

SC DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS



LEAD ★ SERVE ★ REMEMBER

South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs Governor's Summit

September 07, 2023

Governors Summit Agenda

- 01 → **Opening Remarks - Governor and Secretary**
- 02 → **FY 22-23 Action Plan Review**
- 03 → **FY 22-23 Focus Areas Performance**
- 04 → **Coalition Partner Video**
- 05 → **FY 23-24 Action Plan Overview**
- 06 → **Closing Remarks - Governor and Secretary**

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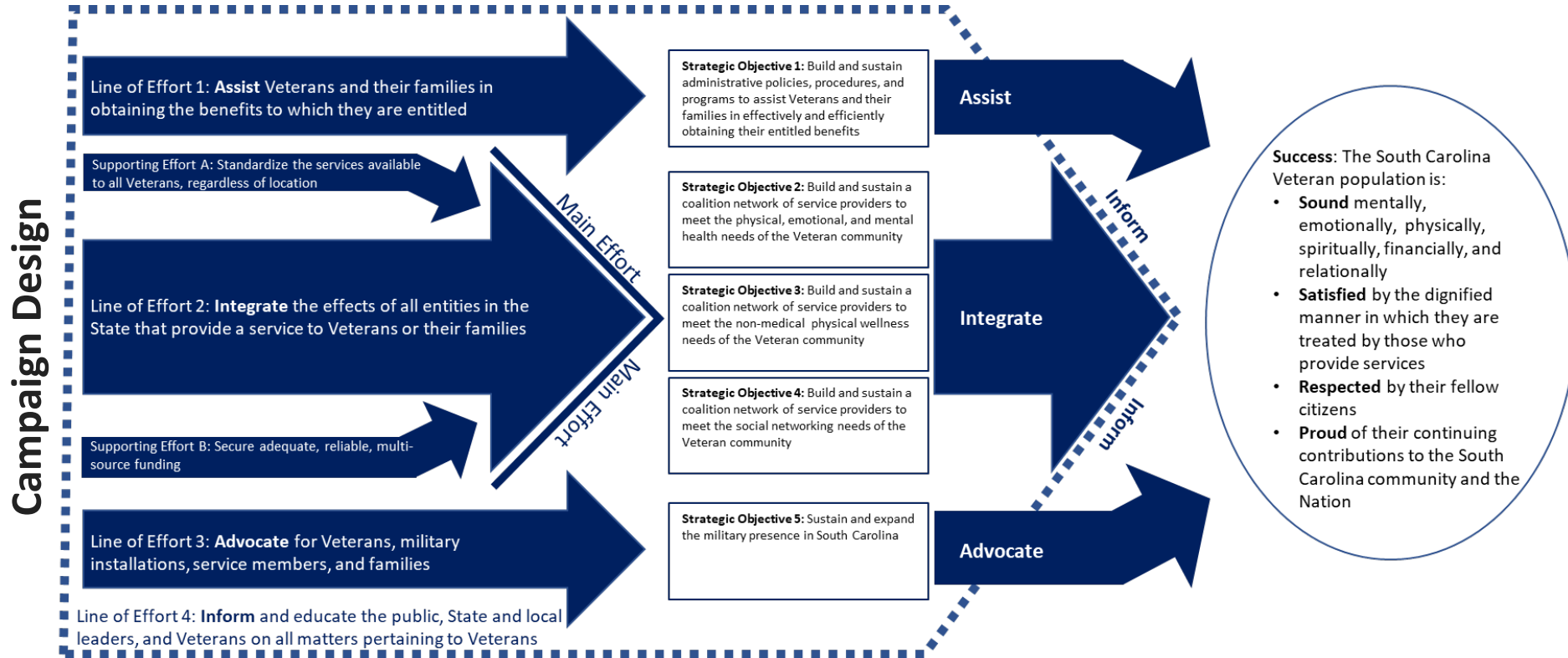
South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs Governor's Summit

September 07, 2023

FY22-23 Campaign Design

Mission Statement

The South Carolina Department of Veterans' Affairs leads and enables a state-wide coalition of partners with an interest in Veterans to create and sustain an environment in which Veterans can thrive as valued and contributing members of the South Carolina community.



