SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
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AGENDA

Full Education Oversight Committee Meeting

Monday, April 12, 2021
Blatt Building, Room 110
1:00 P.M.

I. Welcome .....Ellen Weaver

II. Approval of Full Committee Minutes, February 8, 2021 .....Ellen Weaver

III. Subcommittee Reports:
Academic Standards & Assessments .....Neil Robinson

Action Item:
Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Report..... Dr. Kevin Andrews
Information Item:
Remote Learning Data Update ..... Matthew Ferguson

Strategic Planning Update ..... Dr. Bob Couch

IV. Presentations:

Superintendent's Update.....The Honorable Molly Spearman
SC State Superintendent

eLearning Final Report..... Dr. Lee D'Andrea

South Carolina Early Learning Extension..... Georgia Mjartan & Chelsea Richards
Office of First Steps to Readiness
Dr. David Mathis & Dan Ralyea
State Department of Education

V. Information Item:

EOC's 2021 Annual Report ..... Dana Yow

VI. Adjournment

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

February 8, 2021

Members Present (in-person or remote): Ellen Weaver, Chair; Rep. Terry Alexander; April Allen (remote); Rep. Neal Collins; Dr. Bob Couch, Rep. Raye Felder; Barbara Hairfield (remote); Sen. Kevin Johnson (remote); Sidney Locke (remote); Dr. Brian Newsome; Neil Robinson (remote); Jamie Shuster (remote); Patti Tate (remote); and Dr. Scott Turner

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Matthew Ferguson; Dr. Valerie Harrison; Hope Johnson-Jones; Dr. Rainey Knight; and Dana Yow.

Guests Present: Dr. David Mathis, SCDE; Dr. Lee D'Andrea; Dr. Christine DiStefano.

Ms. Weaver welcomed members and guests to the meeting. The minutes of the December 15, 2020, EOC meeting were approved and seconded. Ms. Weaver asked Mr. Robinson to present the report of the ASA and Public Awareness subcommittees. Mr. Robinson asked Mr. Ferguson to present the Cyclical Review Framework Report, which was also given to the subcommittee.

Following the presentation, Dr. Turner asked if there was discussion about what the size of the gap would be. Mr. Ferguson said the gaps have not yet been determined. Dr. Turner said he wished there was a way to capture more of the Profile of the SC Graduate into the accountability system; we are weak when we measure skills, along with life and career characteristics.

Mr. Hairfield asked where the SCDE is in addressing some of the skills in the profile. Dr. Mathis stated that Stephanie DiStasio and her team are completing a crosswalk of the Profile competencies with the social emotional competencies. The SCDE is ready to come out and print these since they get to the Profile of the Graduate. He described these crosswalks as personalized learning for all grades.

Ms. Hairfield spoke to Recommendation 5 which references data collection. There is a need for a systemic data collection system that would go all the way to postsecondary. Mr. Ferguson reminded Ms. Hairfield of the EIA recommendation for the National Data Student Clearinghouse.

Rep. Alexander asked a question about emphasizing the 5-year graduation rate and asked for more information about the high school credential program. Mr. Ferguson said that we had met with SCDE staff, but we would follow-up with them on the percentage of students who are in the program and who are expected to complete it.

Ms. Weaver stated that she likes that the Profile of the SC Graduate is very aspirational. The reality during COVID is that so many children can't learn basics. We need a bridge of identifying the students who are the furthest behind and move resources forward for those students. There needs to be a strong focus on closing the gaps in the interim.

Mr. Ferguson said we see gaps in remote learning but there was a lot of work that needed to be done prior to COVID. Too many students are not on the path to CCR.

Dr. Mathis talked about the Academic Recovery Plans districts will have to submit. Each will need to develop a plan for ELA and math. Districts will be provided with cut scores for moderate and mild remediation. They must develop strategies and goals for students in each of these areas. It will be a true actionable plan; this is part of what the SCDE is working with Education Analytics on.

Mr. Weaver called upon Dr. Couch to give an overview of the Education Governance Audit. Dr. Couch asked Mr. Ferguson to summarize the audit.

Rep. Alexander asked what would be done with the report. Mr. Ferguson said it was to inform the strategic planning process.

Dr. Christine DiStefano then presented the "Effects of Remote Learning in SC During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Influence on Educators, Students, and Families." The report looked at key stressors on students and teachers, and others across the state

Rep. Felder read a comment aloud from the report; she said the comment from an EL teacher summed up teacher sentiments. The children are very behind, despite the best efforts of teachers.

Rep. Alexander asked if we have done a survey of students. How do we manage what the students are feeling and what they are going through? Dr. DiStefano stated that was a great point and one we should look at. There is no time for children to interact with other kids; it is messing with their psyche.

Rep. Collins stated he is interested in moving forward, specifically the 2021-22 school year. Will there be an opportunity to see what will be coming forward? We should be prepared for what is going to happen as we go forward.

Dr. Couch stated that there is a social emotional toll on students. He sees ongoing mental health issues with students as we come out of this.

Dr. Newsome said he had hired a counselor to work with students. This survey will help us with what our students need. This is a tough time for kids, and the research helps us.

Dr. Mathis said the social emotional piece is huge. When we talk about engagement, what does it look like? Rally has a survey for students; Dr. Mathis said that that might be something Christine can use.

Dr. Lee D'Andrea presented the State Funded Full Day 4K Report.

Dr. Mathis said that the data piece is huge. We have a grant to collect the longitudinal data, to see which programs are getting the best results of all the programs birth to 5. Districts are asking for money to re-engage our youngest learners.

Dr. Lee D'Andrea then presented the eLearning Preliminary Report. She stated that we asked districts to do in weeks what we knew would take years to implement (from eLearning)

Ms. Weaver said she is very thankful for all the work that has been done.

Rep. Collins asked if we anticipate some districts to not be part of eLearning? Dr. D'Andrea said there will be a transition to the SCDE; districts will need to apply to determine their status.

She said there is a potential for some districts to not have eLearning capacity for 2021-22. Perhaps, they haven't learned how to use the LMS with fidelity. Student engagement focused delivery is important. There are still districts sending home paper packets

Mr. Ferguson stated that the EOC used an application and rubric for this process. We would recommend using the same rubric moving forward.

Dr. Turner stated that Greenville is already allowing families to choose virtual for next year. What does eLearning look like over long periods of time in a virtual environment?

Dr. D'Andrea pointed to issues with data quality since districts have discretion in coding hybrid and other options in PowerSchool. There needs to be some idea about what quality looks like in an eLearning environment.

Ms. Weaver inquired about the use of up to five days for eLearning; is this is a State Board of Education regulation?

Rep. Alexander stated he sees opportunities to do some things differently. For us to think we will go back to normalcy, is unreal. This is a golden opportunity to challenge everyone to do things differently, change how we do business for our kids. If we are going to maintain our mindset of where we were last year, we are doing a disservice to our students and teachers. He encouraged members to be serious about doing something different.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE: Academic Standards and Assessments

DATE: April 12, 2021

ACTION ITEM: Report on the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program – Compliance and Assessment Results for 2019-20

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Act 247 of 2018 and Section 12-6-3790(E)(6) of the South Carolina Code of Laws requires the EOC to "issue a report to the General Assembly documenting the impact of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program on student achievement. In addition, the report must include information on individual schools if at least fifty-one percent of the total enrolled students in the private school participated in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program in the prior school year."

CRITICAL FACTS

The attached report includes the following:

- Information on the participation and compliance of schools;
- Information on the 2019-20 academic achievement of students who received grants from the ECENC program; and

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

September 28, 2020	Schools begin uploading student assessment results for school year 2019-20.
October 20, 2020	Collection of student assessment results concludes.
December 30, 2020	EOC staff provided assessment data containing no personally identifiable information.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: Invoice not yet received, maximum possible: $50,000.

Fund/Source: EIA funds appropriated for operation of the agency.

ACTION REQUEST

☒ **For approval** ☐ **For information**

ACTION TAKEN

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

Contents

REPORT ON THE EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN (ECENC) PROGRAM

Compliance and Assessment Results for 2019–20

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Executive Summary

This report is the third annual report on the impact of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program as required by Act 247 of 2018. The ECENC program provides grants and parental tax credits to exceptional needs students attending private schools that meet specific eligibility requirements and that are approved by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). Exceptional SC is a 501(c)(3) that raises and accepts funds and reviews student grant applications. The law defines qualifying students and eligible schools for participation in the ECENC program. The law also specifically requires the EOC annually to:

> issue a report to the General Assembly documenting the impact of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program on student achievement. In addition, the report must include information on individual schools if at least fifty-one percent of the total enrolled students in the private school participated in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program in the prior school year. The report must be according to each participating private school, and for participating students, in which there are at least thirty participating students who have scores for tests administered. If the Education Oversight Committee determines that the thirty participating-student cell size may be reduced without disclosing personally identifiable information of a participating student, the Education Oversight Committee may reduce the participating-student cell size, but the cell size may not be reduced to less than ten participating students. *(Section 12-6-3790(E)(6) of the SC Code of Laws)*

Act 247 of 2018 requires schools participating in the ECENC program to submit to the EOC student test scores that are used to provide program level reports to determine if students participating in the program have experienced measurable improvement.

> (b) student test scores, by category, on national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, for all grades tested and administered by the school receiving or entitled to receive scholarship grants pursuant to this section in the previous school year. The school also shall provide individual student test scores on national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, for any student in grades one through twelve who received a grant from the program during the prior school year. The information must be used to provide program level reports to determine whether students participating in the program have experienced measurable improvement. Students with disabilities for whom standardized testing is not appropriate are exempt from this requirement; *(Section 12-6- 3790(E)(1)(b) of the SC Code of Laws)*

This report, which meets the requirements of Act 247 of 2018, includes the following:

- Information about the process for collecting individual student assessment results used to document the impact of the program on student achievement;
- Information on the participation and compliance of schools;
- Information on the 2019-20 academic achievement of students who received grants from the ECENC program; and,
- State-level information on academic gains from school year 2018-19 to 2019-20 for students who received grants from the ECENC program in 2019-20.

The authors of this report acknowledge that comparisons between the academic performance of students receiving grants from the ECENC program on national assessments and South Carolina public school students with disabilities and their performance on state summative assessments are not ideal because nationally normed data is based on students with and without special needs.

Findings

1. On March 15, 2020, as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, South Carolina schools were closed by executive order. Many schools cited COVID-19 as the reason for not administering assessments to their students in the 2019-20 academic year.
2. Assessment information was provided for 330 students, while a reason for not providing assessment information was provided for 1,096 students.
3. As a measure of school compliance, schools participating in the ECENC program responded to the request for assessment data by providing either assessment information or a reason for not having the information for 1,399 (102 percent) of the 1,365 students who received grants from Exceptional SC in 2019-20.
4. The small number of students with assessment information provided precludes making any judgement regarding the achievement levels of the ECENC student population.
5. Missing assessment information from the 2019-20 school year will also impact the ability to assess student progress to the 2020-21 school year.

Recommendations:

1. The EOC recommends that first time recipients of ECENC grants be asked to provide information for previous year assessments in order to assess student improvement.
2. The EOC will monitor schools failing to report either valid assessment scores or a reason for not providing assessment scores.

3. The EOC recommends that state assessments, including SCREADY and end of course assessments, be made available for administration to South Carolina students in private schools. Until there is a process for such administration of state assessments for private school students, the EOC will highlight student assessment reporting requirements published in the Application Process for School Eligibility to address concerns with the percentage of valid assessments reported (https://eoc.sc.gov/sites/default/files/Documents/ECENC%202020/ECENC%20Manual%20for%2 0SY2020-21.links_.pdf).

Background

Since creation of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program in Fiscal Year 2013-14 through a proviso in the state budget, eligible independent schools participating in the program are required to administer a national achievement test or state standardized tests to determine student progress. Furthermore, when applying to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) for approval to participate in the ECENC program, a school is required to submit summary information of student test scores for all grades tested and administered in the school. The EOC posts school-level summary information based on 10 or more students on its website each year.

Act 247 of 2018 codified the ECENC program into permanent law and created an additional reporting requirement. In addition to school-level test scores being provided and made public, the EOC must evaluate the ECENC program using individual student assessment results to determine the impact of the program on educational outcomes of students who received grants from Exceptional SC. The law specifically requires the EOC annually to:

> issue a report to the General Assembly documenting the impact of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program on student achievement. In addition, the report must include information on individual schools if at least fifty-one percent of the total enrolled students in the private school participated in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program in the prior school year. The report must be according to each participating private school, and for participating students, in which there are at least thirty participating students who have scores for tests administered. If the Education Oversight Committee determines that the thirty participating-student cell size may be reduced without disclosing personally identifiable information of a participating student, the Education Oversight Committee may reduce the participating-student cell size, but the cell size may not be reduced to less than ten participating students. *(Section 12-6-3790(E)(6) of the SC Code of Laws)*

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> both, for any student in grades one through twelve who received a grant from the program during the prior school year. The information must be used to provide program level reports to determine whether students participating in the program have experienced measurable improvement. Students with disabilities for whom standardized testing is not appropriate are exempt from this requirement; *(Section 12-6- 3790(E)(1)(b) of the SC Code of Laws)*

The law requires that an evaluation of the program's impact on student achievement to address the following questions:

- At the state level, how did exceptional needs students who received grants from Exceptional SC under the ECENC program perform academically, both in terms of overall achievement and growth?
- In schools where a majority of students enrolled in the school (fifty-one percent or more of students) received a grant from Exceptional SC, how did exceptional needs students perform academically, both in terms of overall achievement and growth?

Collection of Assessment Data

To maintain student privacy and to ensure the highest level of data security, the EOC contracted with the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (RFA) Office to oversee the collection of the individual student assessment results. RFA was selected because of its mission and work in collecting, storing and safeguarding health, demographic, and other state data. Following is a description of the data collection protocol and compliance.

Data Collection Timeline and Protocol

For schools to submit student information, they must complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) assuring the confidentiality of any and all individually identifiable information shared between the parties. A copy of the memorandum is included in the Appendix A. These MOUs are valid through the 2022-2023 school year.

The timeline of activities for data collection through the secure portal was:

1. September 11, 2020 – Contact information was sent to RFA of individuals responsible for reporting individual student assessment data (Document C of the ECENC Application Process.)
2. September 28, 2020 - RFA opened the portal to receive the individual student assessment data. MOU's were sent to new schools participating in the ECENC program in school year 2019-20.
3. October 30, 2020 – RFA closed the portal for individual student assessment data.
4. December 30, 2020 – RFA sent requested information to the EOC, per agreement.

Only schools that completed the MOU with RFA were given access to the secure portal. Details describing how schools gain access to portal, security of student information in the portal, and the process of entering student assessment information in the portal were presented in the 2019-20 ECENC report, and have not changed.

As in previous years, an official student score report from a test publisher must be uploaded to the portal. Unofficial handwritten or typed assessment data were not accepted. Assessment data submitted without the student's name or testing date visible were also rejected.

Compliance and Analysis of Assessment Data

As required by state law, schools participating in the ECENC Program are required to administer national achievement or state standardized assessments, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) interpretation of the Education Accountability Act prohibits private school students from taking state assessments which include, but are not limited to, SC READY in grades 3 through 8 and end-of-course assessments in Algebra 1, English 1, Biology and US History and The Constitution. Instead, private schools have the flexibility to choose any assessment to measure student performance. Schools that administer national assessments typically select an assessment or assessments that measure reading or English language arts (ELA) competencies and mathematics competencies. Examples of assessments that are used in elementary and middle school grades are the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS). Examples of assessments that are unique to high school are the ACT, PSAT, and SAT.

Exceptional SC provided to RFA a datafile that initially contained a list of 1,477 students in kindergarten through grade 12 who received grants in the 2019-20 school year. Student information was entered into the portal for 1,468 students (Table 1). The number of students with information entered into the portal was a substantial decline from the 2,236 students with information entered for the 2018-19 school year.

Table 1
Number of Children by Grade (K-12) with Information in the Portal.

Grade Level	Number of Students
Kindergarten	7
1	29
2	61
3	84
4	124
5	148
6	168
7	170
8	185
9	149
10	119
11	115
12	109
TOTAL	**1,468**

Source: RFA as provided by Exceptional SC.

The Department of Revenue issued a report on January 15, 2021 in which they report Exceptional SC awarded 1,365 scholarship recipients for the 2019-20 school year, all of which went to students who previously received an ECENC scholarship (Appendix B). EOC staff are in communication with Exceptional SC staff to clarify why there is a difference between the number of student records reported by RFA (1,468) and the number of students reported by the Department of Revenue (1,365). Results of this discussion will be included in an updated report.

RFA populated the secure portal with the name and grade level of each student by school. To reiterate, only schools that completed the data sharing agreement with RFA were given access to the secure portal to upload individual student assessment reports for students whom Exceptional SC verified had received a grant and had attended their school in 2019-20. Schools were asked specifically to upload a score report from a test publisher; therefore, scores obtained from hand-scoring of assessments by school officials or by the classroom teacher were not accepted. Schools that did not provide student scores from a test publisher score report were asked to provide a reason for not providing the information.

Scores from achievement tests that were judged to best align with the content of Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts were recorded. Similarly, scores from aptitude tests that best aligned with the content names Verbal and Non-Verbal were recorded. Although the assessments differ in meaning across publishers, they were treated as if they measure the areas of Reading Comprehension/Verbal Skills and Mathematics Concepts/Non-Verbal similarly: the labels used for the subjects in this report are Reading and Mathematics. When available, national percentile rank scores were reported; in their absence scale scores were reported. Using national percentile rank scores promotes comparability of scores across assessments, because the scores are assumed to be referenced to comparable nationally representative samples of students.

A unique student identifier was associated with each student who received a grant in the 2019-20 school year. The datafile for students who received a grant in the 2018-19 school year was also accessed. When it could be determined that a student in the 2018-19 school year matched a student in the 2019-20 school year, the student record for 2019-20 was assigned the same unique student identifier.

Analysis of Data

In December 2020, the EOC received the datafile containing student records for the 2019-20 school year. These data were in the same format as the file for the 2018-19 school year.

There were 1,468 unique student records from 2019-20, of which 330 (22%) contained assessment information and 1,138 (78%) did not contain assessment information. These percentages are the opposite of the percentages for the 2018-19 school year, where of the 2,236 unique student records, 1,775 (79%) contained assessment information, and 461 (21%) did not contain assessment information. When assessment information was not provided, a reason should have been specified for not providing assessment information.

Table 2 documents the number and percent of the students by grade level with valid information by grade level.

Table 2
Number and of Student With and Without Assessment Information
by Grade Level, 2019-20

Grade Level	Number With Assessment Information	Number Without Assessment Information
Kindergarten	1	6
1	2	27
2	14	47
3	22	62
4	20	104
5	31	117
6	29	139
7	28	142
8	39	146
9	50	99
10	36	83
11	37	78
12	21	88
Total	**330**	**1,138**

The assessments reported are summarized in Table 3. The two most frequently reported assessments were the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment and the PSAT. Approximately 30 percent of all assessments reported were for these two assessments. The MAP assessment is an academic achievement test that is administered to students in kindergarten through grade 12. The PSAT is primarily administered to high school sophomores and juniors.

Table 3

Number and Percent of Assessments Reported, 2019-20

Assessment	Number	Percent
ACT	4	**1**
CTP	20	**6**
Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)	95	**29**
PSAT	102	**31**
SAT	17	**5**
Stanford Achievement Test	45	**14**
Woodcock-Johnson	41	**12**
Other	6	**2**
Total	330	

Of the 1,138 students without assessment results for 2019-20, schools provided specific reasons for not providing results for 1,096 of these students. Table 4 documents that 1,027 students (94 percent) of the students were not administered an assessment as a result of COVID-19. There were 42 students who both did not have assessment information and for whom a reason for not providing this information was not given.

Table 4

Reasons for Not Providing Assessment Information

Reason	Number of Students
No Testing due to COVID-19.	**1,027**
Student not enrolled, or not enrolled for testing.	**18**
School did not assess grade level (includes students in kindergarten and grade 12).	**22**
Parents opted their child out of testing.	**1**
Academic progress was assessed via other means including self-scored by teacher or staff.	**1**
Other	**27**
Total Reasons Given:	1,096
School provided no reason.	42

Compliance

In prior years, the level of compliance was measured by (1) the percentage of students for whom assessment information was provided, and (2) the percentage of students for whom either assessment information or a valid reason for not providing assessment information was provided. As state previously, for the 2019-20 school year, 79% of the student records indicated that the student did not test as a result of COVID-19. For the 2019-20 school year the only measure of compliance presented

is the percentage of students for whom either assessment information or a valid reason for not providing assessment information was provided (Table 5).

Table 5
Summary of Student-Level Compliance

Number of Students (K-12**) Receiving Exceptional SC Grants**	1,365
Number of Students (K-12**) with Valid Assessment Data**	330
Number of Students (K-12**) with Valid Reasons for Not Submitting Assessment Data**	1,069
Percent of Students (K-12**) with Valid Assessment Data or Reasons for Not Submitting Assessment Data**	*102%*

*Excludes 69 students for whom no reason was provided for not providing assessment information, or the reason was "Other".

Data Analysis Methods

The EOC staff analyzed the assessment data to determine: (1) for all students who received a grant from Exceptional SC in 2019-20 and for whom assessment data were collected, how well did students in grades kindergarten through grade 12 statewide perform based on national percentile ranks; and (2) how well did students perform in schools for which at least 51 percent of students in the school received grants from Exceptional SC.

The EOC staff used percentile rank scores when provided. When national percentile rank scores were not available, reports usually provided a scale score; for example, a reported score on the SAT of 540 or an ACT Score of 22 are examples of scale scores. For the ACT, SAT, and PSAT, EOC staff converted scale scores to percentile ranks using conversion tables published online. When national norms were not available, such as in the case with the Woodcock Johnson assessment, the assessment data were not able to be used for analysis.

By reporting information from all assessments as percentile ranks, a common metric is in place; an assumption is made in this process that the national norms for different assessments are comparable – which may not be justified.

Another approach is to convert all percentile rank scores to Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs). NCEs have a mean of 50, and a range from 0 to 100. A student with a percentile rank less than 50 will have an NCE less than 50. For example, a student with a percentile rank of 30 will have an NCE score of 39, while a student with a percentile rank of 70 has an NCE of 61.

Details of why to prefer using percentile ranks and NCEs were presented in the 2019-20 ECENC report and will not be repeated here. Briefly, percentile rank scores can be obtained from any assessment that is nationally normed and the meaning of a percentile rank is consistent across publishers. The limitation of percentile ranks is that they should

not be averaged; the median is the appropriate measure to communicate a typical score. NCEs express scores on a scale from 0 to 100 with a mean of 50, however, the interpretation of these scores is less clear; they can, however, be averaged and subtracted.

