees experienced implementation hurdles such as a mismatch between teacher and student schedules or the necessity to reschedule teacher professional development time. Hurdles are normal and require time to solve the intervening problems, a challenge confounded by the one-year nature of the CBGEPP. The improvements made in the 4K programs have been noted in previous sections of this report.

The question to be addressed here concerns the return on investment (ROI) of the various programs. It must be kept in mind that grants specified different objectives. This fact is most obvious in FY2015 grants, that is grants prior to the change in focus of the grants to 4K programs. Even these grants, however, had quite different emphases, including improving the quality of parent-child interactions, improving teacher understanding and practices; and improving classroom environments. Because of these differing objectives, it is impossible to compare individual projects with one another. Determining the best use of results requires a comparison of initiatives with the same purpose within the same system. This view of ROI offers the greatest opportunity for South Carolina's schools and districts. Frank and Hovey (2014) identify a five-step process for the proper use of ROI data in making informed decisions:

1. Identify the core need;
2. Consider a broad range of investment options;
3. Define ROI metrics and gather data;
4. Weigh investment options; and
5. Make investment decisions.

The core need can be inferred from data presented in the annual evaluations (e.g., improved parent-student communication, classroom environments increasingly conducive to learning.) Without information on the options that were considered before making a choice, CBGEPP performance cannot be compared with other investment options.

A cost per unit can be computed as shown in Table 4.1. These results should not be used to make comparisons across grants or decisions on success because (1) the grants differ in target audiences and (2) there are no valid and reliable outcome data upon which to gauge

performance. Across the six districts or consortia the per unit cost ranges from $215 to $748. It should be noted that the per unit cost is highest when the parent is the unit of analysis. Parent education models typically involve one-on-one interactions, repeated home visits, [in some cases] use of technology to measure language development, and other intensive strategies. By their very nature, then, they are more expensive.

A look at the Chesterfield County Schools (see also Appendix B) demonstrates the value of multi-year programs. The Chesterfield model included the establishment of print-rich environments in both schools and homes. Classroom libraries were expanded, and copies of those books given to students to read at home. These books are consumed in one year either through gifts to the student or classroom wear and tear. That cost recurs annually. Chesterfield also demonstrates the impact of carryover funds. In FY2016 the program had a state grant of $250,000 but was able to expand the program in the next year with only $10,000 from the state. Although the initial investment was relatively high, by the third year Chesterfield's state grant was slightly more than $105,000. Per pupil investment, drawn from 1,421 students over 3 years, was $348. The financial benefit of multi-year programs is also evident in the Pee Dee consortium.

Summary Statement

The CBGEPP is intended to lead to the formation of, or change in, state educational policies. The state's interest is in expanding high quality practices and implementing new practices that lead toward greater student success in the school programs. The utilization of ROI methods offers great promise; however, that promise is empty without an agreed-upon methodology and supporting data sets. Better decisions are made with robust information and deep understanding of "what works under what conditions and in what context." Establishing this as an essential component of the education work in South Carolina offers a substantial opportunity for state-level agencies to inform and support state and local decision-making and policies.

Table 4.1
Cost Per Unit across Three Fiscal Years*

Grantee	Cumulative Investment (Expressed in Dollars)	Unit	Dollar Investment Per Unit
Cherokee	598,587	Parent	$748
Chesterfield	495,513	Student	$348
Lancaster	324,001	Student	$629
*Pee Dee Consortium	711,350	Student (within classrooms)	$215
*Spartanburg Consortium	342.224	Student	$692
York 1	232,450	Student	$505

Note. *FY2016 reports did not provide participant numbers; therefore, only two years of funding are used in the calculations for these two consortia.

CRITICAL QUESTION 5: What recommendations can be made to ensure that future grant programs are of the highest quality and have the greatest likelihood of success? [This is a rewording of the question as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding based on information examined and reflections made during the review process.]

Three major areas of recommendations are offered: the role of the EOC and other agencies, the structure and evaluation of grants programs, and the need to improve the quality of data and the evaluation process.

Role of EOC and Other Agencies

1. The EOC should provide feedback to those grantees who whose projects are likely to be funded, with the expectations that modifications will be made based on the feedback and the proposals resubmitted if necessary.
2. The EOC should collect formative information to allow the examination of progress made toward goal achievement and the determination of whether changes need to be made to increase the likelihood of program success.
3. The SC Department of Education should profile and publish the differences among, and the strengths and weaknesses of, each assessment instrument that is recommended by the agency so that informed choices can be made by the grantees.
4. The EOC and other agencies should request amendments to the proviso as necessary to strengthen the selection and evaluation process and to enhance overall project effectiveness.
5. The EOC and SC Department of Education should examine return on investment data of various programs and components of programs and make those data available to practitioners and policymakers on a continuing basis as a resource for state and local decision-making.
6. An aggressive system-wide, multi-faceted dissemination effort should be initiated and maintained to include showcasing successes and strategies for solving common problems.
7. Funding agencies should be full, active, and responsible partners in data collection and analyses in recognition of the reality that state agencies often have greater research and analytic capacity than local districts.

Structure and evaluation of the grant programs

1. The General Assembly or its agents should be clear as to purpose and intent of the grant program and be prepared to modify proviso language to work through tactical issues.
2. Multi-year programs should replace single-year programs, with each year having a clear and specific purpose.
3. Clear definitions of key terms (e.g., partnerships, disseminations) should be distributed to grantees to help them understand the expectations and improve the quality of their proposals.
4. Each proposal should include a clear and technically defensible definition of success (i.e., what level of improvement or increase is needed for the program to be judged successful).
5. Evaluation criteria and the weights assigned to the criteria should correspond with the purpose or purposes of the grant program.