4 Jan 22

Coalition: A voluntary, cooperative body comprised of diverse members with overlapping goals and objectives.

Success: Enduring conditions which define the attainment of the campaign's overall purpose.

Line of Effort: An arrangement of actions in time and space to achieve a purpose (strategic objective).

Supporting Effort: An arrangement of actions in time and space to enable a line of effort.

Main Effort: The line of effort which leads most directly to Success. Normally the best resourced and supported.

FY 22-23 Action Plan Summary

1 July, 2022 – 30 June, 2023

Focus Areas

Performance Goals

Focus Area 1
Expand the Coalition

Intent: Improve our ability to effectively and efficiently align available resources to Veteran needs by increasing the number of partners actively participating in the state-wide network.

2.1.3 Number of service providers using the SC Veteran Coalition
Goal: 30
Achieved: **84**

4.1.2 Percentage of County Veterans Affairs Offices enrolled in the SC Veteran Coalition
Goal: 50%
Achieved: **19%**

4.2.1 Number of counties with a Community Veteran Engagement Board or similar body
Goal: 35
Achieved: **25**

Legend

Achieved
Significant Progress Toward Goal
Not Achieved/Limited Progress

Focus Area 2
Reduce Veteran Suicide

Intent: Reverse the long-standing trendline of rising Veteran suicide rates.

2.2.1 Veteran Suicide Rate in South Carolina
Goal: 27/100k
Achieved: **29.7**

2.2.5 Number of county offices who have gun locks available on request by a Veteran or family member
Goal: 22
Achieved: **46**

2.2.6 Number of partnered organizations in the coalition using "Ask The Question" Suicide Prevention Campaign
Goal: 30
Achieved: **30**

2.2.7 Number of Palmetto Pathfinders trained and available to connect with Veterans
Goal: 166
Achieved: **121**

Focus Area 3
Improve Veteran Services in Under-Resourced Counties

Intent: Reduce the broad disparity in Veteran Services available to those in urban counties and those in rural and poorly resourced counties.

1.1.1 Percentage of county offices that are open 37.5 hours per week
Goal: 90%
Achieved: **89%**

1.1.2 Percentage of counties with a minimum of two fully-accredited full-time equivalent staff members
Goal: 83%
Achieved: **82%**

2.1.1 Percentage of counties in which Veterans have access to county-wide transport three days per week
Goal: 61%
Achieved: **69%**

4.3.1 Percentage of counties with a functional Veteran Treatment Court
Goal: 26%
Achieved: **26%**

Focus Area 4
Improve Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Intent: Make South Carolina a station of choice for service members by addressing long-standing concerns about public education.

5.2.1.1 Number/type of existing/proposed alternatives to traditional public schools that are available
Goal: 299
Achieved: **300**

5.2.1.2 Number of Purple Star designated school districts in the state
Goal: 12
Achieved: **11**

5.2.1.3 Percentage of schools zoned for military installations with a score ≥ the state average in ELA and math
Goal: 67%
Achieved: **50%**

Focus Area 5
Prepare for the Potential Transfer of Responsibility for Veteran Homes

Focus Area 1 Expand the Coalition

Intent: Improve our ability to effectively and efficiently align available resources to Veteran needs by increasing the number of partners actively participating in the state-wide network.