Assessment Data of Exceptional SC Students in 2019-20

Statewide Results:

Of all students who received ECENC grants in school year 2019-20, 330 students (21 percent) had valid assessment data collected. Assessment data results for the Woodcock Johnson assessment were excluded because the scores could not be converted into national percentile rankings.

The statewide results are presented in Table 6. The median Reading percentile rank is 49, and the median Mathematics percentile rank is 38; which suggest that the overall academic achievement of ECENC students is similar to students nationally for Reading but lower than students nationally in Mathematics. The mean NCE for Reading is 49.0 for Reading, and 43.6 for Mathematics. The overall Reading achievement of ECENC students appears to be similar to students nationally, but for Mathematics the achievement level appears to be slightly lower. As a reminder: students receiving grants from Exceptional SC all have documented exceptional needs whereas national norms include students with and without disabilities; therefore, lower levels of achievement for ECENC students are not unexpected.

Table 6
All Students in 2019-20

	Reading	Mathematics
Number of Students	256	**257**
Median Percentile Rank	49	38
Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE)	**49.0**	**43.6**

Schools with 51 percent or more students receiving grants from Exceptional SC: There were three schools that had more than 51 percent of their total school enrollment receiving grants from Exceptional SC in 2019-20 and at least 10 students with assessment information. Total school enrollment and the number of grants received was determined using information provided by the schools on their 2019-20 application to participate in the ECENC program. These three schools are:

- HOPE Academy
- Hidden Treasure Christian School
- The Chandler School

Hidden Treasure Christian School administered the Woodcock-Johnson assessment to its students, which does not have national norms. As a result, no summary information is provided for Hidden Treasure Christian School.

A summary of the scores obtained from the schools for which data was available are provided in Table 7. For both schools the median percentile ranks are less than 25 for Reading and less than 15 for Mathematics, and the mean NCEs are less than 35 for both Reading

and Mathematics. These schools appear to serve students whose exceptional need results in lower achievement scores.

Table 7

Reading, 2019-20

School	Students	Median Percentile Rank	Mean NCE
Hope Academy	26	15.5	**28.0**
The Chandler School	38	20.5	**32.6**

Mathematics, 2019-20

School	Students	Median Percentile Rank	Mean NCE
Hope Academy	27	14	**29.4**
The Chandler School	39	9	**22.0**

Gain scores from 2018-19 to 2019-20

Of the 256 students with percentile rank Reading scores for the 2019-20 school year, 200 (78 percent) also had scores reported for the 2018-19 school year. Of the 257 students with percentile rank scores in Mathematics for the 2019-20 school year, 202 (79 percent) also had scores reported for the 2018-19 school year. Based on the small number of students with scores matched for two years, caution must be exercised not to over interpret the results presented here. Even greater caution must be exercised when considering data at the school level, as the numbers of students reported on for each school in the matched student samples are all less than 50.

Tables 9 through 13 document the assessment results for matched students in the schools having at least 51 percent of their students who received a grant from Exceptional SC as well as in all schools in the state.

For all matched students, the median Reading percentile rank in 2018-19 was 58, and the median percentile rank in 2019-20 was 48 (Table 8); the mean NCE in Reading was 53.5 in 2018-19, and 48.8 in 2019-20 (Table 10); and the average NCE gain was 0.3 (Table 12). Again, caution should be used not over-interpret the results based on the small number of students.

For Mathematics, the median percentile rank in 2018-19 was 49, and the median percentile rank in 2019-20 was 38 (Table 9); the mean NCE in Reading was 48.9 in 2018-19, and 43.0 in 2019-20 (Table 11); and the average NCE gain was -5.8 (Table 12)..

No evaluation was made of the pattern of scores over time because the number of students with data matched for 2018-19 and 2019-20 was too small.

Table 8

Median Reading Scores for All Students in 2019-20 and for Students with Data in Both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (Matched Students)

School	Matched Student		
	Students	Median Percentile Rank	
		2018-19	**2019-20**
Hope Academy	19	18	**18**
The Chandler School	34	46	**20.5**
All Schools	**200**	**58**	**48**

Table 9

Median Mathematics Scores for All Students in 2019-20 and for Students with Data in Both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (Matched Students)

School	Matched Students		
	Students	Median Percentile Rank	
		2018-19	**2019-20**
Hope Academy	21	29	**20**
The Chandler School	34	33.5	**9**
All Schools	202	49	**38**

Table 10

Mean Reading NCE Scores for All Students in 2019-20 and for Students with Data in Both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (Matched Students)

School	Matched Students		
	Students	Mean	
		2018-19	**2019-20**
HOPE Academy	19	31.7	**31.9**
The Chandler School	34	46.4	**33.5**
All Schools	200	53.5	**48.8**

Table 11

Mean Mathematics NCE Scores for All Students in 2019-20 and for Students with Data in Both 2018-19 and 2019-20 (Matched Students)

School	Matched Students		
	Students	Mean	
		2018-19	**2019-20**
HOPE Academy	21	34.3	**32.1**
The Chandler School	34	42.5	**22.1**
All Schools	202	48.9	**43.0**

Table 12

Average NCE Gain Scores for Reading and Mathematics

School	Reading		Mathematics	
	Students	Mean	Students	Mean
HOPE Academy	19	0.3	21	-2.1
The Chandler School	34	-12.9	34	-20.4
All Schools	200	**-4.6**	202	**-5.8**

Findings

1. On March 15, 2020, as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, South Carolina schools were closed by executive order. Many schools cited COVID-19 as the reason for not administering assessments to their students in the 2019-20 academic year.
2. Assessment information was provided for 330 students, while a reason for not providing assessment information was provided for 1,096 students.
3. As a measure of school compliance, schools participating in the ECENC program responded to the request for assessment data by providing either assessment information or a reason for not having the information for 1,399 (102 percent) of the 1,365 students who received grants from Exceptional SC in 2019-20.
4. The small number of students with assessment information provided precludes making any judgement regarding the achievement levels of the ECENC student population.
5. Missing assessment information from the 2019-20 school year will also impact the ability to assess student progress to the 2020-21 school year.

Recommendations:

1. The EOC recommends that first time recipients of ECENC grants be asked to provide information for previous year assessments in order to assess student improvement.
2. The EOC will monitor schools failing to report either valid assessment scores or a reason for not providing assessment scores.
3. The EOC recommends that state assessments, including SCREADY and end of course assessments, be made available for administration to South Carolina students in private schools. Until there is a process for such administration of state assessments for private school students, the EOC will highlight student assessment reporting requirements published in the Application Process for School Eligibility to address concerns with the percentage of valid assessments reported (https://eoc.sc.gov/sites/default/files/Documents/ECENC%202020/ECENC%20Manual%20for%2 0SY2020-21.links_.pdf).

Appendix A

Memorandum of Understanding

for Data Sharing

This Agreement is entered into by Click or tap here to enter text., hereinafter referred to as "Data Owner" and the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, hereinafter referred to as "RFA", collectively the "Parties."

Data Owner and RFA mutually assure each other that they will protect the confidentiality of any and all individually identifiable information shared with or made available to other parties in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232(g), the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other applicable State and federal privacy regulations.

The purpose of this Agreement is for Data Owner to submit the assessment results of students receiving a grant from Exceptional SC to RFA to support the Education Oversight Committee's (EOC) annual report documenting "the impact of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program on student achievement" as required by Act 247 of 2018, Section 12-6-3790(E)(6).

I. OBLIGATIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF DATA OWNER

A. Data Owner shall obtain consent, authorization, or permission from the individuals as may be required by applicable state or federal laws and/or regulations prior to furnishing the individually identifiable information pertaining to an individual to RFA. Such authorizations or permissions shall be furnished to RFA upon request.

B. Provide to RFA with any changes in, or revocation of, permission by the individuals to use or disclose individually identifiable information, if such changes affect RFA's permitted or required uses and disclosures.

C. On an annual basis, provide to RFA via secure portal a copy of the test score sheet of each student who received a grant from Exceptional SC beginning with school year 2019-20 and for each successive school year through 2022-23.

II. OBLIGATIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF RFA

A. RFA will not use or disclose individually identifiable information other than as permitted or required by this Agreement or as required by state and federal law or as otherwise authorized by Data Owner.

B. RFA will use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of the individually identifiable information other than as provided for by this Agreement. RFA maintains and uses appropriate administrative, technical and physical safeguards to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of and to prevent non-permitted use or disclosure of individually identifiable information. These safeguards are required regardless of the mechanism used to transmit the information.

C. RFA will mitigate, to the extent practicable, any harmful effect that is known to RFA of a use or disclosure of individually identifiable information by RFA or its workforce in violation of the requirements of this Agreement.

D. RFA will report to Data Owner, in writing, any use and/or disclosure of individually identifiable information that is not permitted or required by this Agreement of which RFA becomes aware as soon as reasonable, but no more than 72 hours following knowledge of a breach of confidentiality, pursuant to Act No. 284, 2016 S.C. Acts, Proviso 117.

E. RFA will ensure that any agent, including a subcontractor, to whom it provides individually identifiable information, received from, or created or received by RFA, executes a written agreement obligating the agent or subcontractor to comply with all the terms of the Agreement.

III. PERMITTED USES AND DISCLOSURES BY RFA

A. Functions and Activities: Except as otherwise limited in this and any other agreement between RFA and Data Owner, RFA may use or disclose individually identifiable information only for purposes authorized by Data Owners in a separate written agreement or amendment to this agreement, if such use or disclosure of individually identifiable information would not violate any applicable state or federal laws if done by Data Owners themselves. RFA may pass individually identifiable information to any of its subcontractors for use in filling the obligations of this Agreement as long as the subcontractor adheres to the conditions of this Agreement. This includes, but is not limited to, data being sent directly to any subcontractor to be used in data aggregation and quality assurance on behalf of RFA or Data Owners.

B. RFA may make available individually identifiable information, with permission of Data Owners and in compliance with any applicable state or federal laws, to other entities as authorized by Data Owners in a separate written agreement or amendment to this agreement, if such disclosure of individually identifiable information would not violate any state or federal laws.

C. RFA and any of its subcontractors, except as otherwise limited in this Agreement, may use individually identifiable information to provide feedback on quality issues and comparative analyses using data solely from this project or data generated under the data aggregation authority of this Agreement.

D. RFA upon entering into an agreement using individually identifiable information for any of its functions and activities on behalf of this project or in its general operations will make available that agreement to Data Owner or Data Owners upon request.

IV. TERM AND TERMINATION

A. Term. The Agreement shall be effective when signed by both Parties (the "Effective Date"). The Agreement will automatically extend annually on the anniversary of the Effective Date for four additional one-year terms unless either Party elects to not renew and gives thirty (30) days' written notice to the other Party.

1. Termination for Cause: Upon Data Owner's reasonable determination that RFA has breached a material term of this Agreement, Data Owner shall be entitled to do any one or more of the following:

a) Give RFA written notice of the existence of such breach and an opportunity to cure upon mutually agreeable terms. If RFA does not cure the breach or end the violation according to such terms, or if RFA and Data Owner are unable to agree upon such terms, Data Owner may immediately terminate any agreement between Data Owner and RFA which is the subject of such breach.

b) Immediately stop all further disclosures of individually identifiable information to RFA pursuant to each agreement between Data Owner and RFA which is the subject of such breach.

2. Effect of Termination: Upon termination of the contract or upon written demand from Data Owner, RFA agrees to immediately return or destroy, except to the extent infeasible, all individually identifiable information received from, created by, or received by RFA, including all such individually identifiable information which RFA has disclosed to its employees, subcontractors and/or agents. Destruction shall include destruction of all copies including backup tapes and other electronic backup medium. In the event the return or destruction of some or all such individually identifiable information is infeasible, individually identifiable information not returned or destroyed pursuant to this paragraph shall be used or disclosed only for those purposes that make return or destruction infeasible.

3. Continuing Privacy Obligation: The obligation of RFA to protect the privacy of individually identifiable information is continuous and survives any termination, cancellation, expiration, or other conclusion of this Agreement or any other agreement between Data Owner and RFA.

B. Notices. All notices pursuant to this Agreement must be given in writing and shall be effective when received if hand-delivered or upon dispatch if sent by reputable overnight delivery service, facsimile or U.S. Mail to the appropriate address or facsimile number as set forth at the end of this Agreement.

V. MISCELLANEOUS.

A. Data Owner and RFA agree that Individuals who are the subject of individually identifiable information are not third-party beneficiaries of this Agreement.

B. The parties acknowledge that state and federal laws relating to electronic data security and privacy are rapidly evolving and that amendment of this Agreement may be required to provide for procedures to ensure compliance with such developments. The parties specifically agree to take such action as is necessary to implement the standards and requirements any applicable laws relating to the security or confidentiality of individually identifiable information. The parties understand and agree that Data Owner must receive satisfactory written assurance from RFA that RFA will adequately safeguard all Information that it receives or creates pursuant to this Agreement. Upon request by Data Owner, RFA agrees to promptly enter into negotiations with Data Owner concerning the terms of any amendment to the Agreement embodying written assurances consistent with the standards and requirements of any applicable laws. Data Owner may terminate this Agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice in the event RFA does not promptly enter into negotiations to amend this Agreement when requested by Data Owner pursuant to this Section.

C. In the event that any provision of this Agreement violates any applicable statute, ordinance or rule of law in any jurisdiction that governs this Agreement, such provision shall be ineffective to the extent of such violation without invalidating any other provision of this Agreement.

D. This Agreement may not be amended, altered or modified except by written agreement signed by Data Owner and RFA.

E. No provision of this Agreement may be waived except by an agreement in writing signed by the waiving party. A waiver of any term or provision shall not be construed as a waiver of any other term or provision. Nothing in Section 2 of this Agreement shall be deemed a waiver of any legally-recognized claim of privilege available to Data Owner.

F. The persons signing below have the right and authority to execute this Agreement for their respective entities and no further approvals are necessary to create a binding Agreement.

G. Neither Data Owner nor RFA shall use the names or trademarks of the other party or of any of the respective party's affiliated entities in any advertising, publicity, endorsement, or promotion unless prior written consent has been obtained for the particular use contemplated.

H. All references herein to specific statutes, codes or regulations shall be deemed to be references to those statutes, codes or regulations as may be amended from time to time.

VI. OWNERSHIP OF DATA

A. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall be construed as granting RFA any right, title or interest in or to, any license of any data. Ownership of client data remains that of Data Owner.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have executed this agreement effective upon last dated signature.

Click or tap here to enter text.

S.C. Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office

Health and Demographics Division

Rembert C. Dennis Building

1000 Assembly Street, Suite 240

Columbia, SC 29201

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Columbia, SC 29201

Appendix B

2019–2020 REPORT OF EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN PROGRAM

South Carolina Department of Revenue

JANUARY 15, 2021

dor.sc.gov

300A Outlet Pointe Boulevard
Columbia, SC 29210

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CONTENTS

Appendix B

INTRODUCTION

The following report was prepared in accordance with Act 247 of 2018 regarding the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program. The data and information contained in this report are from Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) and were provided by the South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR), the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC), and Exceptional SC.

The ECENC program was reorganized under a proviso in 2016 to better serve South Carolina's exceptional needs students. In 2018, the program was codified under Act 247.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

In concert with Exceptional SC, the SCDOR assists in record keeping, account management, and disbursing grants awarded pursuant to Act 247.

The SCDOR implements and oversees the tax credit for Exceptional SC donors.

The SCDOR develops and implements a process for eligible parents to reserve, apply, and receive the ECENC Parental Tax Credit.

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The EOC determines the eligibility of schools to participate in the ECENC program. Once a school is designated as eligible, it must submit an annual compliance audit to maintain eligibility.

The EOC establishes an advisory committee, including parents, representatives of independent schools, and independent school associations, to provide recommendations to the EOC on assessment reporting and other matters as requested.

EXCEPTIONAL SC

Exceptional SC is a 501(c)(3) that provides scholarship grants to exceptional needs students in South Carolina to attend credentialed private schools.

Exceptional SC fundraises, accepts and reviews student grant applications, and awards scholarship grants based on a number of criteria. Students who are awarded the scholarship must attend a school that the EOC has approved for program participation.

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EXCEPTIONAL SC

Exceptional SC is dedicated to supporting exceptional needs students and families in South Carolina.

To be eligible for a scholarship from Exceptional SC, students must be residents of South Carolina, be eligible to attend a public school, complete an application with proof of disability (Medical/Professional Form or Educator Eligibility Form), and must attend an EOC approved school. Per legislation, scholarships are awarded to incumbents (students who have previously participated in the program) first and then to students who are new to the program.

$4,547,101
total tax year 2019 donations

342
total individual and corporate donors

$13,296
average donation

1,365
total scholarship recipients
(0 new and 1,365 incumbent)

106
total school recipients

13
average scholarship grants per school

$5,120,004
total amount of scholarships disbursed

$3,750
average incumbent scholarship grant

$0
average new student scholarship grant

FY20 Board Members

Mr. Michael Acquilano,
Director, South Carolina Catholic Conference

Mr. Edward Earwood,
Executive Director, South Carolina Association of Christian Schools

Mrs. Betsy Fanning,
Head of School, Trident Academy

Dr. Spencer Jordan,
Director, South Carolina Independent School Association

Mr. Thomas Persons,
President & CEO, South Carolina Technology Alliance

Data provided by Exceptional SC.

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DONOR TAX CREDIT

Individuals and corporations who pay South Carolina taxes are eligible to donate to the Exceptional SC 501(c)(3) scholarship fund. Donations to Exceptional SC are claimed as state tax credits.

South Carolina individuals and/or businesses make a donation to Exceptional SC.

Donors complete the Exceptional SC Donation Form, and Exceptional SC notifies the SCDOR of the donation.

The SCDOR confirms the credit amount, provided the statewide $12 million cap has not been met.

Donors claim the credit amount with their SC income taxes using SC1040TC or SC1120TC (code 057).

Donors are:

- Eligible to claim a dollar-for-dollar credit on state income tax liability
  - (or) Entitled to a tax credit against bank taxes imposed pursuant to Chapter 11, Title 12
- Limited to a maximum credit claim that is 60% of their one-year tax liability
- Not allowed to designate a specific student or school as beneficiary
- Limited by a first come, first served annual statewide cap of $12 million

$4,547,101 donor credits issued	$13,296 average gift per donor	342 individual and corporate donors

38% of the statewide cap met

Data provided by the SCDOR.

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PARENTAL TAX CREDIT

Parents or guardians of exceptional needs students attending eligible schools can apply for a refundable Parental Tax Credit toward their South Carolina income tax bill. Parental Tax Credits can only be claimed for actual out-of-pocket spending on tuition, up to $11,000. There is a statewide cap of $2 million in credits, reserved on a first come, first served basis.

Parents make their payment to an eligible school for an exceptional needs student's tuition.

Parents complete and submit Form TC-57A to the SCDOR to request a Parental Tax Credit. Parents should retain documentation of their child's eligibility for their own records.

The SCDOR confirms the "reservation" of a Parental Tax Credit, so long as the statewide $2 million cap has not been met.

When the family files SC income taxes, the Parental Tax Credit amount is used to complete Form I-361.

$5,337,069 credits applied for

874	272	$7,353
applicants	recipients	average amount per recipient

$2 million credits approved

Data provided by the SCDOR.

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Appendix B

STUDENTS

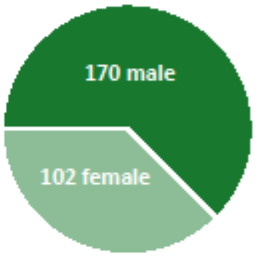
Act 247 calls for reporting demographic and socio-economic data of participants and their families, including the distribution of scholarship funds by income ranges. All information below was reported by applicants.

PARENTAL TAX CREDIT RECIPIENTS

Data reported by applicants on TC-57A (credit application)

Household Income Range	# of Recipients
$0-50,000	17
$50,001-100,000	61
$100,001-150,000	67
$150,001-200,000	36
$200,001-250,000	24
$250,001-300,000	27
$300,001+	40

Ages	# of Students
5-10	104
11-15	132
16+	36
No response	0



$6,204 avg. est. additional expenses from caring for exceptional needs child

2 average number of children in household

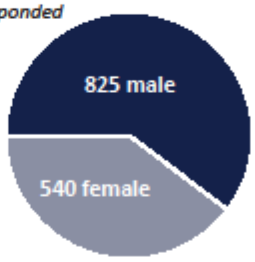
1 average number of exceptional needs children in household

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Data reported by applicants on scholarship application - not all applicants responded

Household Income Range	# of Recipients
$0-50,000	291
$50,001-100,000	367
$100,001-150,000	104
$150,001-200,000	238
$200,001-250,000	87
$250,001-300,000	76
$300,001+	83

*Ages	# of Students
5-10	410
11-15	585
16+	370
No response	0



$6,112 avg. est. additional expenses from caring for exceptional needs child

2 average number of children in household

1 average number of exceptional needs children in household

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Appendix B

SCHOOLS

Schools apply to the EOC to participate in the ECENC program. A list of eligible schools is available on the EOC's website (eoc.sc.gov).

In order to receive an Exceptional SC scholarship grant for an exceptional needs student, the school must: be a private primary or secondary school physically located within South Carolina; not discriminate on basis of race, color, or national origin in their admission of students; use a curriculum which includes courses listed in state diploma requirements; use national or state standardized testing and provide test scores to the EOC; have physical facilities that meet local, state and/or federal laws; be a member of SACS, SCACS, Palmetto Association of Independent Schools, and/or SCISA; and complete an annual compliance audit.

Each year, private schools interested in participating in this program must apply for eligibility with the EOC. This application process helps protect students and families by ensuring schools meet and continue to meet the program eligibility requirements. To be considered for eligibility, a school must initially provide the EOC with: information on the school's eligibility, assessment score data from the previous school year, the number of grants received in the previous school year, a copy of an audit of the organization's financial statements relating to the grants received, and a Statement of Services with information on the services and/or resources exceptional needs students receive and what needs those services are geared toward. School eligibility for participation occurs during the school year. The information provided by the EOC to the SCDOR is based on the fiscal year.

133 eligible schools

35 counties with at least one eligible school

80% of eligible schools received funding

106 schools received funding

Data provided by the EOC and Exceptional SC.

