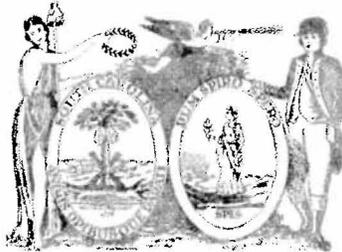


State of South Carolina
Executive Department



FILED

SEP 17 2009

Mark Hammond
SECRETARY OF STATE 8

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO.

2009-12

WHEREAS, South Carolina receives federal education funding to provide early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities through Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (hereinafter Part C Program); and

WHEREAS, Congress established the Part C Program in 1986 in recognition of an urgent and substantial need to: enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities; reduce educational costs by minimizing the need for special education through early intervention; minimize the likelihood of institutionalization; maximize independent living; and enhance the capacity of families to meet their children's needs; and

WHEREAS, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq.*, (hereinafter I.D.E.A.) requires each governor to designate a responsible lead agency through which Part C Program will be administered; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness (hereinafter First Steps) exists as the state's only entity solely devoted to meeting the early educational needs of the state's young children; and

WHEREAS, S.C. Code Ann. § 59-152-20 explains that "the goals for South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness are to:

- (1) provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) increase comprehensive services so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;

- (3) promote high quality preschool programs that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) provide services so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to learn; and
- (5) mobilize communities to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to learn;” and

WHEREAS, these goals are uniquely aligned with those detailed in the Part C Program;

NOW, THEREFORE, I designate South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness as the lead agency for South Carolina’s Part C Program (known locally as BabyNet).

FURTHER, the Office of South Carolina First Steps shall:

- a. Take all necessary and appropriate steps to assume responsibility of the Part C Program, effective January 1, 2010, and make any necessary filings with the United States Department of Education;
- b. Determine the most efficient means of administering South Carolina’s Part C Program and its associated service delivery models, including the development of inter-agency memoranda of agreement and determining what, if any, administrative or service delivery roles may be played by the agency’s affiliate County Partnerships; and
- c. Minimize systemic administrative costs and maximize actual services provided to children through the Part C Program.

FURTHER, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control shall:

- a. Maintain and fulfill all existing responsibilities as the state’s Part C Program lead agency until January 1, 2010;
- b. Cooperate fully in the transition planning efforts of First Steps, and provide timely information and assistance as requested to ensure continuity of service to all existing clients with minimum disruption; and

- c. As requested by First Steps and permissible under federal guidelines, make Part C Program funds and employees available to First Steps to support the transition staffing and planning.

FURTHER, in recognition of the Part C Program's complex inter-agency structure and service delivery model, additional state agencies including, but not limited to, the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, School for the Deaf and Blind, Department of Social Services, Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Insurance shall cooperate fully and participate actively in the transition planning efforts of South Carolina First Steps.

This Order takes effect immediately, with First Steps' formal assumption of Part C lead agency responsibilities to begin January 1, 2010. This Executive Order supersedes previous State directives related to the Part C Program, and remains in force until further modification or rescission by the Governor.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS 17TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2009.



MARK SANFORD
Governor

ATTEST:



MARK HAMMOND
SECRETARY OF STATE