Performance Goals

2.1.3 Number of service providers using the SC Veteran Coalition

Goal: 30

Baseline: 10

End of Fiscal Year: **84**

4.1.2 Percentage of County Veterans Affairs Offices enrolled in the SC Veteran Coalition

Goal: 50%

Baseline: 0%

End of Fiscal Year: **19%**

4.2.1 Number of counties with a Community Veteran Engagement Board or similar body

Goal: 35

Baseline: 30

End of Fiscal Year: **25**

Insights Gained

- Including the right partners at all levels, investment of time, and consistency is key to creating sustaining a Community Veteran Engagement Board or similar body
- Organizations are ready to assist Veterans and see the SC Veteran Coalition as a great way to connect Veterans to services

Successes

- Two Veteran Engagement Councils started in rural counties: Lower Pee Dee Veteran Engagement Council and Rural Lower Veteran Engagement Team
- Partnered with 84 organizations at federal, state, and local levels to connect Veterans to organizations

Challenges

- Identifying needs of Veterans and their families to add organizations that meet the changing needs of Veterans
- Continuing to create additional Community Veteran Engagement Boards or similar bodies in counties that do not have one



SOUTH CAROLINA VETERAN COALITION



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Focus Area 2 Reduce Veteran Suicide

Intent: Reverse the long-standing trendline of rising Veteran suicide rates.

Performance Goals

2.2.1 Veteran Suicide Rate in South Carolina	Goal: 27/100k	Baseline:30.7/100k	End of Fiscal Year: 29.7/100k
2.2.5 Number of county offices who have gun locks available on request by a Veteran or family member	Goal: 10	Baseline: 0	End of Fiscal Year: 46 of 46
2.2.6 Number of partnered organizations in the coalition using "Ask The Question" Suicide Prevention Campaign	Goal: 30	Baseline: 0	End of Fiscal Year: 30
2.2.7 Number of Palmetto Pathfinders trained and available to connect with Veterans	Goal: 234	Baseline: 10	End of Fiscal Year: 121

Insights Gained

- Veteran Suicide Prevention requires the collaboration of agencies at the federal, state, and local levels to find innovative ways to reduce Veteran suicide
- 988 requires sustainable funding from the state to finalize rollout of the system

Successes

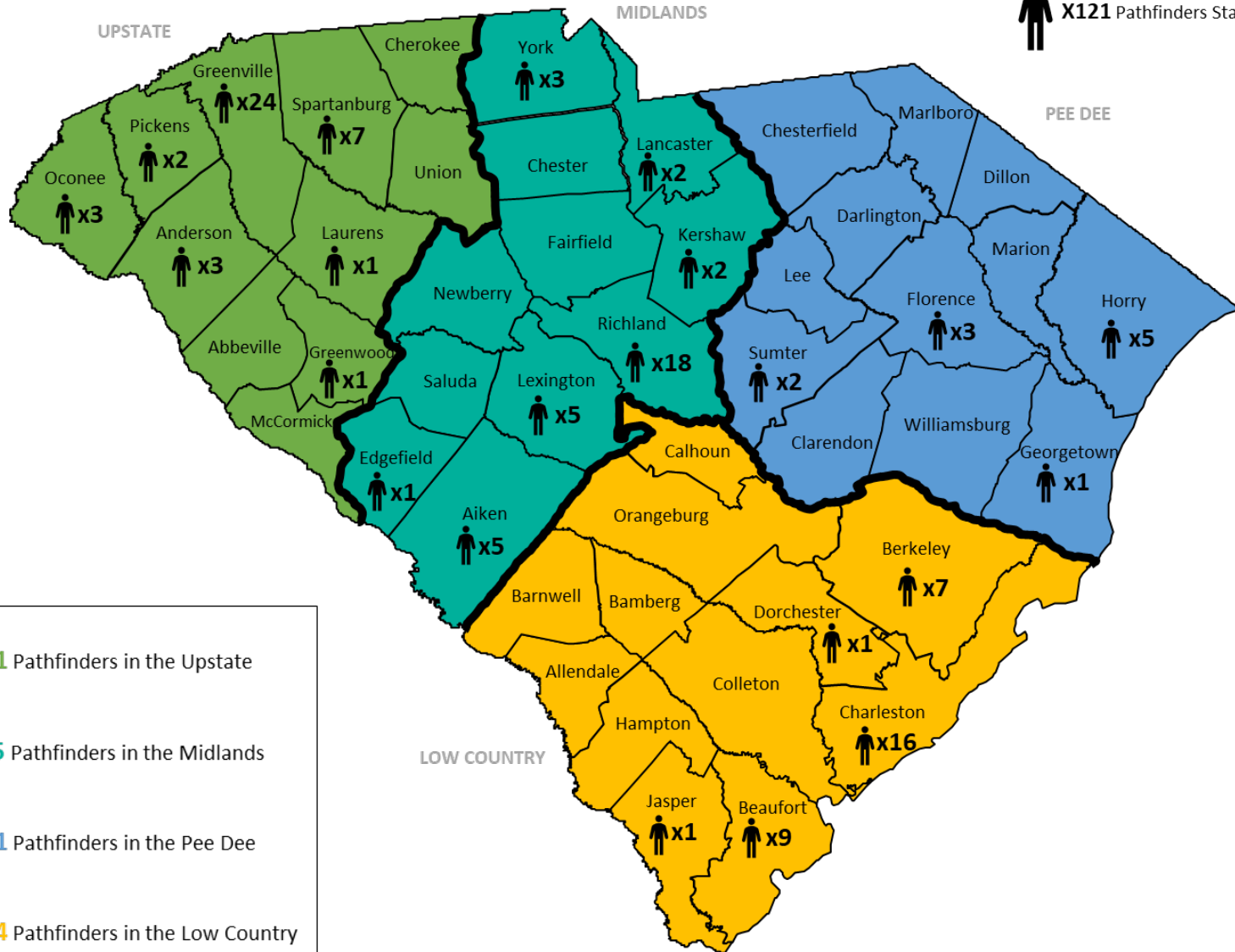
- Trained Palmetto Pathfinders are available to assist service members and Veterans
- State interagency collaboration to create Ask The Question Campaign
- All 46 County Veteran Affairs Offices have access to gun locks