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GRANTS BY SCHOOL

The EOC approved 133 schools to participate in the Exceptional SC program for FY20. The following 106 schools received funding.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL HAVING RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS	NUMBER OF GRANTS ISSUED	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
1. Addlestone Hebrew Academy	**<10**	**$3,850.00**
2. Anderson Christian School	12	$60,500.00
3. Ashley Hall	**<10**	**$44,000.00**
4. Ben Lippen School	29	$84,645.00
5. BEST Skills Academy	**<10**	**$2,860.00**
6. Bishop England High School	53	$205,700.00
7. Blessed Sacrament School	**10**	**$27,225.00**
8. Bob Jones Academy	19	$32,560.00
9. Calvary Christian School - Greer	**<10**	**$22,990.00**
10. Calvary Christian School - Myrtle Beach	<10	$3,905.00
11. Camden Military Academy	**<10**	**$16,500.00**
12. Camperdown Academy	99	$544,335.00
13. Cardinal Newman School	**62**	**$244,860.00**
14. Chabad Jewish Academy	<10	$10,120.00
15. Charis Academy	**<10**	**$6,380.00**
16. Charleston Day School	<10	$11,000.00
17. Christ Church Episcopal School	**63**	**$297,000.00**
18. Christ Our King-Stella Maris Catholic School	14	$48,675.00
19. Clarendon Hall School	**<10**	**$1,100.00**
20. Coastal Christian Preparatory School	<10	$10,461.00
21. Colleton Preparatory Academy	**18**	**$54,450.00**
22. Conway Christian School	<10	$1,320.00
23. Cross School	**<10**	**$15,785.00**
24. Crown Leadership Academy	13	$28,270.00
25. Cutler Jewish Day School	**<10**	**$9,240.00**
26. Divine Redeemer Catholic School	<10	$11,440.00
27. Einstein Academy	**16**	**$41,360.00**
28. First Baptist School of Charleston	<10	$4,900.00
29. First Presbyterian Academy	**19**	**$61,930.00**
30. Five Oaks Academy	<10	$6,875.00
31. Glenforest School	**17**	**$85,250.00**
32. Grace Christian School	<10	$1,265.00
33. Hammond School	**11**	**$54,230.00**
34. Hampton Park Christian School	13	$22,957.00
35. Harvest Community School	**<10**	**$4,125.00**

Data provided by Exceptional SC.

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GRANTS BY SCHOOL

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL HAVING RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS	NUMBER OF GRANTS ISSUED	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
36. Hawthorne Christian Academy	<10	$3,025.00
37. Heathwood Hall Episcopal School	13	$45,545.00
38. Heritage Academy	<10	$2,200.00
39. Hidden Treasure Christian School	33	$181,500.00
40. Hilton Head Christian Academy	21	$86,790.00
41. Hilton Head Preparatory School	<10	$31,680.00
42. Holy Trinity Catholic School	<10	$30,800.00
43. HOPE Academy	53	$241,516.00
44. Hope Christian Academy	<10	$31,570.00
45. John Paul II Catholic School	11	$36,080.00
46. Laurence Manning Academy	<10	$4,180.00
47. Lowcountry Preparatory School	<10	$2,970.00
48. Mason Preparatory School	<10	$20,020.00
49. Mead Hall Episcopal School	<10	$8,360.00
50. Miracle Academy Preparatory School	35	$115,500.00
51. Mitchell Road Christian Academy	12	$24,750.00
52. Montessori Academy of Spartanburg	<10	$1,320.00
53. Montessori School of Anderson	<10	$3,300.00
54. Montessori School of Mauldin	<10	$10,450.00
55. Nativity Catholic School	<10	$16,280.00
56. New Covenant School	<10	$5,280.00
57. Newberry Academy	<10	$10,285.00
58. North Myrtle Beach Christian School	<10	$2,310.00
59. Northside Christian Academy	12	$14,790.00
60. Oakbrook Preparatory School	13	$39,340.00
61. Oconee Christian Academy	<10	$11,220.00
62. Orangeburg Preparatory Schools, Inc.	<10	$6,985.00
63. Our Lady of Peace Catholic School	14	$22,165.00
64. Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School	13	$44,600.00
65. Palmetto Christian Academy - Mt. Pleasant	<10	$23,273.00
66. Pee Dee Academy	<10	$14,850.00
67. Porter-Gaud	<10	$16,500.00
68. Prince of Peace Catholic School	<10	$15,785.00
69. Ridge Christian Academy	19	$45,375.00
70. Sandhills School	57	$313,500.00
71. Southside Christian School	67	$286,665.00

Data provided by Exceptional SC.

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Appendix B

GRANTS BY SCHOOL

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL HAVING RECEIVED SCHOLARSHIP GRANTS	NUMBER OF GRANTS ISSUED	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
72. Spartanburg Day School	**19**	**$80,080.00**
73. St. Andrew Catholic School	18	$52,827.00
74. St. Anne Catholic School - Rock Hill	**15**	**$54,230.00**
75. St. Anne-St. Jude Catholic School - Sumter	<10	$3,080.00
76. St. Anthony Catholic School - Florence	**<10**	**$17,160.00**
77. St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School	<10	$25,245.00
78. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic High School	**<10**	**$11,660.00**
79. St. Francis by the Sea Catholic School	<10	$17,160.00
80. St. Gregory the Great Catholic School	**<10**	**$8,800.00**
81. St. John Catholic School - Charleston	20	$84,050.00
82. St. John's Christian Academy	**13**	**$21,615.00**
83. St. Joseph Catholic School - Anderson	<10	$6,050.00
84. St. Joseph Catholic School - Columbia	**17**	**$38,940.00**
85. St. Joseph's Catholic School - Greenville	39	$140,390.00
86. St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic School	**<10**	**$11,660.00**
87. St. Michael Catholic School	<10	$2,750.00
88. St. Peter's Catholic School - Beaufort	**<10**	**$2,090.00**
89. St. Peter's Catholic School - Columbia	<10	$16,170.00
90. Step of Faith Christian Academy	**<10**	**$880.00**
91. Summerville Catholic School	<10	$10,230.00
92. Sumter Christian School	**<10**	**$3,190.00**
93. Tabernacle Christian School	<10	$1,045.00
94. The Barclay School	**<10**	**$35,000.00**
95. The Chandler School	43	$253,000.00
96. The Charleston Catholic School	**24**	**$72,935.00**
97. The King's Academy	21	$66,335.00
98. Thomas Hart Academy	**<10**	**$9,075.00**
99. Thomas Heyward Academy	<10	$12,320.00
100. Thomas Sumter Academy	**<10**	**$9,570.00**
101. Timmerman School	<10	$7,040.00
102. Trident Academy	**23**	**$126,500.00**
103. Trinity Christian Educational School	<10	$3,410.00
104. Walnut Grove Christian School	**<10**	**$9,510.00**
105. Westminster Catawba Christian School	14	$49,775.00
106. Westside Christian Academy	**<10**	**$3,410.00**

Data provided by Exceptional SC.

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DATA BY COUNTY

The chart below provides the number of eligible schools, Exceptional SC scholarship grant recipients, and Parental Tax Credit recipients by county. For FY20, 11 of South Carolina's 46 counties did not have an eligible school participate in the program.

SC County	# of Grant Recipients	# of Credit Recipients	# of Eligible Schools
Abbeville	<10	0	0
Aiken	27	<10	3
Allendale	0	0	0
Anderson	41	<10	5
Bamberg	0	0	0
Barnwell	0	0	0
Beaufort	51	<10	8
Berkeley	80	<10	5
Calhoun	<10	<10	<3
Charleston	174	19	18
Cherokee	<10	0	<3
Chester	<10	0	<3
Chesterfield	<10	0	<3
Clarendon	<10	<10	3
Colleton	17	0	<3
Darlington	13	<10	<3
Dillon	<10	0	<3
Dorchester	15	0	3
Edgefield	<10	0	<3
Fairfield	<10	<10	<3
Florence	23	0	3
Georgetown	<10	<10	<3
Greenville	435	146	21

SC County	# of Grant Recipients	# of Credit Recipients	# of Eligible Schools
Greenwood	<10	0	<3
Hampton	0	0	<3
Horry	26	<10	8
Jasper	13	0	3
Kershaw	16	<10	<3
Lancaster	0	<10	<3
Laurens	<10	<10	0
Lee	0	0	0
Lexington	48	12	4
Marion	<10	0	<3
Marlboro	0	0	0
McCormick	0	0	0
Newberry	<10	<10	<3
Oconee	<10	<10	3
Orangeburg	<10	0	<3
Pickens	16	<10	<3
Richland	211	29	13
Saluda	0	0	0
Spartanburg	61	14	5
Sumter	17	<10	5
Union	0	0	0
Williamsburg	<10	0	0
York	28	<10	4

Data provided by Exceptional SC (grant recipients), the SCDOR (credit recipients), and the EOC (schools).

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CONTACTS

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Appendix B

COMPILED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND

June 30, 2020

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June 30, 2020

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To Management
SC Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children
Columbia, South Carolina

Management is responsible for the accompanying financial statements of South Carolina Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Fund (the *"Organization"*), which comprise the statement of assets, liabilities, and net assets - modified cash basis as of June 30, 2020 and the related statements of revenue and expenses and functional expenses - modified cash basis for the year then ended and the related notes to the financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting, and for determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable financial reporting framework. We have performed a compilation engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. We did not audit or review the financial statements, nor were we required to perform any procedures to verify the accuracy or the completeness of the information provided by management. We do not express an opinion, a conclusion, nor provide any form of assurance on these financial statements.

We draw attention to Note A of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of Amerira.

We are not independent with respect to the Organization.

Columbia, South Carolina
January 14, 2021

The Hobbs Group, P.A.

Appendix B

COMPILED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND
June 30, 2020

ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents		$ 152,176
	Total Current Assets	152,176
	TOTAL ASSETS	$ 152,176
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		$ 62,000
	Total Liabilities	62,000
Net Assets		
Without donor restrictions		(213,776)
With donor restrictions		303,952
	Total Net Assets	90,176
	TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	$ 152,176

See accountants' compilation report and notes to the financial statements.

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STATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUES AND EXPENSES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND
For the Year Ended June 30, 2020

	Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT			
Contributions		$ 2,769,930	$ 2,769,930
Investment income	(152)		(152)
Net assets released from restrictions	5,258,201	(5,258,201)	-
Total Revenues and Other Support	5,258,049	(2,488,271)	2,769,778
EXPENSES			
Program services	5,392,326		5,392,326
Management and general	137,829		137,829
Fundraising			-
Total Expenses	5,530,155	-	5,530,155
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(272,106)	(2,488,271)	(2,760,377)
Net assets at beginning of year	58,330	2,792,223	2,850,553
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	$ (213,776)	$ 303,952	$ 90,176

See accountants' compilation report and notes to the financial statements.

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STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND
For the Year Ended June 30, 2020

	Program Services	Supporting Services: Management and General	Supporting Services: Fundraising	Total
Awards and grant scholarships	$ 5,199,350			$ 5,199,350
Salaries and wages		$ 42,000		42,000
Payroll taxes		3,694		3,694
Office		3,938		3,938
Contract services	192,976	63,189		256,165
Professional and legal fees		20,206		20,206
Bank fees		3,302		3,302
Meals & Entertainment		1,500		1,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	$ 5,392,326	$ 137,829	$ 0	$ 5,530,155

See accountants' compilation report and notes to the financial statements.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND
June 30, 2020

NOTE A -- NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Nature of Activities

South Carolina Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Fund (the "Organization") was incorporated in South Carolina on June 16, 2016. The Organization's mission is to provide scholarship grants to K through 12th grade "exceptional needs" children by means of the efficient implementation of the South Carolina State Budget Proviso (the *"Proviso"* or *"Program"*). The Proviso is also commonly referred to as the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC).

South Carolina Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Fund is the sole organization distributing scholarship grants as defined under the terms of the Proviso. Activities of the Organization are limited to accepting contributions eligible for a tax credit under the terms of the Proviso and issuing scholarships to eligible children in accordance with the Proviso. The Organization shall be governed by five directors, two appointed by the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, one of which is based upon the recommendation of the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools and one which is based upon the recommendation of the Diocese of Charleston, two appointed by the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee based upon the recommendations of the South Carolina Independent Schools Association and one appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Palmetto Association of Independent Schools. The directors of the fund, along with the Director of the South Carolina Department of Revenue (the "Department"), shall designate an executive director of the fund. The Department may expend up to two percent of the fund for administration and related costs. For purposes of this calculation the "fund" is defined as the total contributions for the fiscal year, net of the returned payments, plus any investment income earned for that year. The Organization may not expend public funds to administer the program. The Organization engages in no other activities outside the purposes reasonably contemplated by the Proviso.

In an act dated and signed May 14, 2018, the Governor signed into permanent law by adding section 12-6-3790 to provide definitions and to create the ECENC which sets limits for tax credits available and the way the scholarships should be awarded.

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Accounting: The financial statements of the Organization are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). Management has determined that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the presentation of the Organization's financial statements.

Basis of Presentation: The Organization classifies its resources for accounting and reporting purposes into two classes of net assets, according to externally imposed restrictions:

> *Net assets without donor restrictions*: The portion of the net assets of the Organization that can be used subject only to the broad limits resulting from the nature of the Organization,

Appendix B

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND

NOTE A -- NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
- Continued

the environment in which it operates, and the purposes specified in its bylaws. The Organization has the ability to choose when using these resources.

Net assets with donor restrictions: The portion of net assets of the Organization that is subject to either donor-imposed time restrictions or donor-imposed purpose restrictions. These restrictions limit the Organization's choices when using these resources as the Organization has a fiduciary responsibility to the donors to follow their instructions.

Cash and Cash Equivalents: The Organization considers all highly liquid investments available for current use with an initial maturity of three months or less, to be cash equivalents. The carrying value of cash approximates fair value because of the short maturities of these financial instruments.

Contributions: Contributions received are recorded as net assets with or without donor restricted support, depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor restrictions. All donor-restricted support is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the nature of the restriction. When a restriction expires or the purpose of the restriction is satisfied net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Estimates: The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets, liabilities and changes therein, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates. The significant estimate in these financial statements is the functional allocation of expenses.

Functional Allocation of Expenses: Management estimates the Organization's indirect expenses on a functional basis. Management's estimates of other indirect costs are based on pro-rated percentages as determined by management. Expenses that can be identified with a specific program or supporting service are charged directly to the program or supporting service.

Income Taxes: The Organization has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) indicating it is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is subject to federal income tax only on net unrelated business income. Management has determined that the Organization has no current obligations for unrelated business income tax. Accordingly, no provisions for federal and state income taxes are required.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND

NOTE A -- NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
- Continued

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to evaluate tax positions taken by the Organization and recognize a tax liability (or asset) if the Organization has taken an uncertain position that more likely than not would not be sustained upon examination by the IRS. Management has analyzed the tax positions taken by the Organization, and has concluded that as of June 30, 2020, there are no uncertain positions taken or expected to be taken that would require recognition of a liability (or asset) or disclosure in the financial statements. The Organization is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdiction; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress.

Donor-Imposed Restrictions: The Organization limits any donor-imposed restrictions on contributions to those allowed by the Proviso so that the contribution will be eligible for a tax credit. In order for contributions to be eligible for a tax credit, the Proviso prohibits donors from designating a specific child or school as the beneficiary of the contribution. The Organization does not accept contributions designated for the benefit of a specific child or school.

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program: The 2019-2020 South Carolina State Budget New law act 247 approved by the Governor, allows for the issuance of a total of $12,000,000 in individual scholarship grants in an amount not exceeding $11,000 (as may be adjusted) or the total cost of tuition (whichever is less). These funds may be used for tuition, transportation or textbook expenses for eligible "exceptional needs" children attending approved South Carolina independent schools. Before awarding any grant, the fund must receive written documentation from the qualifying student's parent or guardian documenting that the qualifying student is an exceptional needs child. Upon approving the application, the fund must issue a check to the eligible school in the name of the qualifying student within either thirty days upon approval of the application or thirty days of the start of the school's semester.

In the event that the qualifying student leaves or withdraws from the school for any reason before the end of the semester or school year and does not reenroll within thirty days, then the eligible school must return a prorated amount of the grant to the fund based on the number of days the qualifying student was enrolled in the school during the semester or school year within sixty days of the qualifying student's departure.

The Organization may not award grants solely for the benefit of one school. The Department may not release any personally identifiable information pertaining to students or donors or use information collected about donors, students, or schools for financial gain. The Department shall develop a process to prioritize the awarding of grants to eligible incumbent grant recipients at eligible schools.

The Provisos & Law also limit the Organization to administrative and related expenses of not more than 2% of the fund.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND

NOTE A -- NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES
- Continued

New Accounting Pronouncements: The Agency is subject to the provisions of the Revenue From Contracts with Customers topic of the FASB ASU 2014-09. ASU 2014-09 amends the existing accounting standards for revenue recognition. The new standard provides guidance for (i) all revenue arising from contracts with customers and (ii) provides a model for the measurement and recognition of gains and losses on the sale of certain nonfinancial assets, such as property, including real estate. The standard is effective for the year ended June 30, 2020; however, there is no effect on the financial statements as a result of the new pronouncement.

In August 2018, the FASB issued ASU 2018-08, Not-For-Profit Entities: Clarifying the Scope and the Accounting Guidance for Contributions Received and Contributions Made. ASU 2018-08 provides guidance on determining whether a transaction should be accounted for as a contribution or as an exchange transaction. It also provides better guidance on determining whether a contribution is conditional. The standard is effective for the year ended June 30, 2020; however, there is no effect on the financial statements as a result of the new pronouncement.

Subsequent Events: Subsequent events have been evaluated through January 14, 2021, which represents the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

NOTE B -- CONCENTRATION OF CREDIT RISK

The Organization maintains cash balances that at times, may exceed amounts insured. Accounts at each financial institution are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC insured) up to $250,000 for bank and certificate of deposit balances. The Organization believes it is not exposed to any significant credit risk on its cash balances. The bank balances consist of the following at June 30, 2020:

Cash and cash equivalents on deposit insured by the FDIC	$ 152,176
	$ 152,176

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN FUND

NOTE C -- NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

A summary of temporarily restricted net assets is as follows at June 30, 2020:

Restricted to scholarship grants for eligible "exceptional needs" children enrolled at approved South Carolina independent schools	$ 303,952

NOTE D -- LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

The following table reflects the Organization's financial assets as of June 30, 2020, reduced by amounts not available for general expenditure within one year. Financial assets are considered unavailable when illiquid or not convertible to cash within one year, or because the Organization has set aside the funds for a specific contingency reserve. Board designations could be drawn upon if the Board approves that action.

	2020
Financial assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 152,176
Total Financial Assets	152,176
Less those unavailable for general expenditure within one year, due to:	
Funds with donor restrictions	(303,952)
FINANCIAL ASSETS AVAILABLE TO MEET CASH NEEDS FOR GENERAL EXPENDITURES WITHIN ONE YEAR	$ (151,776)

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The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
If you have questions, please contact the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) staff for additional information. The phone number is 803.734.6148. Also, please visit the EOC website at www.eoc.sc.gov for additional resources.

Part 3: Analysis of South Carolina's Fall-to-Winter 2021 NWEA MAP Formative Data

Key Findings

1. Less than 3 out of 10 South Carolina students in grades 3 through 8 are projected to meet grade level proficiency in mathematics and ELA/reading.
2. Fall-to-winter growth is far below what is expected by normed growth projections in all grades for reading and in all grades except 5 and 8 in mathematics.
3. While the overall COVID slide has been most dramatic in mathematics, Cohort percentile declines in fall-to-winter were most dramatic in reading.
4. Achievement gaps do not appear to have widened during fall-to-winter 2021. However, vulnerable student populations are likely missing from the sample.

Recommendations

1. Focus on student catch up growth in addition to annual growth.
2. Consider increased academic offerings and the re-organization and addition of instructional time.
3. Emphasize acceleration rather than remediation.

Analysis of South Carolina's Fall-to-Winter 2021 NWEA MAP Data

The South Carolina General Assembly passed Act 142 to authorize the expenditure of federal funds disbursed to the state in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and to specify the manner in which funds may be expended. Section 5 of Act 142 requires districts to administer student assessments in reading and mathematics and directs the EOC to evaluate the pandemic's impact on student learning:

> *(D) School districts are required to utilize the additional instructional days and to assess each student enrolled in 4K through eighth grade in reading and mathematics. The assessment shall utilize a pre- and post-formative assessment from the state-approved list.*
>
> *(E) All students will be assessed during the first two weeks of school to identify students needing additional support and the support to be provided. All students will be assessed again prior to the end of the 2020 Calendar Year to measure the impact of the intervention provided. The results of the pre- and post-assessments must be submitted to the Department of Education which, in turn, must provide the information to the Education Oversight Committee for evaluation of the pandemic's impact on student learning and the impact of the interventions on student learning.*

SOUTH CAROLINA'S FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT DATA

Since the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the closure of schools across the nation in March 2020, education systems have been working to meet the needs of schools, families and students. The effects on student achievement were projected to be far-reaching and exacerbate long-standing opportunity gaps.

The Education Oversight Committee (EOC) worked closely with NWEA, an Oregon non-profit organization that provides MAP Growth assessments, to conduct an analysis of the impact on South Carolina students. MAP Growth was administered by 67 South Carolina public school districts – the most widely used formative assessment in fall 2020 and winter 2021. Formative assessments like MAP Growth are typically given multiple times during a school year and provide educators with feedback to guide instructional decisions. MAP Growth is given to students across the country and provides national norms that compare scores against the performance of a statistically selected group of test takers who have taken the test.

In addition to normative information, MAP Growth results allow for projections of student performance levels on SC READY. These projections are based on a linking study using spring 2019 data to derive RIT cut scores on the MAP Growth assessments that correspond to the SC READY performance levels. A child's RIT scale score measures what students know and their growth over time, regardless of their grade level. The linking study was recently updated to incorporate the new 2020 NWEA MAP growth norms. This

information allows educators to identify students at risk of failing to meet state proficiency standards early in the year.[1]

Summary of Part 1: South Carolina's Fall 2020 Formative Assessment Findings

In Part 1 of the EOC's Review of Remote Learning's Impact on South Carolina's Students, the following findings from the fall 2020 administration of NWEA MAP were discussed at length:

1. On average, 7 out of 10 South Carolina students in grades 3 through 8 were projected not to meet grade level proficiency standards in mathematics and English Language Arts.
2. The COVID slide was most dramatic for students in mathematics and at the elementary level.
3. Although COVID slide declines were not as dramatic as in mathematics, overall South Carolina reading achievement remains low.
4. Significant achievement gaps among historically underachieving students and their higher achieving peers continue to exist but did not appear to have widened during emergency remote learning according to fall 2020 formative assessment results. However, it is important to note that vulnerable student populations may be missing from the student sample.
5. Substantially larger percentages of South Carolina students decreased in their achievement quartile standing from 2019 to 2020, both for reading and for mathematics, though more so for mathematics.

Figures D1 and D2 add to the analysis of the impact of emergency remote learning in fall of 2020. These figures show the total percentage of students in South Carolina within each grade who moved up one quintile or more ("Gainers," green), stayed in the same achievement quintile from one school year to the next ("Maintainers," blue), or moved down one quintile or more ("Sliders," red). The left side of both figures, showing winter 2019/fall 2019 show pre-COVID shifts while the right side of both figures reflect the impact of emergency remote learning, which occurred post-COVID.