Data and evaluation

1. When program goals emphasize increases or improvements, baseline data should be required.
2. The appropriateness and relevance of each classroom observation and student assessment instrument to the project goals should be described and a rationale for the choice of a particular instrument should be given.
3. Reports from children's assessment instruments should be disaggregated at the domain level when used to determine learning and/or developmental progress.
4. Reports on professional development for teachers or educational programs for parents should include data on a per classroom, per teacher, per parent, or per family basis to increase understanding of the data.
5. It is essential to improve consumer literacy when it comes to instrumentation, data collection and reporting, and evaluation methodology. This has implications for designers of instruments and producers of technical reports as well as for educators and policymakers who must select instruments and make sense of the reports.

References

Bradfield, T. and McConnell, S. (2013). Decision making within an early childhood RtI model. Minneapolis, MN: College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. [http://www.crtiec.dept.ku.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Bradfied-McConnell-DEC-CRTIEC-2013_TAB_SRM.pdf]

Frank, S., & Hovey, D. (2014). Return on investment in education: A system-strategy approach. *Education Resource Strategies*. [https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED560072.pdf]

Henderson, A. T. and Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Austin, TX: National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. [https://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf]

Karantonis, A. and Sireci, S. G. (2006). The bookmark standard-setting method: A literature review. *Educational Measurement Issues and Practice, 25*(1), 4-12. [10.1111/j.1745-3992.2006.00047.x]

Lozano, P. (2016). *What is means to be kindergarten ready in the U. S.* [https://www.ageoflearning.com/whitepapers/KindergartenReadiness.pdf]

Appendix A

Proviso 1.94
South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program Authorizing Legislation

Proviso 1.94. of the 2014-15 General Appropriation Act creates the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program: 1.94. (SDE: South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program) There is created the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program. The purpose of this matching grants program is to encourage and sustain partnerships between a community and its local public school district or school for the implementation of innovative, state-of-the-art education initiatives and models to improve student learning. The initiatives and models funded by the grant must be well designed, based on strong evidence of effectiveness, and have a history of improved student performance. The General Assembly finds that the success offered by these initiatives and programs is assured best when vigorous community support is integral to their development and implementation. It is the intent of this proviso to encourage public school and district communities and their entrepreneurial public educators *to undertake state-of-the-art initiatives to improve student learning and to share the results of these efforts with the state's public education community. As used in this proviso: (1) "Community" is defined as a group of parents, educators, and individuals from business, faith groups, elected officials, non-profit organizations and others who support the public school district or school in its efforts to provide an outstanding education for each child. As applied to the schools impacted within a district or an individual school, "community" includes the school faculty and the School Improvement Council as established in Section 59-20-60 of the 1976 Code; (2) "Poverty" is defined as the percent of students eligible in the prior year for the free and reduced price lunch program and or Medicaid; and (3) "Achievement" is as established by the Education Oversight Committee for the report card ratings developed pursuant to Section 59-18-900 of the 1976 Code. The executive director of the Education Oversight Committee is directed to appoint an independent grants committee to develop the process for awarding the grants including the application procedure, selection process, and matching grant formula. The grants committee will be comprised of seven members, three members selected from the education community and four members from the business community. The chairman of the committee will be selected by the committee members at the first meeting of the grants committee. The grants committee will review and select the recipients of the Community Block Grants for Education. The criteria for awarding the grants must include, but are not limited to: (1) the establishment and continuation of a robust community advisory committee to leverage funding, expertise, and other resources to assist the district or school throughout the implementation of the initiatives funded through the Block Grant Program; (2) a demonstrated ability to meet the match throughout the granting period; 61 (3) a demonstrated ability to implement the initiative or model as set forth in the application; and (4) an explanation of the manner in which the initiative supports the district's or school's strategic plan required by Section 59-18-1310 of the 1976 Code. In addition, the district or school, with input from the community advisory committee, must include: (1) a comprehensive plan to examine delivery implementation and measure impact of the model; (2) a report on implementation problems and successes and impact of the innovation or model; and (3) evidence of support for the project from the school district administration when an individual school applies for a grant. The match required from a

grant recipient is based on the poverty of the district or school. No matching amount will exceed more than seventy percent of the grant request or be less than ten percent of the request. The required match may be met by funds or by in-kind donations, such as technology, to be further defined by the grants committee. Public school districts and schools that have high poverty and low achievement will receive priority for grants when their applications are judged to meet the criteria established for the grant program. However, no grant may exceed $250,000 annually unless the grants committee finds that exceptional circumstances warrant exceeding this amount. The Education Oversight Committee will review the grantee reports and examine the implementation of the initiatives and models to understand the delivery of services and any contextual factors. The Oversight Committee will then highlight the accomplishments and common challenges of the initiatives and models funded by the Community Block Grant for Education Pilot Program to share the lessons learned with the state's public education community.

Appendix B

State and Local Funds for FY2016 – FY2018

Grantee	FY2016		FY2017		FY2018		TOTAL		
	State	Local	State	Local	State	Local	State	Local	Cumulative
Cherokee	250,000	44,000	10,000	44,000	206,587	44,000	466,587	132,000	598,587
Chesterfield	250,000	40,000	10,000	40,000	105,513	40,000	375,513	120,000	495,513
Lancaster			164,000	16.539	126,923	16,539	290.923	33,078	324,001
Florence 1 Florence 2 Pee Dee Consortium	250,000 239,000	102,000 245,000	250,000	137,000	187,350	137,000	926,350	621,000	1,547,350
Spartanburg 7/Spartanburg Consortium	194,466	25,000	142,000	46,600	128,724	25,000	465,190	96,600	561,790
York 1			84,000	25,600	97,250	25,600	181,250	51,200	232,450