Challenges

- Assessing the efficacy of suicide prevention methods
- Facilitating education of agencies and organizations on the Ask The Question Campaign

Pathfinders Across the State are Trained and Available to Assist

 **X121** Pathfinders Statewide



-  **X41** Pathfinders in the Upstate
-  **X35** Pathfinders in the Midlands
-  **X11** Pathfinders in the Pee Dee
-  **X34** Pathfinders in the Low Country

Palmetto Pathfinder Program



Matt & Kara Rutter



CPT Bernadette Binning



Robert Best

Focus Area 3 Improve Veteran Services in Under-Resourced Counties
Intent: Reduce the broad disparity in Veteran Services available to those in urban counties and those in rural and poorly resourced counties.

Performance Goals

1.1.1 Percentage of county offices that are open 37.5 hours per week	Goal: 90%	Baseline: 85%	End of Fiscal Year: 89%
1.1.2 Percentage of counties with a minimum of two fully-accredited full-time equivalent staff members	Goal: 83%	Baseline: 72%	End of Fiscal Year: 82%
2.1.1 Percentage of counties in which Veterans have access to county-wide transport three days per week	Goal: 61%	Baseline: 52%	End of Fiscal Year: 69%
4.3.1 Percentage of counties with a functional Veteran Treatment Court	Goal: 26%	Baseline: 17%	End of Fiscal Year: 26%

Insights Gained

- Veteran population and county resources contribute to the number of hours County Veteran Affairs Offices are open
- Mentors and programs that address mental health and substance abuse are key to a successful Veteran Treatment Court.

Successes

- Increased information of transportation options for Veterans to Veteran Affairs Medical Centers and other medical facility
- Expanded Veteran Treatment Courts to three counties, Chesterfield, Darlington, and Florence