In reading (Figure D1), the percentage of students who were Gainers, Maintainers or Sliders was more similar between winter / fall 2019 and winter / fall 2020. However, there were more Sliders in reading in all grades shown, with grades 3 through 5 being the most negatively impacted.

[1] NWEA. (2020). Linking study report: Predicting performance on the South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) based on NWEA MAP Growth scores. Portland, OR: Author. https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/07/SC-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-23.pdf

In contrast, nearly twice as many students moved down a quintile in math this year as compared to the previous year, as shown in in Figure D2. Grades 3 through 6 were the most dramatically impacted with over one-third of students identified as Sliders.

Figure D1. Percentage of South Carolina students who shifted their relative position in the reading test percentile distribution comparing winter 2019 to fall 2019 vs. winter 2020 to fall 2020.

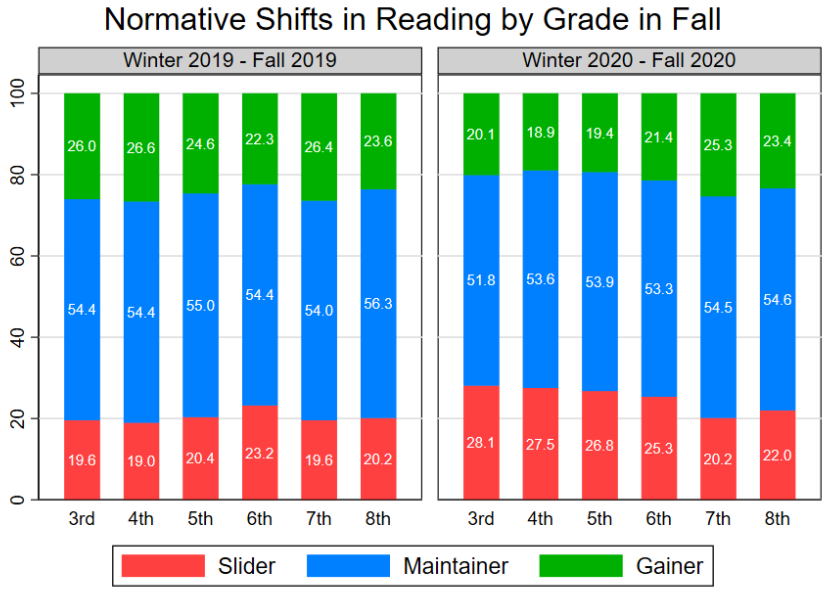
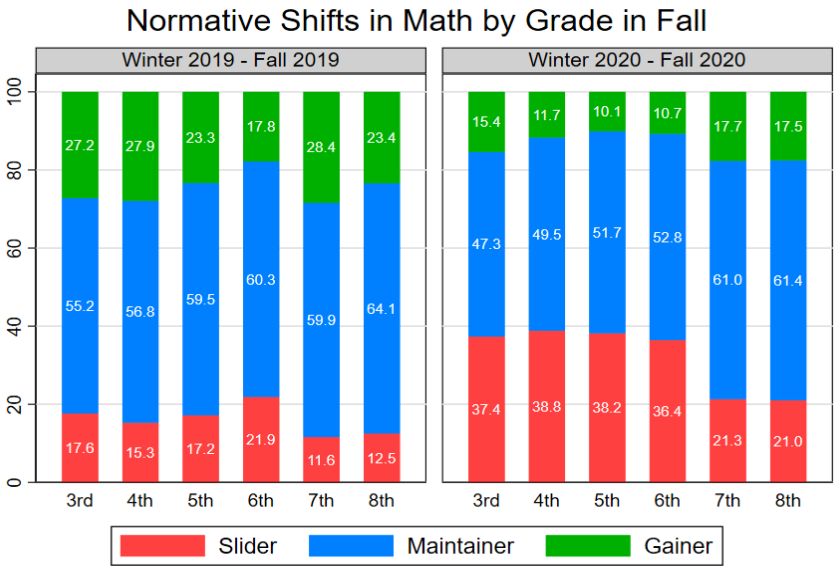


Figure D2. Percentage of South Carolina students who shifted their relative position in the math test percentile distribution comparing winter 2019 to fall 2019 vs. winter 2020 to fall 2020.



Part 3: South Carolina's Students Tested in NWEA MAP Winter 2021

The following analyses are based on a sample of over 230,670 South Carolina students from 67 school districts tested using NWEA MAP in winter 2020. This represents an increase from 224,430 students in the fall 2020 administration of NWEA MAP in South Carolina (see Appendix A).

This increase in the availability of data in South Carolina to inform decision making is an exception to the national trend. NWEA reported that the number of students testing in the winter 2021 session nationally was nearly half of what it was in the winter 2020 testing session. This increase in South Carolina is due, in part, to Act 142 which required districts to administer formative assessments in fall 2020 and winter 2021.

Analyses

Analyses to demonstrate changes in achievement in winter 2021 were conducted using three different measures: 1) the projected percentage of South Carolina students who will be proficient (achieve the level of meets or exceeds) in English/Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics as measured by the SC READY assessments; 2) the median percentile rank of South Carolina students with respect to norms for the NWEA-MAP reading and mathematics assessments; and 3) RIT score gains from fall-to-winter.

The predicted percentages of South Carolina students who meet state standards were obtained for students in grades 3 through 8 using the NWEA linking study.[2] Median percentile ranks are obtained with respect to NWEA MAP national norms and are available for all grades for fall, winter, and spring testing.

South Carolina's Fall 2020 to Winter 2021 Formative Assessment Findings

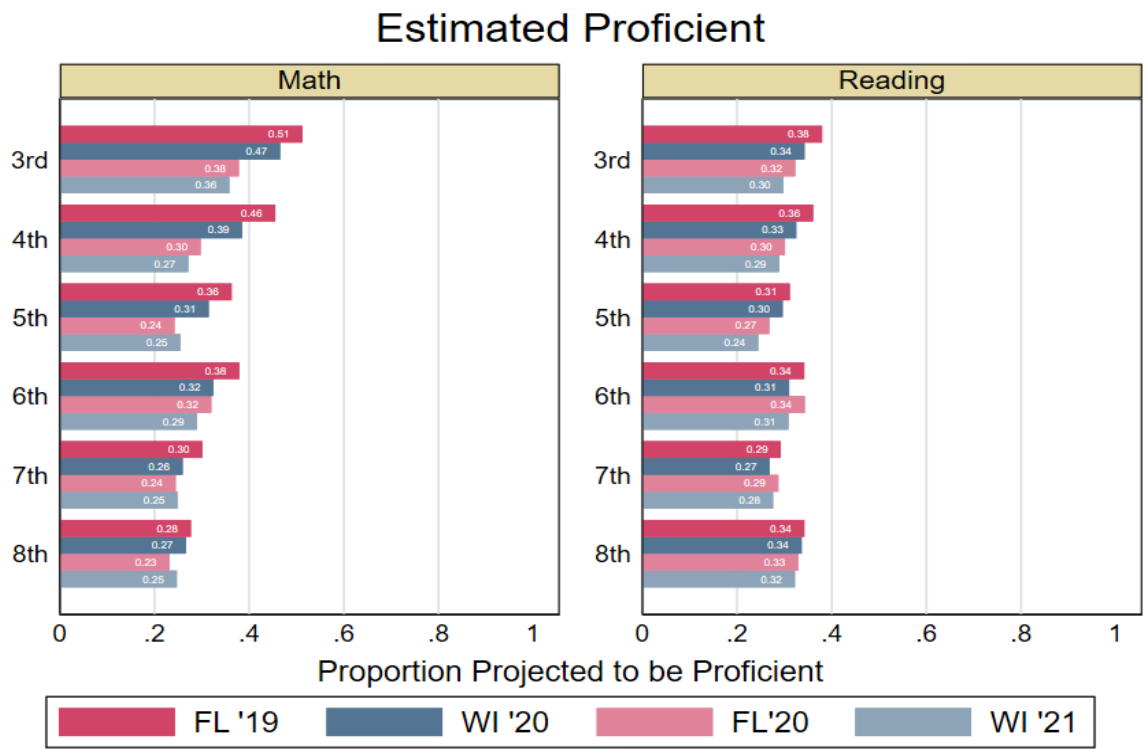
Key Finding: Less than 3 out of 10 South Carolina students in grades 3 through 8 are projected to meet grade level proficiency in mathematics and ELA/reading.

Key Finding: Using projected growth norms, fall-to-winter growth is far below what is expected in all grades for reading and in all grades except 5 and 8 in mathematics.

[2] NWEA. (2020). Linking study report: Predicting performance on the South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) based on NWEA MAP Growth scores. Portland, OR: Author. https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/07/SC-MAP-Growth-Linking-Study-Report-2020-07-23.pdf

Figure D3 presents the percentages of South Carolina students projected to be proficient using NWEA MAP data from fall 2019, winter 2020, fall 2020, and winter 2021. One caution in interpreting these data is that there are differences in the definitions of proficiency by grade level on SC READY.

Figure D3. Percentage of South Carolina Students Projected to be Proficient based on MAP Testing – Fall 2019, Winter 2020, Fall 2020, and Winter 2021



In reading, there is a decrease in the percentage of South Carolina students projected to be proficient in all grade levels based on scores in winter 2021 compared to fall 2020. In mathematics, a decrease in the percentage of South Carolina students projected to be proficient occurs for grades 3, 4, and 6. It should be noted that there are also declines in projected proficiency in winter 2020 compared to fall 2019, a year not impacted by COVID.

The decline in percentage of students projected to be proficient in mathematics is not as large from fall-to-winter 2021 as from fall 2019 to fall 2020. However, only for grades 5, 7, and 8 in mathematics is the projected percent proficient larger in winter 2021 than in fall 2020.

Figure D4 presents the median RIT gains in reading and mathematics for South Carolina students in fall 2019 to winter 2020 and compares those to the median RIT gains from fall 2020 to winter 2021. In reading, the RIT growth experienced by South Carolina students from fall 2020 to winter 2021 is less than the growth experienced by South Carolina students in the same period in 2019-2020, a non-COVID year. In mathematics, students

in grade 3, 4, 5, and 8 have experienced more RIT growth from fall 2020 to winter 2021 than students in the same period in 2019-2020.

Figure D4. South Carolina Median RIT Gains in Reading and Mathematics from Fall 2019 to Winter 2020 and Fall 2020 to Winter 2021.

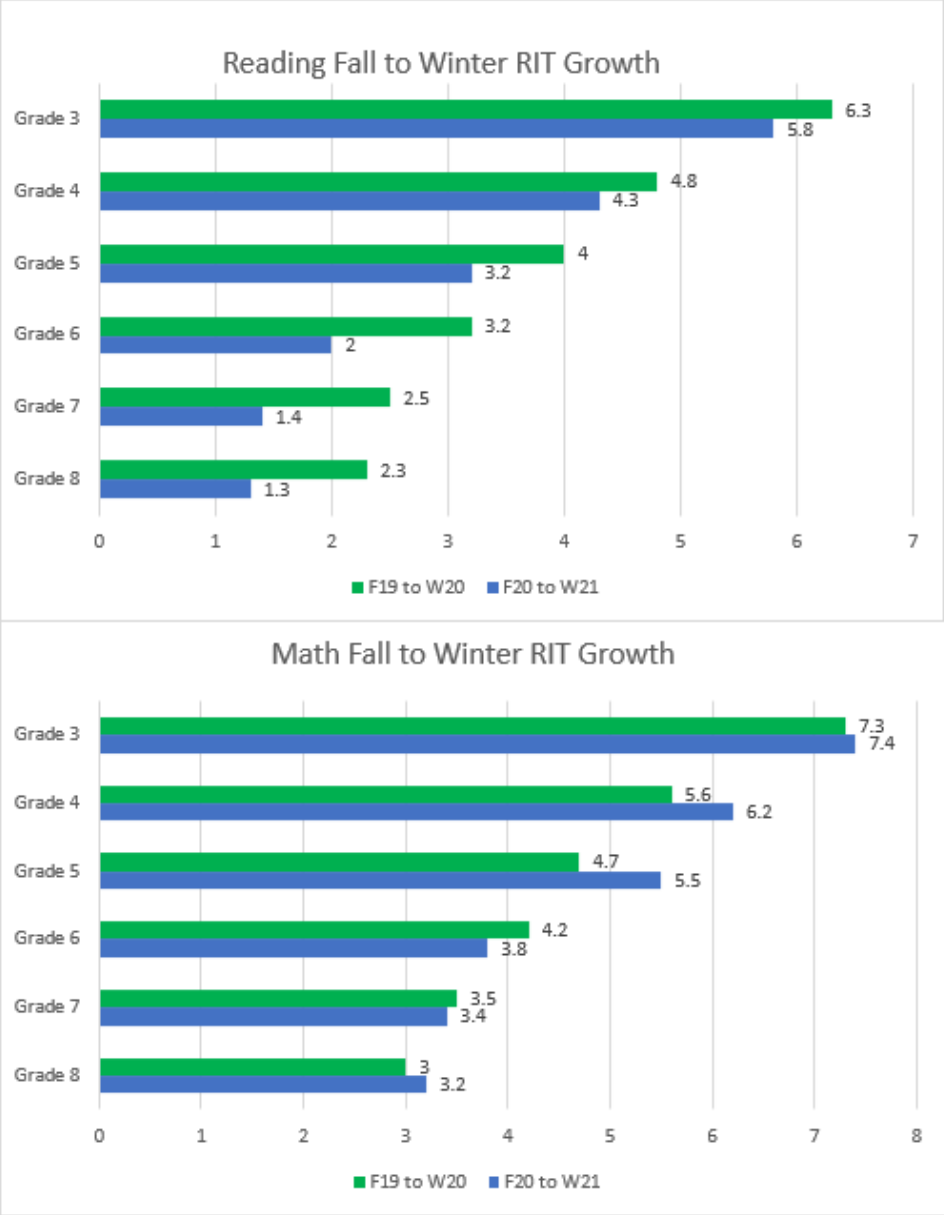
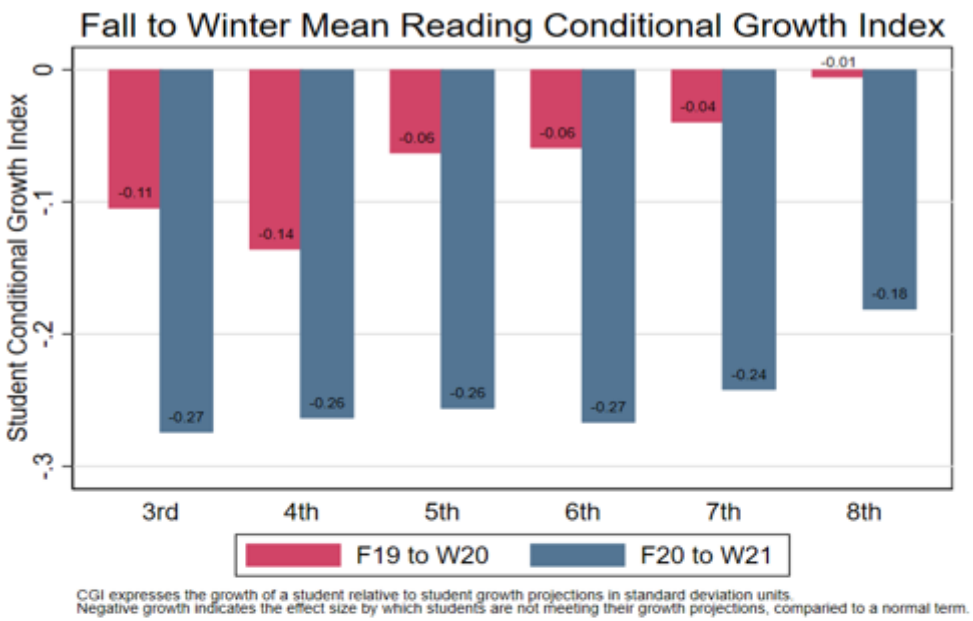
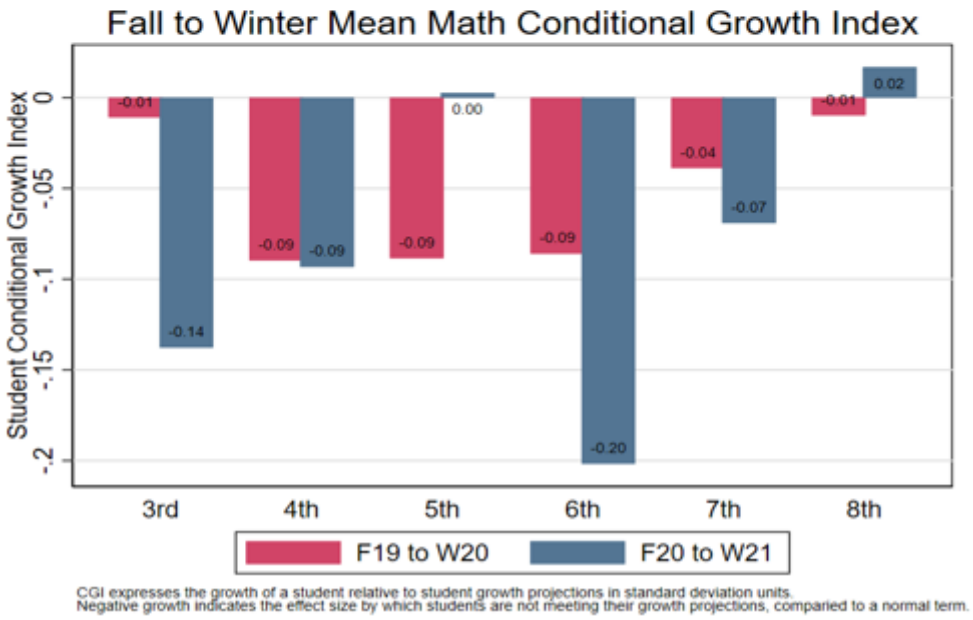


Figure D5 presents the fall-to-winter Conditional Growth Index (CGI). This concept expresses the growth (the RIT gains from fall to winter) of a student relative to student growth projections; in essence, how much individual student growth deviates from the student growth norms This provides the distance a student is from what is expected

relative to other students. In other words, a CGI of 0.0 indicates that a student's observed growth was the same as a student's projected growth. This is the expectation for the overall student population. A positive CGI would indicate that student growth was greater than similar students in the NWEA norm group, while a negative CGI would indicate the opposite.

Figure D5. Fall-to-Winter Conditional Growth Index





In reading, while students had a negative CGI in the prior fall-to-winter, it was about half the effect size as this fall-to-winter. This is an indication that not only were students

starting lower, but they fell short of the projected growth for the term. The CGI in reading of more than -.2 in grades 3 through 7 indicates that student growth was more than two-tenths of a standard deviations below average relative to other similar students.

In mathematics, the points of concern would be grades 3 and 6. In grade 6, the CGI of -.2 indicates that student growth was two-tenths of a standard deviations below average relative to other similar students. As a positive, the average growth in fall 2020 to winter 2021 in grades 5 and 8 are above expected growth.

In summary, actual student growth has lagged significantly behind growth projections, especially in reading at all grade levels and in all grade levels except grade 5 and 8 in mathematics. In other words, students started the school year behind and grew less than expected during the fall, resulting in students being even further behind in winter 2021.

South Carolina's Winter 2021 Cohort

Analyses were conducted using only those South Carolina students who were tested in all administrations from fall 2019 through winter 2021, not including spring 2019 at which time many students did not test due to COVID-19. The following analyses include results from a sample of over 120,766 South Carolina students across 67 school districts (see Appendix B).

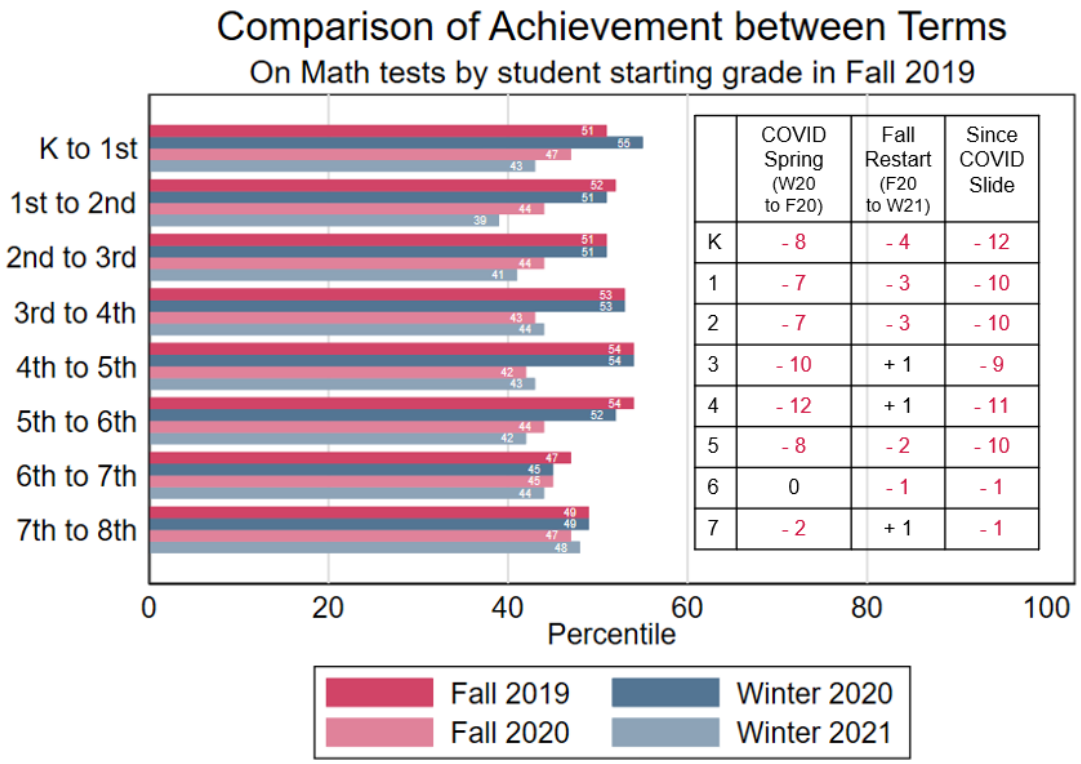
South Carolina's Winter 2021 Cohort Formative Assessment Findings

Key Finding: Cohort percentile declines were most dramatic in fall-to-winter in reading. The overall COVID slide has been most dramatic in mathematics.

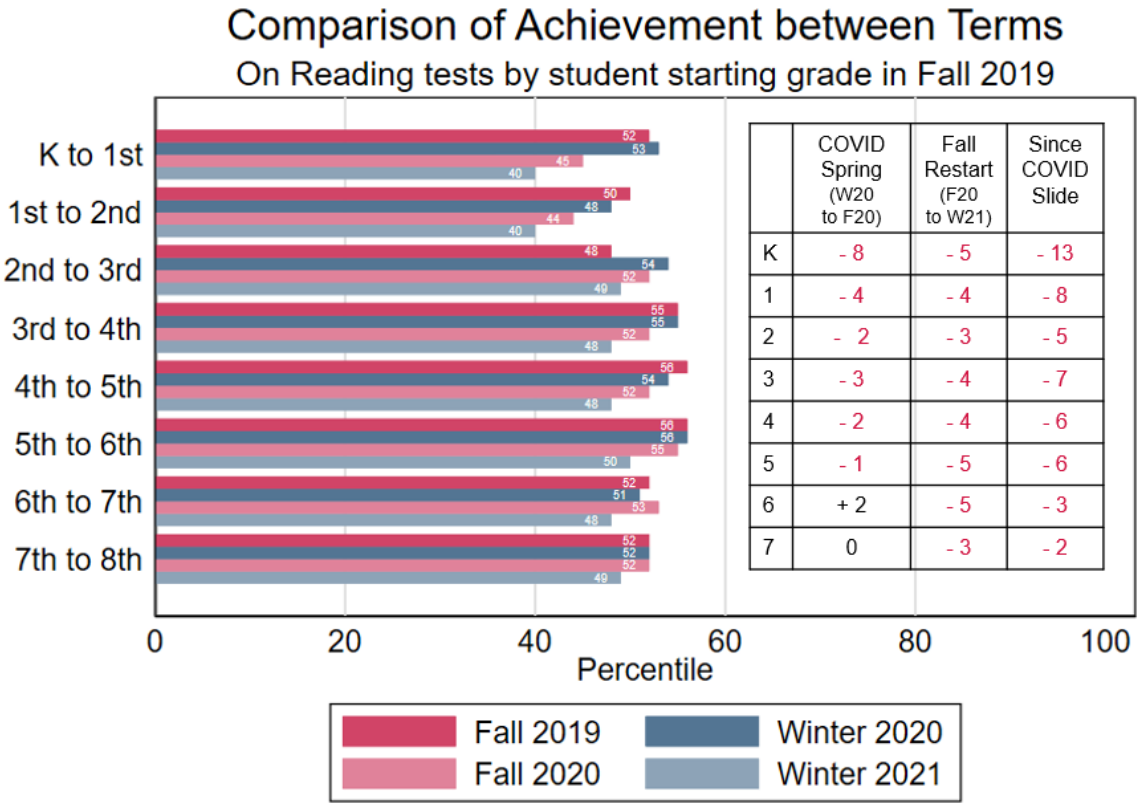
In Figure D6, the median percentile ranks are provided for South Carolina students in the Winter 2021 Cohort. In mathematics, for grades K through 5, the differences between the winter 2020 and the fall 2020 (COVID Spring) median percentile ranks range from no percentile decrease to a 12-percentile decrease. The difference between fall 2020 and winter 2021 (Fall Restart) median math percentile ranks in grades K through 5 range from a decrease of 4 to an increase of 1 percentile. Thus, in mathematics, the largest declines occur in COVID Spring (winter 2020 to fall 2020, with smaller drops in Fall Restart (fall 2020 to winter 2021).

In reading, the largest differences from winter 2020 to fall 2020 are in Kindergarten and grade 1, with a decline of 8 and 4 percentile points respectively. The difference decreases as grade level increases to no difference in grade 7, with grade 6 as an anomaly where the median percentile is higher in 2020 than in 2019. The declines in percentile rank in reading persist between fall 2020 and winter 2021 (Fall Restart) with all grade levels demonstrating a decline, many as large or larger than the decline experienced in the COVID Spring of emergency remote learning. Therefore, reading achievement seems to have neither stabilized nor yet entered a period of recovery.

Figure D6. Median Percentile Rank for South Carolina Winter Cohort



	COVID Spring (W20 to F20)	Fall Restart (F20 to W21)	Since COVID Slide
K	- 8	- 4	- 12
1	- 7	- 3	- 10
2	- 7	- 3	- 10
3	- 10	+ 1	- 9
4	- 12	+ 1	- 11
5	- 8	- 2	- 10
6	0	- 1	- 1
7	- 2	+ 1	- 1



	COVID Spring (W20 to F20)	Fall Restart (F20 to W21)	Since COVID Slide
K	- 8	- 5	- 13
1	- 4	- 4	- 8
2	- 2	- 3	- 5
3	- 3	- 4	- 7
4	- 2	- 4	- 6
5	- 1	- 5	- 6
6	+ 2	- 5	- 3
7	0	- 3	- 2

Student Achievement by Subgroups in South Carolina 2021 Winter Cohort

Key Finding: **Significant achievement gaps among historically underachieving students and their higher achieving peers continue to exist but do not appear to have widened during fall 2020 to winter 2021. <u>However, vulnerable student populations are likely missing from the sample.</u>**

Table D1 presents the median percentile rank in reading and mathematics for five student subgroups of the South Carolina 2021 Winter Cohort: African American, Hispanic, Pupils in Poverty (PIP), Non-PIP, and White. The change in percentile ranking for each of these subgroups between winter 2020 and winter 2021 (the COVID period) is also noted in the table. See Appendix C for student subgroup counts.

Table D1. Median Reading and Mathematics Percentile Rank by Student Subgroup

Demographic	Median Percentile Rank - Reading					Median Percentile Rank - Math				
	F19	W20	F20	W21	W20 / W21 Change	F19	W20	F20	W21	W20 / W21 Change
Grade: 3rd to 4th										
African American	42	42	39	33	- 9	38	37	30	28	- 9
Hispanic	39	40	37	35	- 5	41	43	34	36	- 7
Pupils in Poverty	45	45	42	38	- 7	43	43	34	34	- 9
Non-PIP	72	73	69	68	- 5	71	72	62	62	- 10
White	65	67	62	61	- 6	65	66	54	56	- 10
Grade: 4th to 5th										
African American	41	40	37	31	**- 9**	36	36	29	27	- 9
Hispanic	45	43	41	39	- 4	46	46	36	36	- 10
Pupils in Poverty	46	45	42	38	- 7	43	43	33	32	**- 11**
Non-PIP	73	72	71	69	- 3	73	71	61	65	- 6
White	68	67	64	63	- 4	68	66	54	58	- 8
Grade: 5th to 6th										
African American	41	41	39	33	- 8	36	36	29	27	- 9
Hispanic	44	44	44	38	- 6	47	46	37	36	- 10
Pupils in Poverty	46	46	44	39	- 7	43	43	34	33	- 10
Non-PIP	73	71	69	67	- 4	70	69	60	60	- 9
White	68	67	65	63	- 4	65	64	54	54	- 10
Grade: 6th to 7th										
African American	35	35	36	31	- 4	30	29	30	28	- 1
Hispanic	42	42	44	40	- 2	47	46	37	36	**- 10**
Pupils in Poverty	41	41	42	37	- 4	37	35	36	34	- 1
Non-PIP	70	69	70	68	- 1	65	65	63	64	- 1
White	65	64	63	62	- 2	63	63	59	60	- 3
Grade: 7th to 8th										
African American	36	36	37	32	- 4	31	32	33	33	+ 1
Hispanic	45	46	45	45	- 1	43	42	41	43	+ 1
Pupils in Poverty	41	41	41	38	- 3	38	38	37	38	0
Non-PIP	70	69	68	68	- 1	67	68	64	64	**- 4**
White	65	64	63	62	- 2	63	63	59	60	- 3

Significant achievement gaps among historically underachieving students and their higher achieving peers continue to exist. The difference between the highest achieving subgroup and the lowest in reading ranges from 34 to 37 percentile points depending on the grade level. In mathematics, the achievement gap ranges from 31 to 38 percentile points depending on the grade level. In both reading and mathematics, the percentile rank of the highest achieving subgroup is more than double the percentile rank of the lowest achieving subgroup.

Yet, in most instances, the gaps do not seem to have widened during the COVID period between winter 2020 and winter 2021. For example, see grade 3 mathematics. The decline for African American students was 9 percentile points, 7 for Hispanic students, 9 for pupils in poverty (PIP), 10 for non-PIP students, and 10 for white students. There are a few areas noted on Table D1 in bold where there was a difference of at least 5 percentile points between the subgroup declines: African American students in grade 4 to 5 in reading, Pupils in Poverty in grade 4 to 5 in mathematics, Hispanic students in grade 6 to 7 in mathematics, and Non-PIP students in grade 7 to 8 mathematics.

Caution should be taken against overinterpreting these results. As in the national COVID analysis, students missing from the sample could cause the actual effect of the COVID-19 slide to be underestimated. Preliminary analysis of the South Carolina sample does indicate that fewer students were tested in schools with higher percentages of pupils in poverty and with higher percentages of minority students. Continued monitoring of student data is necessary to determine the impact on the achievement of vulnerable student populations across South Carolina.

Recommendations

Fullan, Quinn, Drummy, and Gardner (2020) have presented the pandemic's impact on education as a three-phase process.[3] Phase 1: Disruption occurred during spring 2020 as the pandemic disrupted schools and shifted instruction to remote learning. Phase 2: Transition was the attempt to reopen schools during school year 2020-21. Phase 3: Reimagining is not a guarantee, but an opportunity to build back better. Intentionally planning for this next phase is what is required of education system leaders now.

Further work will be needed to provide support, increased instructional time, and targeted, high quality interventions to students. There will also be a need to collect and transparently report student data around opportunities to learn as well as academic achievement in order to guide curriculum and instruction and support students. The following recommendations are made in response to the findings of this report related to the impacts of COVID-19 school closures on student achievement but are applicable to other long-term school closures.

[3] Fullan, M., Quinn, J., Drummy, M., & Gardner M. (2020). *Education reimagined: The future of learning*. https://edudownloads.azureedge.net/msdownloads/Microsoft-EducationReimagined-Paper.pdf

1. **Focus on student catch up growth in addition to annual growth.** Each student should be expected to achieve annual growth each year of their schooling experience. Annual growth only results in students maintaining their current level. Unfortunately, looking at the conditional growth index shown in Figure D5, that expectation is not the reality in South Carolina. Worse, given the percentile declines experienced during COVID, if South Carolina students only make annual growth each year, they will never fully recover. Instead, schools will need to work to deliver annual growth plus catch-up growth in order for students to recover and meet grade level standards. **The primary driver of catch-up growth is increased instructional time and high-quality instruction.**
2. **Consider increased academic offerings and the re-organization and addition of instructional time.** The instruction of students who are meeting grade level standards and those students significantly below grade level and requiring catch-up growth must be different. It is only after 2-3 years of comprehensive instruction of more than 200 minutes per day that these students begin to cross the threshold of grade-level performance at the 50th percentile (Fielding, Kerr, and Rosier, 2007)[4].

   District and school leaders should work to analyze school schedules to guarantee that below grade-level students are receiving at least 200 minutes of daily instruction in mathematics and literacy (for a daily total of at least 400 minutes).

   District leaders should also work to reconsider school year calendars. Perhaps the utility of the agrarian educational calendar has come to an end. School calendars could instead be organized to provide 9-week instructional quarters followed by focused periods of acceleration for below-grade level students.

   At the very least, districts should work to provide additional face-to-face instructional opportunities during the summer as well as throughout the school year for below-grade level students to receive the additional instructional time and high-quality instruction necessary to achieve catch-up growth.
3. **Emphasize acceleration rather than remediation.** Remediation is generally not an effective strategy for students who are behind academically. While students are trying to catch up academically, the curriculum continues to move forward leaving students further behind. An alternative to remediation is acceleration: an approach to instruction that has two requirements: 1) paring down the curriculum to focus on the essential content standards, and 2) reducing the amount of time spent on review and instead providing supports to access on grade level mastery of standards.

[4] Fielding, L., Kerr, N., Rosier, P. (2007). *Annual growth, catch-up growth: Annual growth for all students, catch up growth for those who are behind*. The New Foundation Press.

Appendix A

Number of Test Counts in Analysis

Table D2. Number of Reading Tests by Grade and Term

grade	term							
	FL '18	**WI '19**	**SP '19**	**FL '19**	**WI '20**	**SP '20**	**FL'20**	**WI '21**
	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts
K	18091	15420	20373	12682	13131	814	9787	11426
1st	24414	19709	28613	18754	17188	1609	22015	22747
2nd	33677	31057	34025	29592	29614	5088	29737	30416
3rd	33096	28790	33547	31326	25345	5556	26712	27436
4th	34426	26460	34524	31062	23140	5338	26889	27577
5th	34992	31755	35059	32889	30357	5056	27074	27783
6th	33285	20635	31345	33170	20697	4391	26801	27667
7th	30209	18865	28972	33260	20619	4909	27435	27837
8th	28786	26068	27054	30568	24720	4863	27980	28020
Total	270976	218759	273512	253303	204811	37624	224430	230909

Table D3. Number of Math Tests by Grade and Term

grade	term							
	FL '18	**WI '19**	**SP '19**	**FL '19**	**WI '20**	**SP '20**	**FL'20**	**WI '21**
	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts	Counts
K	18256	15126	20742	12600	13226	677	13738	15693
1st	24674	19340	29153	18982	17488	1233	26154	26657
2nd	33976	29914	34220	30365	29719	3249	30033	30398
3rd	33120	25098	33190	31283	23275	3819	26871	27374
4th	34760	26011	34734	31051	22932	4043	27031	27649
5th	34676	31349	34358	32852	29903	4033	27254	27787
6th	32763	20538	30649	33232	20307	2450	27177	27919
7th	30465	18923	28970	33275	20201	3283	27707	28133
8th	29019	26104	27353	30336	24170	3732	27983	28060
Total	271709	212403	273369	253976	201221	26519	233948	239670

Appendix B

Winter 2021 Cohort Student Counts

Table D4. Cohort Student Count by Term – Reading

	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
K	8288	8288	8288
1st	12533	12533	12533
2nd	20708	20708	20708
3rd	20022	20022	20022
4th	19422	19422	19422
5th	20090	20090	20090
6th	19703	19703	19703

Table D5. Cohort Student County by Term – Math

	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
K	8774	8774	8774
1st	13695	13695	13695
2nd	21055	21055	21055
3rd	19865	19865	19865
4th	19973	19973	19973
5th	20586	20586	20586
6th	19792	19792	19792

Appendix C

Student Cohort Subgroup Counts

Table D6. Math Count for African American Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	5667	5667
4th to 5th	5733	5733
5th to 6th	5432	5432
6th to 7th	5337	5337
7th to 8th	5040	5040

Table D7. Math Count for African American Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	5924	5924
4th to 5th	6012	6012
5th to 6th	5945	5945
6th to 7th	5811	5811
7th to 8th	5558	5558

Table D8. Reading Count for African American Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	5965	5965
4th to 5th	5736	5736
5th to 6th	5302	5302
6th to 7th	5265	5265
7th to 8th	4928	4928

Table D9. Reading Count for African American Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	6245	6245
4th to 5th	5975	5975
5th to 6th	5822	5822
6th to 7th	5717	5717
7th to 8th	5491	5491

Table D10. Math Count for Hispanic Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	1674	1674
4th to 5th	1703	1703
5th to 6th	1520	1520
6th to 7th	1479	1479
7th to 8th	1529	1529

Table D11. Math Count for Hispanic Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	1729	1729
4th to 5th	1737	1737
5th to 6th	1599	1599
6th to 7th	1559	1559
7th to 8th	1668	1668

Table D12. Reading Count for Hispanic Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	1845	1845
4th to 5th	1690	1690
5th to 6th	1500	1500
6th to 7th	1452	1452
7th to 8th	1516	1516

Table D13. Reading Count for Hispanic Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	1906	1906
4th to 5th	1732	1732
5th to 6th	1596	1596
6th to 7th	1521	1521
7th to 8th	1648	1648

Table D14. Math Count for White Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	8058	8058
4th to 5th	7953	7953
5th to 6th	7621	7621
6th to 7th	6742	6742
7th to 8th	6713	6713

Table D15. Math Count for White Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	8276	8276
4th to 5th	8182	8182
5th to 6th	8033	8033
6th to 7th	7083	7083
7th to 8th	7120	7120

Table D16. Reading Count for White Students by Winter-to-Winter Terms

	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
3rd to 4th	8909	8909
4th to 5th	8023	8023
5th to 6th	7825	7825
6th to 7th	6659	6659
7th to 8th	6690	6690

Table D17. Reading Count for White Students by Fall-to-Fall Terms

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020
3rd to 4th	9164	9164
4th to 5th	8232	8232
5th to 6th	8219	8219
6th to 7th	7007	7007
7th to 8th	7115	7115

eLearning Pilot Districts Project

Final Report to the
Education Oversight Committee
April 8, 2021

Prepared by Lee M. D'Andrea, Ph.D.

Table of Contents

eLearning Pilot Project

Report to the EOC, February 2021

Year 1: 2018-19

- Five SC school districts participated
- Components of participating districts included existing, well-embedded technology landscape, including a Learning Management System, instructional technology integration, teacher professional development, and 1:1 device distribution.
- Participating school districts reported that at least two years is necessary to lay the foundation for successful implementation.

Year 2: 2019-20

- Ten additional SC school districts added to pilot; support and provided by Year 1 districts.
- District leadership and organization structure were critical to overall success.
- Clear that eLearning is not the same as online, virtual learning for longer periods of time.
- Preparation and planning made a difference in the quality of the migration from a digital learning environment (in school) to eLearning (away from school).

Year 3: 2020-21

- When schools closed due to COVID, EOC staff pivoted for eLearning Year 3. Recognizing that many more districts would be required to offer some form of virtual instruction during emergency remote learning, a streamlined application process was created. Thirty-one districts and public charter schools were added to the Year 3 cohort. A Readiness Cohort was also created that would eventually include 25 districts. The Readiness Cohort was for those districts interested in harnessing the potential of instructional technology but who lacked some foundational or technical requirements of eLearning.
- eLearning for the short term is not the same as virtual learning that is exclusively online.
- The development of the SC Digital Ecosystem (for the state and within each district) is critical to systemic student achievement.

EOC Recommendations

- The use of up to five eLearning days should be continued for all current eLearning districts in the 2021-2022 school year to allow for the make up for short term disruptions. Districts should report the use and reasons for eLearning days in the state level Student Information System (SIS).
- The continued development of a digital ecosystem at both the district and state level should be supported. State level support and guidance is necessary to ensure resources and equity of access.
- Additional research and resulting state level guidance is needed for the effective utilization of virtual classes, programs, and/or schools.
- There is a need for intentional work to standardize and collect data, particularly as it relates to attendance, virtual offerings and conditions for success measures, such as access to high-speed internet at home.

Questions about this study should be directed to
Dr. Lee D'Andrea, 1leedandrea@gmail.com

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
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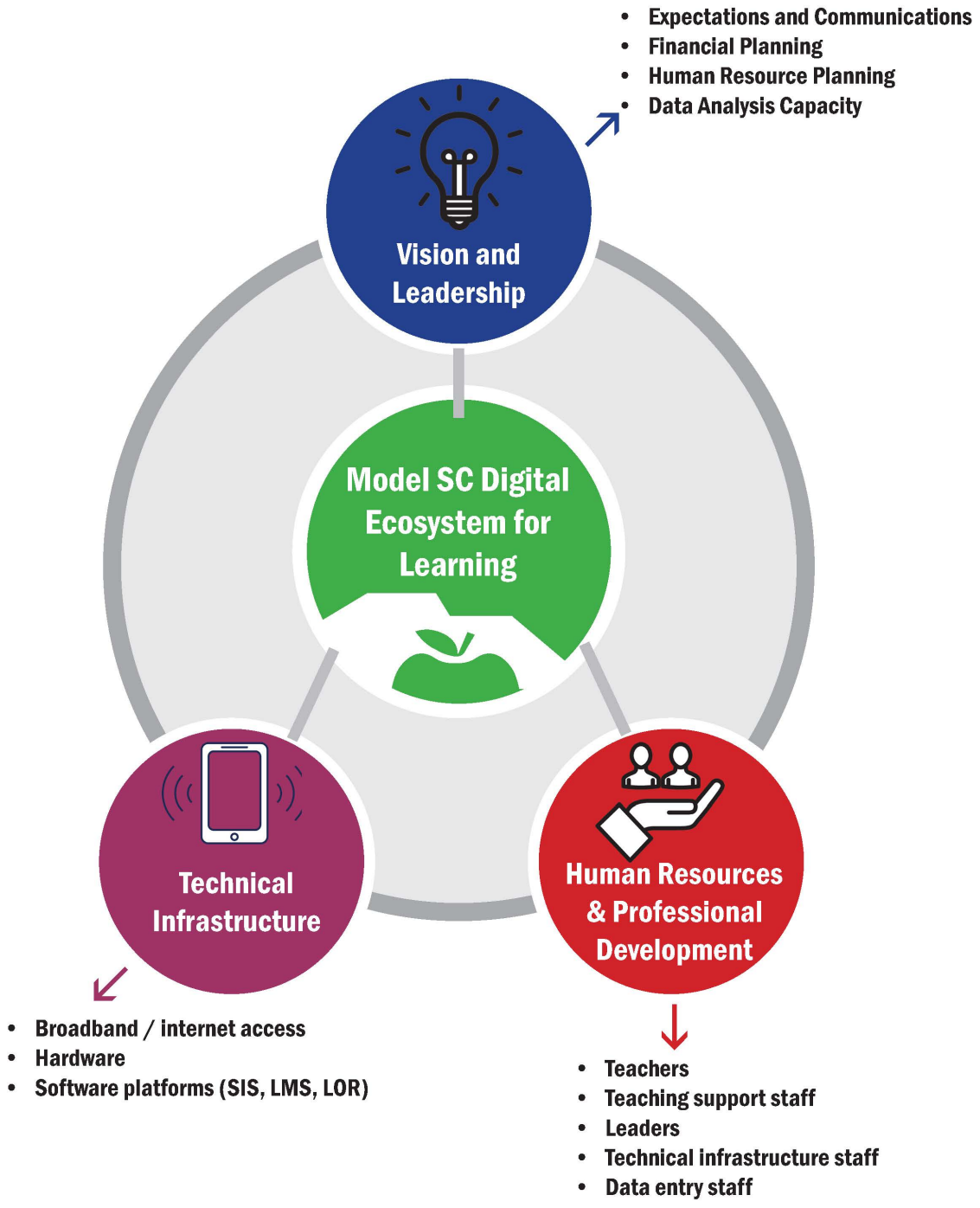

Expectations and Communications
Financial Planning
Human Resource Planning
Data Analysis Capacity
Vision and Leadership
Model SC Digital Ecosystem for Learning
Technical Infrastructure
Human Resources & Professional Development
Broadband / internet access
Hardware
Software platforms (SIS, LMS, LOR)
Teachers
Teaching support staff
Leaders
Technical infrastructure staff
Data entry staff

Executive Summary

eLearning Pilot Project Report - 2020-2021

Pursuant to Proviso 1A.69 of Act 135, signed by the Governor on May 18, 2020, to continue normal operations of state government (see Appendix A), the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) constructed and implemented the third year (2000-21) of a pilot program for alternative delivery methods of instruction during short term disruption of school, such as inclement weather, utility outages, etc.