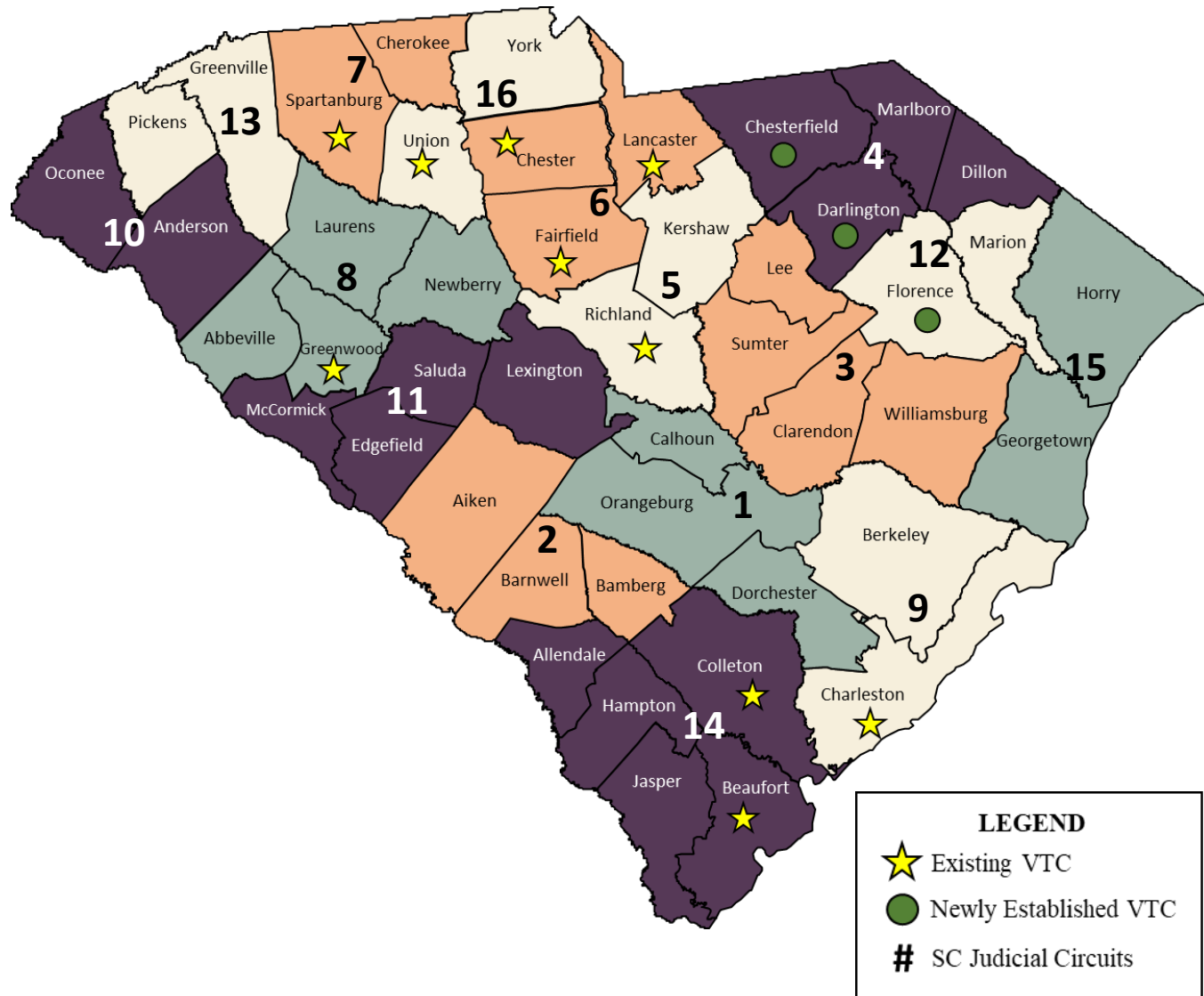
Challenges

- Limited office space, equipment, and information technology in eleven counties
- Early identification of Veterans for Veteran Treatment Courts

Veteran Treatment Court (VTC)

Veteran Treatment Court (VTC) is a minimum twelve-month program that includes dynamic treatment variables, which include completion of defined phases, sobriety, and service delivery. Program requirements may vary between the courts, but generally include:

- Legal, mental health, alcohol, and drug use assessments to establish treatment needs
- Screening by the VA to determine eligibility for services
- Veterans court appearances three times per month
- Weekly attendance to alcohol/substance or other self-help meetings
- Weekly random drug testing
- Compliance with treatment as required by clinical staff
- Compliance with requirements for other habilitation services: job training, employment, or medical
- Maintaining contact with assigned Veteran mentor