For Cohort 3 (2020-21), it was originally planned to add an additional 10-15 districts and work towards the transition of the eLearning pilot to SCDE. However, because of school closures due to COVID and fall restart plans, EOC staff pivoted. Recognizing that many more districts would be required to offer some form of virtual instruction during emergency remote learning, it was decided to add an additional 27 school districts and 2 public charter schools through a streamlined application process. A Readiness Cohort was also created that would eventually include 18 districts. A process was established for a Readiness district to petition for eLearning status when the districts attained the elements identified as necessary for a working instructional technology environment. In August 2020, seven districts successfully petitioned to move from Readiness to the eLearning cohort. In addition, 15 districts joined the Readiness cohort during the summer of 2020. (See Appendix B).

Throughout the year, information and data were collected which substantiated the findings from Years One and Two. The capacity of the district to provide engaging and effective instruction in a digital environment depends on having a digital ecosystem within the district. The Report in Brief (two previous pages) document the Findings and the Recommendations over the eLearning pilot project period. In addition, a Model SC Digital Ecosystem for Learning is presented to describe the elements/components necessary for use by teachers and students. Behind each of the elements/components is extensive organization of planning, processes, and professional development.

The body of the Report describes the changes in Year Three based on the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Graphs and descriptions provide aggregate results and feedback. Some of the best qualitative information is found in Appendices I-K where the actual words of the individual districts (reported anonymously) are reported. Each appendix articulates the challenges, successes, and next steps, respectively.

This final report includes the dates used for eLearning as well as more information on the Readiness Cohort.

Introduction and Background

Pursuant to Proviso 1A.69 of Act 135, signed by the Governor on May 18, 2020, to continue normal operations of state government (see Appendix A), the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) constructed and implemented the third year (2200-21) of a pilot program for alternative delivery methods of instruction during short term disruption of school, such as inclement weather, utility outages, etc.

For the duration of this project, the EOC has contracted with Dr. Lee M. D'Andrea to structure the pilot project, to assist cohort districts in implementation, and to establish a working network among the cohorts and South Carolina ETV (SCETV) and the SC State Library as required by the proviso. The information collected and shared in this report comes from Regional Cluster meetings, phone and virtual meetings/conversations, surveys and information provided to the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff. The resources used for reference, benchmarking, best-practice, and recommendations are listed at the end of the report.

eLearning Cohort 1 (2018-19) consisted of five (5) school districts (Anderson 5, Kershaw, Pickens, Spartanburg 1 and Spartanburg 7). These districts were selected after an application process to determine the level of 1:1 device distribution among students, teachers' familiarity and use of a learning management system (LMS), technology infrastructure, and current status of instructional technology as part of overall learning process.

eLearning Cohort 2 (2019-20) added an additional ten (10) school districts (Anderson 1, 2, and 3; Berkeley; Florence 1; Georgetown; Lexington 2 and 3; York 2 and 3) through an anonymous scoring process conducted by school districts from Cohort 1. Additionally, Cohort 1 districts served as mentors to districts in Cohort 2. Mentoring activities included hosting virtual meetings, sharing resources, providing examples of communications, and building extended capacities.

For Cohort 3 (2020-21), it was originally planned to add an additional 10-15 districts and work towards the transition of the eLearning pilot to SCDE. However, because of school closures due to COVID and fall restart plans, EOC staff pivoted. Recognizing that many more districts would be required to offer some form of virtual instruction during emergency remote learning, it was decided to add an additional 27 school districts and 2 public charter schools through a streamlined application process. A Readiness Cohort was also created that would eventually include 18 districts. A process was established for a Readiness district to petition for eLearning status when the districts attained the elements identified as necessary for a working instructional technology environment. In August 2020, seven districts successfully petitioned to move from Readiness to the eLearning cohort. In addition, 15 districts joined the Readiness cohort during the summer of 2020. (See Appendix B). The Readiness Cohort was for those districts interested in harnessing the potential of instructional technology but who lacked some foundational or technical requirements of eLearning, such as lacking 1:1 student devices. All districts in Cohort 3 and those in the Readiness Cohort would receive the support of a mentor district and the benefit of regional meetings to facilitate sharing resources and building networking opportunities.

For this report, the following terms are defined and used accordingly:

- Digital learning (or instructional technology integration) – the use of technology resources with teaching lessons, regardless of whether the lessons are face-to-face, online exclusively or in hybrid modes.

- eLearning – the term used in the original implementation of this pilot project through a systemic digital delivery method (or Learning Management System – LMS). Originally, the pilot project examined using the systemic digital system for the purpose of continuing instruction short-term on inclement weather days or utility outage events.

- Online Virtual learning – the exclusive use of technology resources for teaching and learning. Face-to-face classes are *not* a part of the regular planning, teaching, learning activities or submission of materials.

- Hybrid learning – some combination of face-to-face classroom instruction and online learning. Multiple combinations were used in South Carolina districts during the global COVID pandemic. More information is detailed in the EOC report on Remote Learning, January 2020.

Project Changes with Onset of Global COVID Pandemic

The original eLearning Pilot Project was designed to investigate the elements required and sustainability of delivering instruction virtually on inclement weather days or other short-term interruptions of up to five (5) days. As the Coronavirus shuttered South Carolina schools and districts in March 2020, all districts across the state were faced with how to continue instruction while removed from the school building. Many districts wanted to provide virtual or hybrid instruction. Working with the SCDE, the EOC eLearning Pilot Project pivoted from its original plan and agreed to include and support more districts in Cohort 3 given the circumstances of more students required to receive instruction in a virtual environment.

With this new focus, the eLearning application and selection processes were streamlined. An additional nine (9) districts were added to Cohort 3 based on their Cohort 2 application scores being "close to ready for inclusion." This group of automatically added districts to Cohort 3 included: Anderson 4, Beaufort, Calhoun, Chester, Darlington, Greenville, Richland One, Richland Two, and Spartanburg Three.

The eLearning application was then offered to all remaining South Carolina school districts. The EOC determined that districts who applied and "overnight" were trying to build a digital ecosystem should be provided some type of support and networking. The directive to close schools and the SCDE request for continuation of instruction plans truly forced these districts to "build the plane and fly it at the same time." Upon completion and submission, all submitted applications were grouped into either Cohort 3 districts or *Readiness* districts.

If all the basic elements noted in the Findings from Cohort 1 and 2 were evident (or devices on order to meet the 1:1 element), the district was included in Cohort 3 for eLearning in 2020-21. Many districts did not have the depth of knowledge or history of implementation demonstrated and required of Cohorts 1 and 2. However, the necessity to provide emergency remote learning and virtual instructional delivery clearly indicated the need to help and support as many districts as possible. Creating and including these districts in the Readiness Cohort provided additional support and networking through the Regional Clusters and mentoring.

Informal networking with Regional Clusters were established through personnel contact sharing, resources acquisition advice and resource documents provision. Many of these districts not only lacked the elements noted in earlier Findings from Cohort 1 and 2, but they also had no plans to pursue this type of digital ecosystem for eLearning status. Many also reportedly lacked the resources before emergency remote learning.

During the emergency remote learning period in the spring of 2020, many South Carolina teachers and students were required to migrate from brick-and-mortar classrooms to virtual learning with little digital learning experience to a full online digital environment. In districts, such as the 15 eLearning Pilot districts with demonstrated robust digital learning environments in the classroom and experience in eLearning, the migration to full online learning was a less stressful transition. Yet even their transition was filled with challenges

and prompted questions. For example, how should special education services prescribed in the student Individual Education Plan (IEP) be delivered when not face-to-face in a brick-and-mortar classroom; or how could “wet labs” in science classes be reproduced digitally, or how would wrap-around services related to health, counseling, or guidance be provided?

Fall 2020 Restart

The SC Department of Education led this transition related to emergency remote learning plans for instruction. With the end of the 2019-2020 school year, the multitude of questions and concerns surrounding issues such as mental health, depth of instruction and learning quality, access to the internet and other infrastructure elements (such as devices) moved to the foreground. The magnitude of the emergency remote learning period was realized along with its timeline projecting the impact deep into the school year 2020-2021.

Again, implementation plans evolved to support districts and the progress they were making toward eLearning levels of implementation and a fully developed digital ecosystem. Readiness Districts were offered a petition period in August 2020 and again in December 2020. This appeal process offered the district a time to articulate its progress and join the other districts in the eLearning network. While the standard was different and required less developed elements, the support was provided in the “crisis” situation requiring all districts to implement parts of the digital ecosystem for education. Appendix Items F and G provide a copy of the Petition form and the lists of districts accepted at each opportunity.

To quickly provide members of the General Assembly information, the EOC staff conducted a study and reported the findings in the Review of Remote Learning’s Impact on South Carolina’s Students Report, published January 2021. The district digital ecosystem and its elements (cited in Cohorts 1 and 2 of the eLearning Pilot Project) emerged in this report. Access to the internet, the need for professional development for teachers and leaders, devices for 1:1 distribution and LMS fluency (or the presence of an LMS) were all noted as either obstacles or emerging issues.

As the Review of Remote Learning’s Impact on South Carolina’s Students indicated, the collection of accurate data, such as analytics in virtual, hybrid and face-to-face learning environments, is paramount to decision-making. The data combined with accurate assessments of student achievement and/or learning loss should determine the path forward at every level – student, school, district, and state.

This eLearning Pilot Project Report 2020-2021, including Cohorts 1 and 2 along with the Cohort 3 revised implementation (due to Coronavirus impact described above), establishes the foundation for the Findings and Recommendations about digital ecosystems for instruction and learning in South Carolina school districts.

Findings

The findings from the eLearning Pilot Project report are summarized below and are based on identified elements in the district (or state) digital ecosystem from all Cohorts in the eLearning Pilot Project.

Cohort 1 (5 districts)	Elements necessary for the successful implementation of eLearning include: 1. instructional technology integration, 2. 1:1 device distribution, 3. robust Learning Management System (LMS), 4. effective professional development for teachers and leaders, 5. robust communication plan including all stakeholders: teachers, students, staff, parents and extended community.
Cohort 2 (15 districts)	1. District leadership and organization structure were critical to overall success. 2. Successfully separating from the physical school is based on the foundation of a well-established digital learning environment within the physical classroom. 3. Preparation and planning make a difference in the quality of the migration from a digital learning environment (in school) to eLearning (away from school). 4. The need for extensive planning and preparation for implementation of the district digital ecosystem plan was the most substantial new Finding. Examination of the elements in the digital ecosystem and construction of a methodical plan (complete with funding sources, professional development, and communications) determined to a great extent the successful implementation
Cohort 3 (49 districts)	1. eLearning for the short term is not the same as virtual learning that is exclusively online. Further additional research on the effective use of virtual learning is necessary. 2. The development of the SC Digital Ecosystem (for the state and within each district) is critical to systemic student achievement, workforce development, and national/global integration success. 3. The compacted timeline (weeks/months rather than years) for planning, preparation, and incremental practice operating a digital ecosystem in the district's instruction and learning environment resulted in frustration and negative stress in the short-term during emergency remote learning and the fall 2020 restart.

In the Cohort 1 Findings, the following elements were documented and described: *instructional technology integration, 1:1 device distribution*, *a robust Learning Management System (LMS), effective professional development for teachers and leaders, and robust communication plan including all stakeholders – teachers, students, staff, parents and extended community.*

In Cohort 2, with three times the number of districts included in the project, the findings built on Cohort 1 findings: the *need for extensive planning and preparation for implementation of the district digital ecosystem plan* was the most substantial new finding. Examination of the elements in the digital ecosystem and construction of a methodical plan (complete with funding sources, professional development, and communications) determined to a great extent the successful implementation. As described above, the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic, forced districts to literally compact this step (the new Finding from Cohort 2) into a matter of days and weeks; over the months, the serendipitous effects of this situation emerged. Many districts reported trying to "reset" the communications and expectations established during emergency remote learning during spring 2020 as the fall 2020 restart began. Yet, operating in the Coronavirus pandemic environment made the "reset" challenging as well. The lag in receipt of devices ordered, requirements for social distancing, broadband coverage (or lack of it), and balancing professional development with other demands on teachers were all noted in meetings and phone interviews.

The following describes the digital ecosystem model and identities elements which emerged in the eLearning Pilot Project (reference graphic in Report Summary).

Model for South Carolina (SC) Digital Ecosystem for Education

Components/Elements

Digital teaching/learning methods and resources are an integral part of the education environment regardless of whether the instruction is a face-to-face delivery, or a synchronous or asynchronous virtual delivery. The development of the SC Digital Ecosystem (for the state and within every district) is the foundation for quality instruction in every classroom – both face-to-face and virtual.

- **Vision and Leadership**
    - Expectations and communications to all stakeholders – teachers, education leaders, students, parents, board members and communities
    - Financial planning to support the digital ecosystem.
    - Human resources planning to support personnel and professional development.
    - Capacity for data analysis to inform monitoring, adjusting, decision-making *centered* on student achievement, teaching or resource effectiveness, and return on investment (funding efficiencies) – uses the Student Information System, Teacher Information System

- **Technical Infrastructure**
    - Broadband or internet access (in progress)
    - Hardware
        - Networks – servers, wireless access, clouds, switches, etc.
        - Devices for teachers and students
    - Software Platforms
        - Student Information System (SIS) – currently PowerSchool
            - Quality, accurate consistently populated data
        - *Learning Management System (LMS) – uses SIS to populate students, teachers, and classes.*
            - *Contracted for districts using 4 LMS (Blackboard, Canvas, Google, Schoology) through 2022-2023; Microsoft Teams also used*
            - *Classroom and course builder, management of assignments, assessments, and teaching resources.*
        - *Learning Object Repository (LOR) – uses the LMS to create interactivity*
            - *Meta digital library (Safari Montage – SM)*
            - *High-quality content in a centralized place; timesaver for teachers*

- **Human Capital and Proficiency Development**

  - Teachers
    - Digital tools competency
    - Digital resources knowledge
    - Lesson preparation and delivery excellence
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)

  - Teaching support staff (instructional coaches, technology integration specialists, media center teachers)
    - Digital tools competency
    - Digital resources knowledge
    - Lesson preparation and delivery excellence
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)
    - Adult coaching and lesson modeling skills
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)

  - Leadership Roles (district C&I and technology leaders; building level leaders)
    - Working knowledge and understanding of competency and knowledge of digital tools and digital resources that are expected of teachers and support staff
    - Working knowledge and understanding of professional development required to develop and grow instructional staff capacity to effectively integrate digital tools and resources
    -
    - Working understanding quality data standards, processes, and analytics
    - Commitment to support and evaluation
    - Working knowledge of funding options, budget planning and multi-year refresh cycles
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)

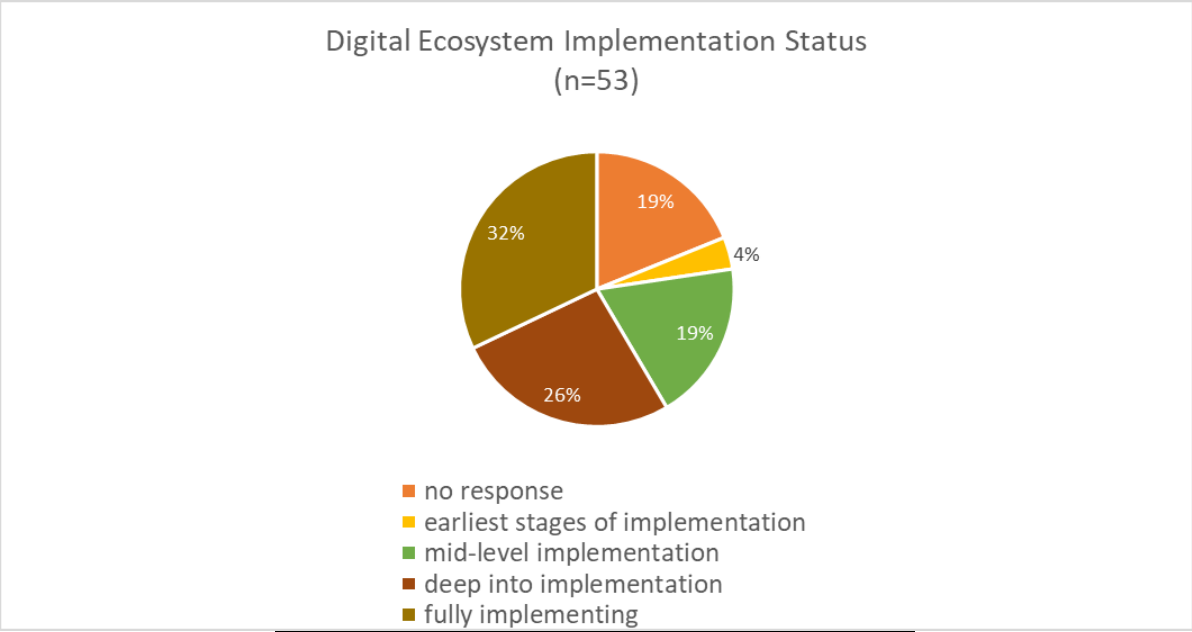
  - Technical Infrastructure Team Members
    - Technology networking expertise
    - Working knowledge and understanding all software platforms
    - Working understanding quality data standards, processes, and analytics
    - Working knowledge budget planning and multi-year refresh cycles
    - Commitment to support and evaluation
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)

  - Data Entry Team Members
    - Working expertise in quality data standards, processes, and basic reports
    - Ongoing professional development (personalized and differentiated)

With the digital ecosystem elements identified though meetings and district experiences, information was also gathered to provide status updates as well as needs assessments. Each eLearning district was asked to complete a Questions and Information Collection form (see Appendix D).

When asked to self-assess the status of their own digital ecosystem, 58% of the 53 respondents reported they were “deep into implementation” or “fully implementing.” Twenty-two districts reported themselves in the mid-level or earlier implementation stages. See Table 3 for full range reporting.

Table 3. eLearning Districts Self-Assessment on Digital Ecosystem Implementation



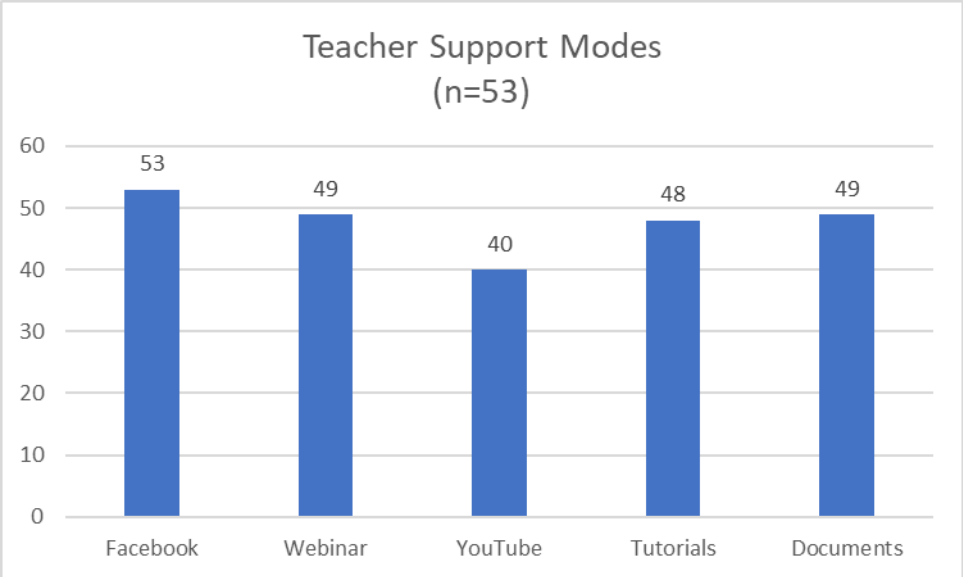
Digital Ecosystem Status	# Districts	Percentage
no response	10	19%
earliest stages of implementation	2	4%
mid-level implementation	10	19%
deep into implementation	14	26%
fully implementing	17	32%

When asked to identify the numbers of teachers in the district and how many had engaged in professional development during the 2019-2020 school, including summer 2020, the districts reported a range from 50% to 100%. The overwhelming majority of the fifty-three districts in the eLearning Pilot Project reported between 95% and 100% of the teachers had participated in professional development related to the LMS use or another software program related to instruction delivery in the digital ecosystem (e.g., Edmentum). This is a positive result of the district’s commitment to supporting an overnight demand to operate

in the eLearning environment. However, according to the data disaggregated by district, there were approximately 4100 teachers not engaged in professional development.

In addition to direct professional events and opportunities, districts provided ongoing support to teachers through a variety of methodologies. Table 4 below describes the variety of ways the support was offered in the 53 participating eLearning districts.

Table 4. Common Modes of Support for Teachers



Additional district specific examples noted in the collection form included brag boards, social media groups, virtual in-house conferences, graduate level coursework, podcasts, individual teacher coaching, and website resources.

In addition to professional development for teachers, staff and leaders, districts were faced with the immediate need to communicate and educate parents on the elements and expectations of the Learning Management System (LMS) and instruction in a virtual modality. When asked, 82% of the districts reported structured activities for parents. Tables 5 and 6 document this response and the participation in activities the district hosted.

Table 5. Districts Planned and Hosted Parent Activities for eLearning

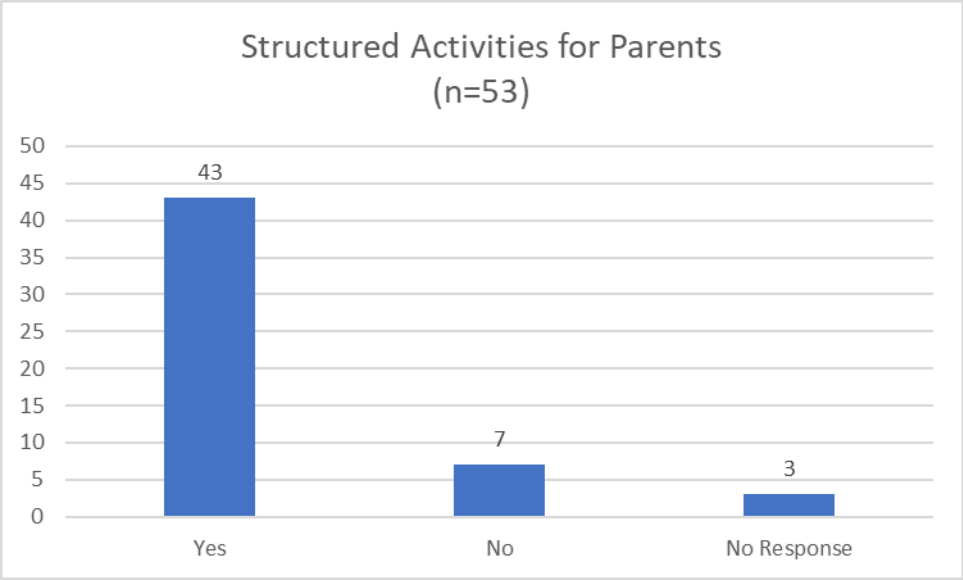
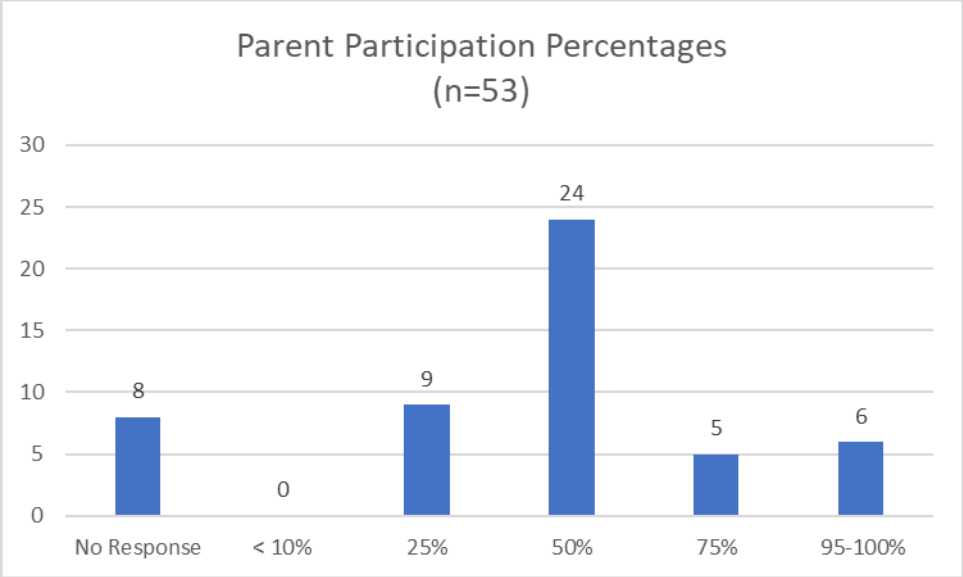
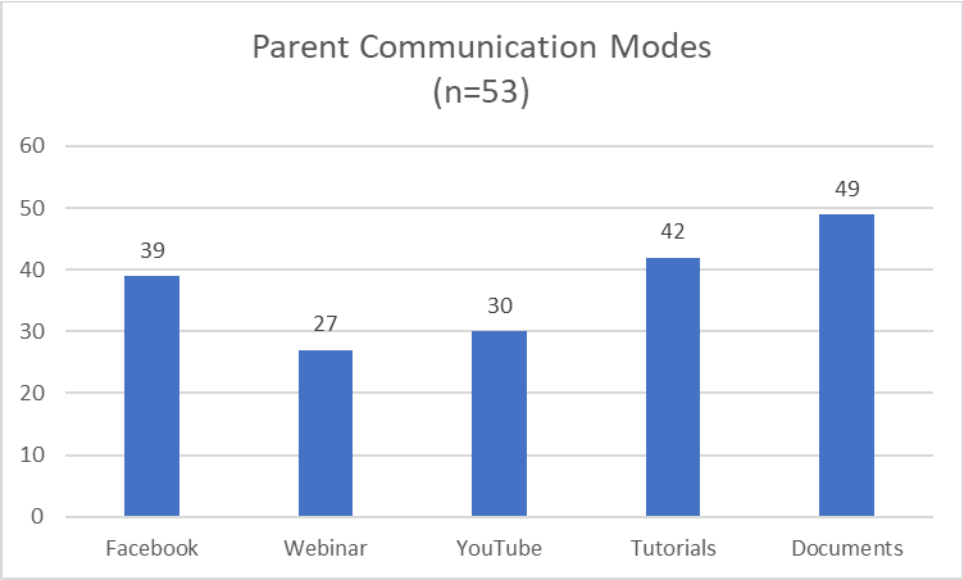


Table 6. Parent Participation in District/School Activities About eLearning



Districts used a variety of outreach methods to communicate with parents. Table 7 provides the types of communication strategies the districts provided.

Table 7. District Communication Modes with Parents



Creating and understanding a digital ecosystem, then delivering digital instruction while in the Coronavirus pandemic crisis was challenging for teachers and parents. For students who had experience with digital instruction integration in the classroom (especially for students in the 15 districts in eLearning cohorts 1 and 2), the knowledge base existed. In discussions with students, the challenges centered on *identifying expectations*, *working outside of the classroom with the absence of its social atmosphere*, *and the migration to total virtual learning activities (especially without engaging strategies).* Districts did plan and provide communications specially for students. Tables 8, 9 and 10 provide more details from the districts' responses to questions about student communications.

Table 8. Districts Providing Student Communications

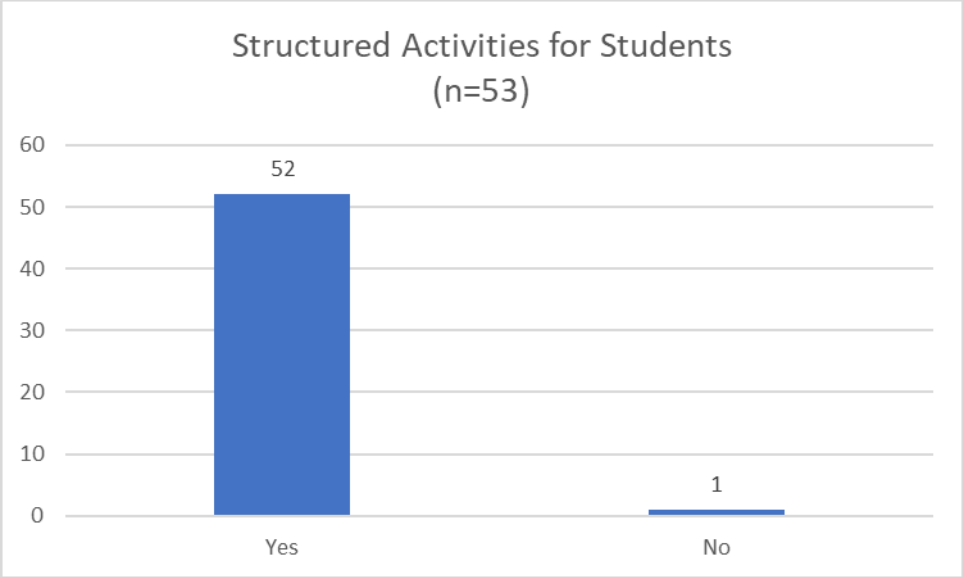


Table 9. District Provided Modes of Support for Students

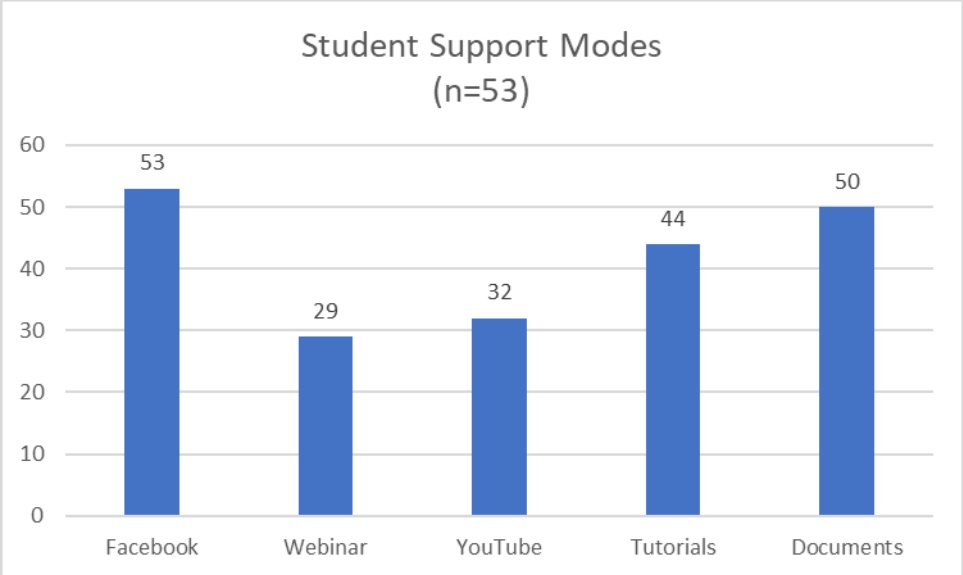
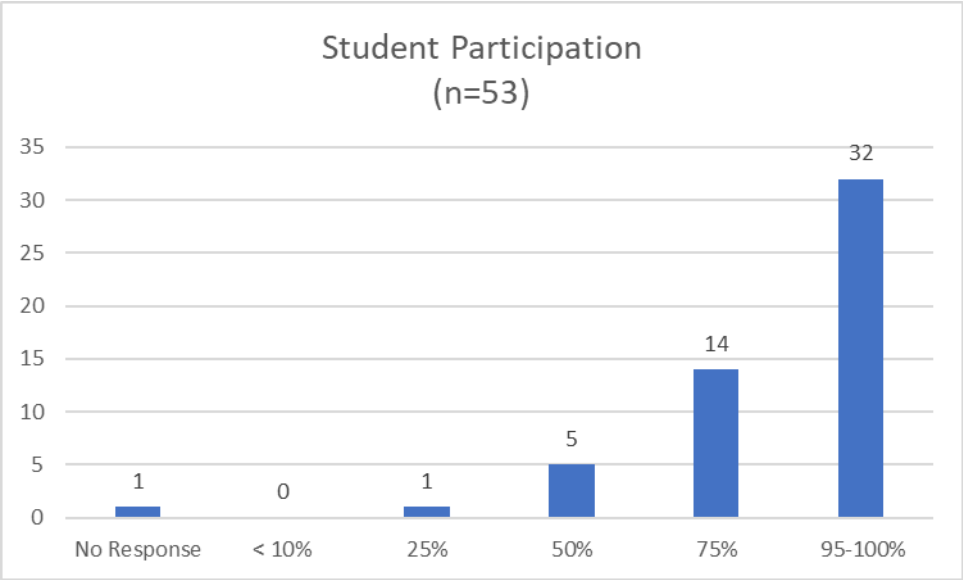


Table 10. Student Participation in Professional Development and/or Communication Activities



Eighty-six percent (86%) of school districts indicated 75% or more of their students participated in professional development and/or communication activities. One significant challenge for districts included in the eLearning Pilot Project (and the state of South Carolina) is the thousands of students **not** engaging in professional development or communication activities. Early indicators are the gap in access and achievement widens because of these findings.

Appendices H and I describe (in their own words) the cumulative successes and challenges, respectively, of establishing a digital ecosystem for instruction and learning while faced with the Coronavirus pandemic impact and timeline. Out of necessity, districts worked diligently and often in collaboration with the fifteen districts in eLearning Pilot Project Cohorts 1 and 2. Regional Cluster meetings in the fall facilitated network building, resource sharing and solution collaboration. Appendix C includes agendas from these meetings.

Findings Summary

From the Cohort 2 eLearning Pilot Project Report (presented in February 2020, pre-Coronavirus pandemic), the findings indicated (emphasis added through italics): "*In the networking meetings, all fifteen pilot districts described the extensive digital learning landscapes they had created as a part of the overall teaching and learning environment in the district. The readiness to implement predicated the ability to offer the eLearning day to students and families as a strategy for continuing instruction without interruption. In each of the fifteen pilot districts, digital learning (instructional technology integration) and 1:1 devices were in existence for at least two years. The districts reported this amount of time was necessary to fully implement an effective LMS, secure devices and establish practices for use both in school and at home. In addition, professional development was*

ongoing during the entire implementation process. Even during implementation, the 15 pilot project districts reported the need to identify teachers with less skill in these teaching strategies and provide professional development. Helping and supporting teachers on topics such as Learning Management System (LMS) uses, digital instructional strategies and location of resources were scheduled in face-to-face meetings, summer seminars, webinars and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) time.**"**

During Cohort 3 of the eLearning Pilot Project (altered to support more districts in a crisis), these findings were strongly supported. The compacted timeline, the lack of years for planning, preparation, and incremental practice operating a digital ecosystem in the district's instruction and learning environment resulted in frustration and negative stress in the short term. The long-term results on student learning and achievement as well as mental health will emerge over the coming months and years.

Recommendations

1. **The use of <u>up to five eLearning days</u> should be continued for all current eLearning districts in the 2021-2022 school year to allow for the make up for short term disruptions. Districts should report the use and reasons for eLearning days in the state level Student Information System (SIS).** The eLearning Pilot Project in Cohort 1 and 2 had clear results indicating an eLearning day(s) can be successfully used on inclement weather days, during utility interruptions, and even for short term student suspensions. This option should be provided in the 2021-2022 school year to all current eLearning districts. Districts should be able to use up to five days in eLearning modalities – synchronous[1] or asynchronous[2]. Reports on usage of days and reasons could be made utilizing the current Student Information System (SIS) PowerSchool.

2. **The <u>continued development of a digital ecosystem</u> at both the district and state level should be supported. State level support and guidance is necessary to ensure resources and equity of access.** The eLearning Pilot Project highlights needed next steps for statewide development of district and state level digital ecosystems – environments using digital tools and resources for the provision of teaching and learning. As the end of the pandemic closes a chapter in the delivery of education experiences in South Carolina, a reset chapter should follow. From this reset stage can emerge robust, effective digital ecosystems in districts as well as the state level. These systems are necessary not only for the original purpose of the eLearning investigation, but for emerging reasons focused on equity of access, student achievement and preparation of a global workforce. Thus, a plan to establish updated guard rails and support for district must be provided.

   Again, from the Cohort 2 Report (emphasis added in italics): *the districts reported*

[1] Instruction occurs at the same time and place with groups of learners and their instructor.
[2] Learning occurs in different times and spaces particular to each learner; the students proceed through the curriculum at their own pace

the laser focus on being prepared for either mock or practice days as well as actual eLearning days strengthened the overall teaching and learning plans in their districts. This only happens with a strong digital learning foundation and high level of readiness in all stakeholders, including students with devices, teachers working in this instructional technology environment and administrators communicating clearly to all stakeholders…When asked, the districts reported thousands of man hours had gone into the planning for every aspect: financing, procurement, LMS structure, communications, IT set-up and backup, migration and interface with PowerSchool, defining curriculum and instruction expectations and creating learning resources.

As indicated in the Appendix J, districts are ready to face the challenges of building district digital ecosystems. They have identified some of their next steps. Statewide direction and support are needed and should be provided in an ongoing and systemic manner. The global citizen described in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate only manifests through an education entity with a well-developed digital ecosystem.

3. **Additional research and resulting state level guidance is needed for the effective utilization of virtual classes, programs, and/or schools.** Deep, expanded examination of this instruction delivery modality – online virtual learning – should take place given that the migration of digital learning environments in physical classrooms to using a digital ecosystem for learning exclusively online through virtual classes, programs or schools was forced to occur "overnight. Data collected from consistent interpretations and guidelines is needed. For example, attendance days in the virtual or eLearning environment, school, student achievement results, teacher professional development and credentials and even overall district digital ecosystem implementation plans should be included. This data gathering and a report to the General Assembly, the district and the public would provide a basis for future decision making from parents selecting between brick-and-mortar or virtual program options, funding and perhaps, even teacher training.

4. **There is a need for intentional work to standardize and collect data, particularly as it relates to attendance, virtual offerings and conditions for success measures, such as access to high-speed internet at home.**

In summary, Recommendation 1 is the short-term action step and continuation of the eLearning opportunity for districts when inclement weather or utility outages interrupt the flow of the 180-day instruction calendar. Recommendation 2 articulates the need for state level guidance and support for districts continuing the journey to fully developing digital ecosystems. Recommendations 3 and 4 emphasize the need for data collection as both a conduit to building effective digital ecosystems in education entities and providing systemic accountability on behalf of all students.

Conclusions

A pilot project is a short-term endeavor to examine a tenant, practice, or theory. It enables the organization to minimize risk in implementation, discover the successes and challenges, and subsequently make recommendations. Often, the findings answer the question, *and* open new doors for discovery, research and/or articulate clear next steps.

The original examination of the eLearning pilot project focused on the use of districts' existing digital ecosystems to continue instruction on inclement weather days. Due to the impact of the global Coronavirus pandemic and the necessity for districts to utilize a fully developed digital ecosystem for long-term, everyday instruction, this pilot project fulfilled its original scope of work/examination and quickly pivoted to support districts committed to both building and/or expanding their digital ecosystems. At the conclusion of the eLearning pilot, more than 94% of the South Carolina school districts were included. Working collaboratively with this project, the South Carolina Department of Education also moved to develop its digital ecosystem and what is provided school districts statewide.

From Years 1 and 2, the eLearning pilot project revealed that the elements of the digital ecosystem are not developed overnight. The steps necessary to develop all parts of the system outlined in the graphic on the next page take time and were often identified as an ongoing focus in the district's continuous improvement cycle. The expedited implementation schedule necessary during COVID-19 closures and the crisis demand left many (district administrators, teachers, students, and parents) stressed, distanced and often without resources. The infusion of funds from multiple sources certainly relieved the districts of this barrier; however, time and experience cannot be bought and will continue as hurdles and challenges in implementing district level digital ecosystems for learning.

In Year 1, surveys indicated that teachers, parents, and students were pleased or extremely pleased with the use of eLearning days. They eliminated the interruption in instruction and provided flexibility to the districts. In Year 2, districts reported similar findings, and the collective 15 districts reported that a focus on preparation and planning for an eLearning day strengthened the overall instruction in the classroom. Using digital tools, platforms, and software resources, the learning opportunities for both teachers and students were broadened. In addition, teachers were reportedly able to engage students through personalized activities while also differentiating assignments to students at different levels.

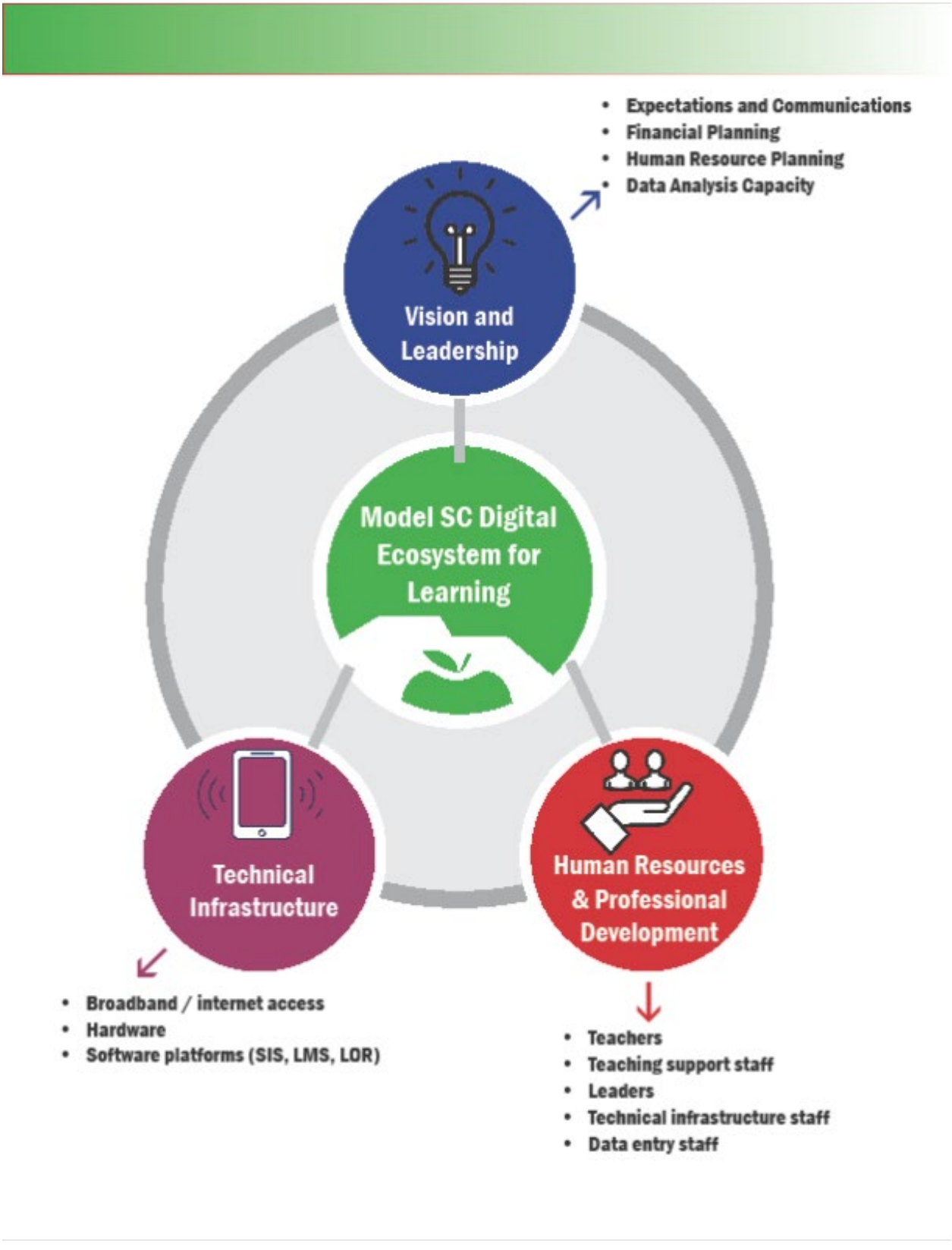
In March 2020, the global Coronavirus pandemic interrupted life around the globe. The education system in South Carolina, like school districts all over the nation, were greatly impacted and forced to find ways to continue learning activities in distanced and separated modalities. Without question, the situation was critical and emergency measures were literally the standard operation. As reported in a separate EOC report, *Review of Remote Learning's Impact on South Carolina's Students*, multiple delivery systems were employed in various districts, few with the benefit of long-term planning and training. Survival simply meant offering some type of education and engagement activity for students. The heroic efforts of teachers, leaders, bus drivers, food service staff and many other district employees enabled this survival. Expanding the number of

districts in the eLearning Pilot Project provided some level of support to districts who were quite literally creating and building the digital ecosystem, while simultaneously using it to deploy instruction to students.