Performance Goals

5.2.1.1 Number/type of existing/proposed alternatives to traditional public schools that are available	Goal: 299	Baseline: 296	End of Fiscal Year: 300
5.2.1.2 Number of Purple Star designated school districts in the state	Goal: 12	Baseline: 10	End of Fiscal Year: 11
5.2.1.3 Percentage of schools zoned for military installations with a score \geq the state average in ELA and math	Goal: 67%	Baseline: 50%	End of Fiscal Year: 50%

Insights Gained

- Military-connected students are located across the whole state, not just around military installations

Successes

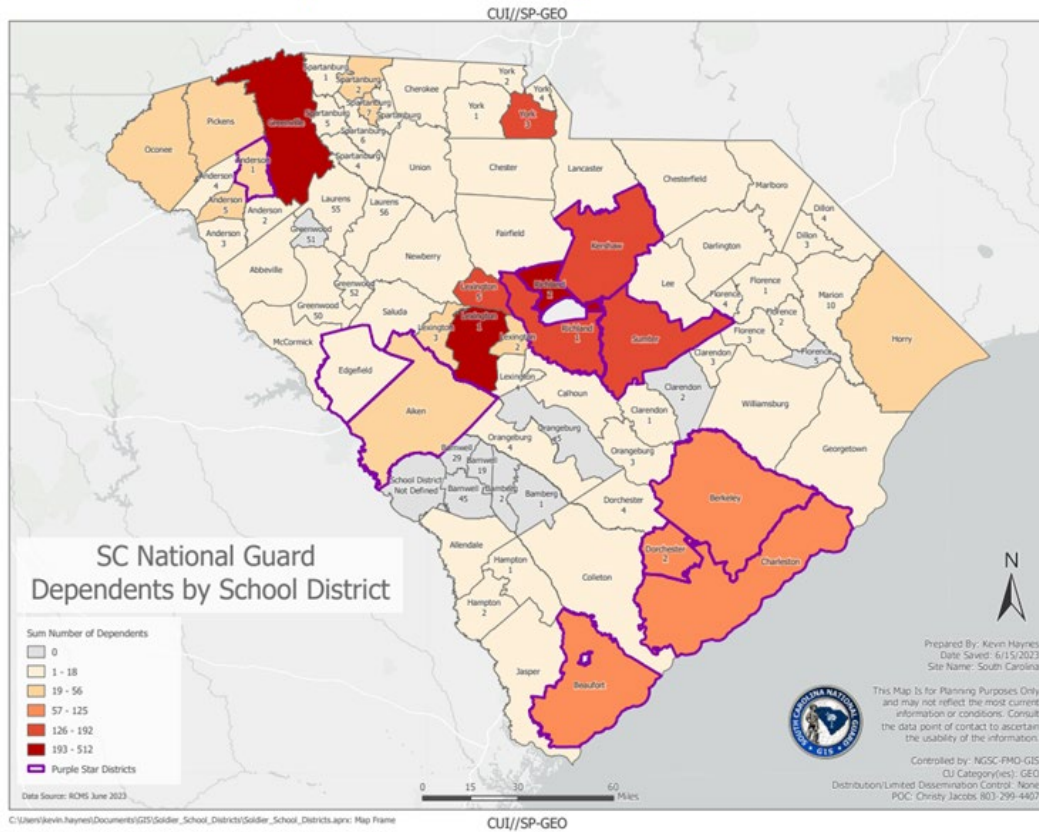
- Purple Star School Districts bring awareness of military-connected children and training for faculty and staff to better support military students and their families

Challenges

- School districts are often unaware of the number of military-connected children in their district

Improve Educational Opportunities for Military Children

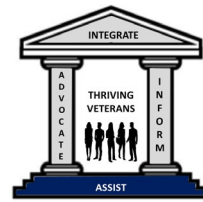
- Military-connected students are located across the whole state, not just around military installations.
- School districts are often unaware of the number of military children in their district.
- Purple Star School Districts bring awareness of military-connected children and best practices for their support.



Dorchester District Two became the 11th Purple Star School District in South Carolina joining:

Aiken, Richland 2, Kershaw, Sumter, Richland 1, Charleston, Berkeley, Edgefield, Beaufort, and Anderson 1.

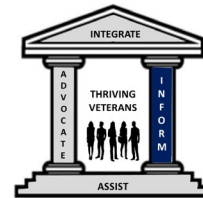
FY23-24 Campaign Design



✓ **Objective:** Build and sustain administrative policies, procedures, and programs to assist Veterans and their families in effectively and efficiently obtaining their entitled benefits



✓ **Objective:** Sustain and expand the military presence in South Carolina



✓ **Objective:** Inform and educate the public, State and local leaders, and Veterans on all matters pertaining to Veterans



✓ **Objective:** Build and sustain a coalition network of service providers to meet the physical, emotional, and mental health needs of the Veteran community

✓ **Objective:** Build and sustain a coalition network of service providers to meet the non-medical physical wellness needs of the Veteran community

✓ **Objective:** Build and sustain a coalition network of service providers to meet the social networking needs of the Veteran community

✓ **Objective:** Standardize the services available to all Veterans, regardless of location

✓ **Objective:** Secure adequate, reliable, multi-source funding



FY 23-24 Action Plan Summary

1 July, 2023 – 30 June, 2024

Focus Area 1 Expand the Coalition

Intent: Improve our ability to effectively and efficiently align available resources to Veteran needs by increasing the number of partners actively participating in the state-wide network.

Focus Area 2 Reduce Veteran Suicide

Intent: Reverse the long-standing trendline of rising Veteran suicide rates.

Focus Area 3 Improve Veteran Services in Under-Resourced Counties

Intent: Reduce the broad disparity in Veteran Services available to those in urban counties and those in rural and poorly resourced counties.

Focus Area 4 Improve Educational Opportunities for Military Children

Intent: Make South Carolina a station of choice for service members by addressing long-standing concerns about public education.

Focus Area 5 Prepare for the Transfer of Responsibility for Veteran Homes

Intent: Seamlessly transition responsibility for Veteran Nursing Homes with no reduction in the quality of care provided to Veterans

2.1.3 Number of service providers using the SC Veteran Coalition
Goal: 30

2.2.1 Veteran Suicide Rate in South Carolina
Goal: 27/100k

1.1.1 Percentage of county offices that are open 37.5 hours per week
Goal: 90%

5.2.1.1 Number/type of existing/proposed alternatives to traditional public schools that are available
Goal: 303

6.1 Conduct through and timely planning and coordination with the SCDMH and the SCDOA

4.1.2 Percentage of County Veterans Affairs Offices enrolled in the SC Veteran Coalition
Goal: 50%

2.2.5 Number of county offices who have gun locks available on request by a Veteran or family member
Goal: 22

1.1.2 Percentage of counties with a minimum of two fully-accredited full-time equivalent staff members
Goal: 83%

5.2.1.2 Number of Purple Star designated school districts in the state
Goal: 15

6.2 Establish facilities, infrastructure, personnel, and procedures in advance of the transfer date to prevent any degradation of performance

4.2.1 Number of counties with a Community Veteran Engagement Board or similar body
Goal: 35

2.2.6 Number of partnered organizations in the coalition using "Ask The Question" Suicide Prevention Campaign
Goal: 5

2.1.1 Percentage of counties in which Veterans have access to county-wide transport three days per week
Goal: 61%

5.2.1.3 Percentage of schools zoned for military installations with a score \geq the state average in ELA and math
Goal: 67%

6.3 Incrementally shift responsibility by function as conditions are established

2.2.7 Number of Palmetto Pathfinders trained and available to connect with Veterans
Goal: 166

4.3.1 Percentage of counties with a functional Veteran Treatment Court
Goal: 26%

Closing Remarks