Thus, the eLearning pilot project concludes with findings to address the use of eLearning days for inclement weather and/or utility interruptions at either the school or district level. The findings from Year 3 yield a much wider scope and directly speak to a more systemic challenge in South Carolina schools and districts. Robust, highly developed digital instructional ecosystems have not been implemented previously statewide and are necessary to: (1) expand opportunities for students through more resources, content, and experiences; (2) provide more personalized and/or differentiated learning for students; and (3) connect real-world environments and workforce development for students. Districts with minimal digital instructional ecosystems provide fewer and less robust opportunities, individualization, and connections to workforce preparation. It is often said that technology has made the world smaller. **Yet, the gap widens and deepens among students from districts with robust, highly developed digital ecosystems for learning (in all three elements described in the model) and those without such ecosystems.**

As the COVID-19 emergency begins to subside, South Carolina districts, both leaders and teachers, emerge weary of the crisis status but poised to enter a period of recovery and hopefully rejuvenation. Thus, it is essential to help push a reset button while realizing we will never return to pre-pandemic teaching and learning environments.

Using the insights, strengths, challenges, and hard-earned lessons for next steps identified by districts, a clear plan for the continuation of building a digital ecosystem for learning in South Carolina must be developed with measurable outcome and obtainable timelines.


Expectations and Communications
Financial Planning
Human Resource Planning
Data Analysis Capacity
Vision and Leadership
Model SC Digital Ecosystem for Learning
Technical Infrastructure
Human Resources & Professional Development
Broadband / internet access
Hardware
Software platforms (SIS, LMS, LOR)
Teachers
Teaching support staff
Leaders
Technical infrastructure staff
Data entry staff

Resources

New Mexico's Digital Distance Learning Recommendations: 2020 & Beyond https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/wpcontent/uploads/2020/08/NMPED_DigitalDistanceLearning_Recommendations.pdf?v2

New Report Guides States on Helping Deliver Digital Learning – THE Journal, Transforming Education though Technology https://thejournal.com/articles/2020/06/01/new-report-guides-states-on-helping-deliver-digital-learning.aspx?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=99b325dcdb-ED_CLIPS_06_04_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-99b325dcdb-63605399

Remote Learning Is Here to Stay - Results from the First American School District Panel Survey https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA956-1.html

Top Free Resources to Support Virtual Instruction – NIET National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (SC 4.0 rubric – teacher evaluation) https://www.niet.org/remote-learning/top-free-virtual-instruction-resources/

States' E-Learning Directives Pivot for the Long Haul – Education Week https://www.edweek.org/technology/states-e-learning-directives-pivot-for-the-long-haul/2020/03

Strategies for Maintaining Student Engagement During Remote Learning – Hanover Research https://insights.hanoverresearch.com/hubfs/Strategies%20for%20Maintaining%20Student%20Engagement%20During%20Remote%20Learning.pdf

School District Leaders Indicate Online Instruction Will Outlast COVID-19. Here's What to Consider https://www.rand.org/blog/2021/01/school-district-leaders-indicate-online-instruction.html

Appendix A

Proviso 1A.69. of Act 135, signed by the Governor 5/18/2020

1A.69. (SDE-EIA: Digital Learning Plan) The Education Oversight Committee is responsible for implementing the second year of a pilot program for alternative methods of instruction for make-up days. The five school districts that participated in the initial pilot program in the prior fiscal year shall have the option of continuing to participate during the current fiscal year. As a condition of their continued participation, these five school districts shall assist the committee in reviewing and approving additional school districts to participate in the second year of the pilot program and shall provide technical assistance and support to new districts participating in the pilot. From funds available to the committee, the committee is authorized to allocate funds to the five districts for providing technical support to the new districts participating in the pilot program.

All districts participating in the pilot in the current fiscal year shall utilize alternative methods of instruction which may include, but are not limited to, online or virtual instruction for scheduled make up time. All make up time must reflect the number of hours of the make-up days the instruction will cover. All make up time must meet state requirements for elementary and secondary school days. All districts shall continue to report to the Department of Education all days missed, reasons for the absences, days made up, and now the alternative method of instruction used. The Education Oversight Committee shall work with the Educational Television Commission (ETV) and the State Library to utilize and coordinate available ETV and State Library resources and explore alternative means of delivery to districts that may lack proper access to online instruction. All school districts shall report the following information to the Education Oversight Committee by April 1, 2020: method(s) of implementation utilized, advantages and disadvantages of the method(s) used, any feedback received from administrators, teachers, parents or guardians, and recommendations for how the program can be implemented statewide.

By June 1, 2020 the Education Oversight Committee shall report to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Department of Education, and the State Board of Education a plan for implementing the eLearning program for make-up days statewide.

Appendix B - List of SC School Districts in Year 3 of the eLearning Pilot Project

The eLearning and Readiness Cohorts as of January 2021 are shown in the following tables.

District (light blue=Year 1& 2; medium blue = added Year 3 & dark blue=petitioned Year 3)	*eLearning = Year 1 or 2; eLearning-Year 3 added for 2020-2021*	*Region (#s begin at top of the state and continue clockwise; finish in the center of the state)*
Spartanburg 1	Year 1	1
Spartanburg 7 (RC Lead)	Year 1	1
York 2	Year 2	1
York 3	Year 2	1
Cherokee	Year 3	1
Chester	Year 3	1
Lancaster	Year 3	1
Spartanburg 3	Year 3	1
Spartanburg 5	Year 3	1
Spartanburg 6	Year 3	1
Union	Year 3 (petition August)	1
Spartanburg 2	Year 3 (petition December)	1
Spartanburg 4	Year 3 (petition December)	1
York 1	Year 3 (petition December)	1
York 4	Year 3 (petition December)	1
Florence 1	Year 2	2
Georgetown (RC Lead)	Year 2	2
Darlington	Year 3	2
Florence 2	Year 3	2
Florence 3	Year 3	2
Horry	Year 3	2
Marlboro	Year 3 (petition August)	2
Dillon 4	Year 3 (petition December)	2
Marion	Year 3 (petition December)	2
Pickens (RC Lead)	Year 1	3
Berkeley	Year 2	3
Barnwell 45	Year 3	3
Beaufort	Year 3	3
Charleston	Year 3	3
Dorchester 2	Year 3	3
Royal Live Oaks Academy (Hardeeville)	Year 3	3
Allendale	Year 3 (petition August)	3
Barnwell 29 (Williston)	Year 3 (petition August)	3
Dorchester 4	Year 3 (petition August)	3
Barnwell 19	Year 3 (petition December)	3
Colleton	Year 3 (petition December)	3
Jasper	Year 3 (petition December)	3
Anderson 5 (RC Lead)	Year 1	4
Anderson 1	Year 2	4
Anderson 2	Year 2	4
Anderson 3	Year 2	4
Horse Creek Academy-Erskine (Aiken)	Year 3	4

District (light blue=Year 1& 2; medium blue = added Year 3 & dark blue=petitioned Year 3)	*eLearning = Year 1 or 2; eLearning-Year 3 added for 2020-2021*	*Region (#s begin at top of the state and continue clockwise; finish in the center of the state)*
Anderson 4	Year 3	4
Greenville	Year 3	4
Greenwood 50	Year 3	4
Greenwood 51	Year 3	4
Laurens 56	Year 3	4
Oconee	Year 3	4
Laurens 55	Year 3 (petition August)	4
Abbeville	Year 3 (petition December)	4
Newberry	Year 3 (petition December)	4
Saluda	Year 3 (petition December)	4
Kershaw (RC Lead)	Year 1	5
Lexington 2	Year 2	5
Lexington 3	Year 2	5
Calhoun	Year 3	5
Clear Dot Charter-Erskine (Columbia)	Year 3	5
Fairfield	Year 3	5
Gray Collegiate Academy-Erskine (W. Columbia)	Year 3	5
Lexington 1	Year 3	5
Lexington 4	Year 3	5
Lexington/Richland 5	Year 3	5
Richland 1	Year 3	5
Richland 2	Year 3	5
Clarendon 2	Year 3 (petition August)	5
Sumter	Year 3 (petition December)	5
Total eLearning Districts (Feb. 26, 2021)	**62**	
Total Public Charter Schools (SC)	**4**	

District	*Readiness from original applications; and Readiness (A) added in summer*	
Edgefield	Readiness	
McCormick	Readiness (A)	
Clarendon 1	Readiness	
Williamsburg	Readiness	
Orangeburg	Readiness (A)	
Dillon 3	Readiness	
Chesterfield	Readiness	
Clarendon 3	Readiness	
Hampton 2	Readiness	
Bamberg 1	Readiness (A)	
Bamberg 2	Readiness (A)	
East Point Academy (West Columbia)	Readiness (A)	
Total Readiness Districts	**11**	Aiken, Florence 4 and 5, Greenwood 52, Hampton 1, and Lee School Districts did not participate.
Total Public Charter Schools (SC)	**1**	

Appendix C

eLearning and Readiness Initial Kick-off Meeting Agendas

SC Pilot Program – eLearning
Year 3 -Cohort 3 (42 districts and 4 public charter schools)
July 30, 2020 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Host: SCETV
1041 George Rogers Blvd, Columbia, SC 29201

Agenda

10:00 am	Welcome and Introductions; Update on the project and its focus during the year
10:15 am	Introductions (for in-person attendees)
10:30 am	SCETV Resources
10:50 am	SC State Library Resources
11:00 am	Update from David Mathis, SDE
11:15 am	Sharing your reset strategies for using digital tools and your monitoring/accountability strategies
11:45 am	Sharing best professional development for teachers
12:10 pm	Sharing best parent communication strategies
12:30 pm	Adjourn

SC Pilot Program – eLearning
Year 3 – Readiness Cohort
August 5, 2020 – 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Host: SCETV
1041 George Rogers Blvd, Columbia, SC 29201

Agenda

10:00 am	Welcome and Introductions; Update on the project and its focus during the year
10:15 am	Introductions (for in-person attendees)
10:30 am	SCETV Resources
10:50 am	SC State Library Resources
11:00 am	Update from David Mathis, SDE
11:15 am	Sharing your strategies for using digital tools and your monitoring/accountability strategies; including virtual academies
11:45 am	Sharing best professional development for teachers
12:10 pm	Sharing best parent communication strategies
12:30 pm	Adjourn

Appendix D

Fall Meetings Regional Cluster Agendas Examples

(Regions 1 and 5 included in Final Report)

eLearning Agendas for Region 2 Cohort
Year 3
Georgetown, Florence 1, Florence 2, Florence 3, Darlington, Horry, Marlboro Submitted by: Keith Brown and Marc Frechette (Georgetown)

July 20, 2020	**Agenda:** Introductions, initial expectations, success, & challenges **Attending:** Brown(G), Frechette(G), Sigmon(D), Huckabee(F3), Jefferson (D), Scott (F3), Prosser(F3), Supt. Price (G), D'Andrea (SDE) **Missing**: Florence 2, Horry 1. Welcome and Introductions 2. Sign In (Click HERE for link to Response Form) ● Georgetown ● Florence 1 ● Darlington ● Florence 2 ● Florence 3 ● Horry 3. Sharing successes 4. Sharing challenges 5. Share plans for opening 6. Mock eLearning Day 7. What questions/needs do you have to prepare for the eLearning Days? 8. Resources
August 2020	No meeting

September 17, 2020	AGENDA ● Greetings ● Notes from July 30th Cohort 3 meeting ● A Calendar for the rest of the year. ● Professional development for teachers and learning to use a consistent LMS ● Mock eLearning Day (How we did it, How did you do it) ● Guidelines for work and grades and days allowed for getting work turned in. ● Creating a system/ Tool for sharing/posting ideas with one another ● Communicating with parents ● Sharing Successes and Challenges ● Sharing Websites that Districts already have created ● Sharing GCSD YouTube Channel ● Chat Box Notes click HERE
October	No meeting
Nov 30, 2020	**Participating with Responses**: Florence 1, Marlboro, Darlington (x2), Florence 3, and host Georgetown **Missing:** Florence 2, Horry Mock eLearning Day(s) Districts reported how they were doing or had done with their eLearning day that was scheduled for November 2020 via a web tool called Flip Grid. This allowed participants to respond to a video prompt, with a video response of their own. Districts responding: Georgetown, Florence District 1, Marlboro, Darlington (2) , Florence District 3 Here are the flip Grid Responses: https://flipgrid.com/d35bb7b2 Here are the Closed Caption Responses: https://docs.google.com/document/d/13JcPSI36d5WOKbR5BkptTkrT_E5H8SFOsyP-_RcPdic/edit?usp=sharing

South Carolina eLearning

Regional Cluster #3 - 2020-2021 School Year

Agenda for Meeting 1

1. **Introductions & Attendance**
    a. **Present Monday, August 10, 2020; 2 to 3 PM**
    Meeting Link **Password:** a4rYxJDCD77
        i. School District of Pickens County
            1. Sharon Huff, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services
            2. Barbara Nesbitt, Assistant Superintendent for Technology Services
        ii. Barnwell 45
            1. Kelly Shealy, Secondary Curriculum
            2. Daphne Still, K-8 Curriculum
        iii. Charleston
            1. Karolyn Belcher, Chief Academic Officer
            2. Emile Woody, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
            3. Buffy Roberts, Executive Director of Assessment and Evaluation
        iv. Dorchester 2
            1. Kelly Purvis, Assistant Director of Middle School Curriculum
            2. Wally Baird, Assistant Director of Elementary Schools
        v. Erskine (Royal Live Oaks - Hardeeville)
            1. Brian Morse, Chief of Staff
        vi. Beaufort
            1. John Sullivan (Sully), iLearning Coordinator
    b. **Present Friday, October 9, 10 to 11 AM**
    Meeting Link **Password:** De3AQGcF
        i. School District of Pickens County
            1. Sharon Huff, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services
            2. Barbara Nesbitt, Assistant Superintendent for Technology Services
        ii. Dorchester 4
            1. Nancy Britt-Stevens, Director of Secondary Education
            2. Monica Tudder, Director of Special Services
            3. Shelissa Bowman, Director of Elementary Education
            4. Elijah Delee, Director of Technology
        iii. Allendale
            1. Alfreda Jamison, Director of Technology

    c. **Present Tuesday, October 20, 11 to Noon**
    Meeting Link **Password:** fJZeSz32
        i. School District of Pickens County
            1. Sharon Huff, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services

2. Barbara Nesbitt, Assistant Superintendent for Technology Services

ii. Barnwell 29/Williston

1. Debra McCord, Director of Curriculum
2. Terry Roy, Technology Coordinator

2. School District of Pickens County eLearning Story

a. Instructional Plan, Digital Ecosystem, Virtual Learning
b. Tech It Home
c. Digital Learning Days
d. My Choices, My Success, My SDPC

3. eLearning Cohort #3 Regional Cluster #3 Readiness Details

District	Digital Ecosystem	1:1	Prof. Development
School District of Pickens County 22% fully virtual Rest F2F; no hybrid; built in quarantines for remote learning	**ClassLink - SSO** **Schoology - LMS** **Webex - Video Conferencing** **Safari Montage - LOR**	**K-12 Chromebooks & Hotspots as needed**	**In house PD** **2 Instructional Tech Coaches** **2 Math Coaches (Great with Technology)** **Lots of trainers at each school who support us**
Barnwell 45 Kelly Shealy, Daphne Still PreK-8: Face to face or virtual High School: Hybrid or Virtual 30% Virtual total; 38% high school	**Clever** **Schoology new this year; were using Google Classroom** **Dreambox - MS** **iStation** **SC VIrtual, APEX** **Newer textbooks are digital** **Google Meets**	**K-12 1 to 1 for 4 years** **2-12 Chromebooks** **PreK-1 iPads** **Hover Cam** **Promethean boards**	**In house PD Videos** **Lead teachers attend district meetings** **Promethean training** **GAFE training**
Beaufort Fully Virtual to begin.	**Classlink & Clever** **Google Classroom** **Schoology this year** **Zoom**	**1:1 since 2012-13** **HP Windows 10 tablets 3-12** **K-2 iPads last year, adding Windows Tablet**	**6 Ed Tech Coaches for district** **31 schools + CTC and Charter School** **Various PD as needed**

District	Digital Ecosystem	1:1	Prof. Development
	Seesaw K-2 **SC Virtual Franchise** **K-8 K12 Learning Solutions**		
Charleston Buffy Roberts, Emilie Woody, Karolyn Belcher	**Clever** **Canvas * (Some use Google Classroom but link from Canvas)** **Digital Textbooks & Content** **Virtual K-12: Odysseyware, Edgenuity, FLHS, SC Virtual, District-Written** **Zoom & Webex**	**K-12 Chromebooks (6-12), iPads (K-5)**	**Remote Learning & Virtual Teaching this summer** **Asynchronous and Synchronous PD** **Virtual PLCs** **Remote Learning Course through Low Country Consortium this year**
Dorchester 2 Kelly Purvis, Wally Baird Hybrid & Virtual 4K, K, 1 come f2f ½ day A, B Hybrid other grades Start eLearning 1st week, then hybrid 28% Virtual	**Clever** **Microsoft Teams** **Calvert, APEX,** **Transitioning to Digital Textbooks** **Text in Hand** **Chose Schoology**	**K-12 Dell Laptop (3-12)** **2nd HP Streams** **K-1 iPads**	**Systemic Modern Learning Specialists** **Tech Tuesdays** **600-700 weekly** **Some Days of PD at beginning of year. Seven days before children return (3 are PD)** **Virtual PLCs**
Erskine (Royal Live Oaks - Hardeeville) **Brian Morse** **Starting virtually** **Over 50% virtual**	**Google Classroom** **Google Meets** **Looking into Schoology** **SC Virtual**	**1:1 Elem CBs** **6-12 Laptops**	**Google certified** **Levels 1 and 2** **Curriculum Mapping** **Friday PDs** **Parent Videos**

District	Digital Ecosystem	1:1	Prof. Development
Dorchester 4 F2F Traditional: Started AB; now coming in 4 days a week; Friday remote 807 (38%) Hybrid: Participating with traditional remotely 1006 (47%) Virtual: Self-Paced; must check in weekly F2F on Zoom 330 (15%) 2143 Students	**Google Classroom/GAFE** **Seesaw** **Clever** **Edgenuity; Edmentum** **SC Virtual (Alt)** **Zoom** **Going with Schoology that state is providing; soft implementation this year; will do more next year**	**1:1 K-12 CBs; iPads (K & 1)**	**Cohort through Remote Learning Class with Digital Learning Collaborative** **Technology Coach (Digital Tools)** **Zoom Training** **SREB Remote Learning Training** **SREB Powerful LIteracy and Powerful Math inc. digital resources** **Friday PD** **NIET Training through State Department (David Matthis)**
Allendale 3 grants over last 3 years 75% are Virtual 25% are Hybrid F2F 2 days; Remote 2 days (½ and ½) Fridays are office hours or small groups; PD	**Skooler (LMS) works with Office 365; Trainer in Norway; MIcrosoft Teams** **Will switch to Schoology but have not trained teachers.** **Acellus** **iReady** **USA Test Prep** **Mastery Connect** **Algebra Nation** **ClassLink SSO**	**1:1 iPads 3K through 12th; teachers use Mac Air; Promethean Panels** **Swivel Robots with iPads** **Hot Spots (400)**	**Lost instructional technology coach; not filled yet** **Tech Ambassadors (Skooler)** **Lesli Fisher (ISTE) Friday night trainer** **Need Microsoft PD (Teams)**
Barnwell 29/Williston Debra McCord Terry Roy 50% in Virtual	**Clever SSO** **Roster about 50%** **Google Classroom; migrating to Canvas** **Google Meet**	**1:1 in K-12 with Chromebooks (Not going home till Covid; used in classroom)** **Promethean Boards in each classroom; Laptops with webcam**	**Google Classroom; using GAFE extensions to engage students** **Asynchronous and synchronous instruction to create virtual classroom close to traditional instruction.**

District	Digital Ecosystem	1:1	Prof. Development
50% hybrid/F2F K-8 Virtual; virtual only teachers; synchronous 4 days a week; follow typical bell schedule; using teacher content High School Virtual; APEX and SCVirtual Franchise		**Working on bluetooth microphones for teachers and Drawing Tablets**	**Equitable instruction** **(Find Canvas trainer)** **Not had to use a district-wide eLearning day. Have emergency eLearning lesson plans ready in Google Classroom.**

4. **Questions**
   How do you envision inclement weather make-up days?

   How did students prepare for eLearning days?

   Practice with new devices. How to login.

5. **Next Steps**
   Share document - HR Who does what where and when. Non instructional staff.

6. **Follow-Up Meetings**
   a. Two as a large group
      i. Meeting #2: January 15; 11 to noon
      ii. Meeting #3: TBD
   b. Individual Meetings on-going both virtual and face-to-face

Other Meetings

SDPC & Allendale

- October 23, 2 to 2:30; Schoology Best Practices, Johnnie MIiller & Alfreda Jameson
- TO DO:
  - Planning session on Schoology setup with Brenda Holliday (DONE on 11/6/2020 and 11/10/2020)
  - Training sessions with Kimber and Betsy: Friday, November 6, 8 to 9 AM (DONE)
- Online session for principals and a few ambassadors on November 10,2020 @9 am (Betsy and Kimber)
- Online Schoology Setup with Brenda HOlliday and Barbara on November 10 @ 1
- January 15, Betsy Masters and Tech Ambassadors
- January 22, Schoology Permission Excel Spreadsheet to share
- January 29, Betsy Masters, Barbara Nesbitt, and Kimber Nelson with Tech Ambassadors

SDPC & Beaufort

- October 8, 11 to Noon, Schoology Best Practices & PD Philosophy, Mary Stratos & Daniel Fallon
- TO DO:
    - Training sessions with teachers

January 15, 2021

1. Updates from Districts
    a. Virtual/F2F with COVID
    b. eLearning - Inclement Weather
2. Help Needed
    a. eLearning
    b. Schoology/LMS Integrations
    c. Other
3. Site Visits

District	Present
Allendale	Alfreda Jamison Moved from hybrid to F2F. On day 4. 4 days a week F2F 75% still virtual. Most learning synchronous with some asynchronous at high school. COVID numbers are manageable in district. Took some time off after Thanksgiving due to an outbreak. Managing well now. One week in December virtual. Fridays - professional learning; catching up with students. **No inclement learning days.** Students have hot spots due to hybrid. Some virtual came back in November. Elementary nearing capacity.
Barnwell 29/Williston	
Barnwell 45	Daphne Still, Kelly Shealy Pleased so far. Transition S2. (1/26). K-8th gave been F2F 5 days. High Schools were hybrid due to sharing career center with another county. Starting S2 - HS will be F2F five days a week. Still have virtual option. Did one remote week (some synch/asynch). 40 students transitioned from virtual back to F2F. Allowed F2F to go V.. Had created weather day plans teachers could use and some did for remote week. About ⅓ virtual. **No inclement learning days.** .
Beaufort **Choose Schoology. Can we share resources?**	Sully Opened 5 days F2F (Jan 2021). Started fully virtual Sept 8. October - opened hybrid for those who elected F2F. Those students are now fully F2F. No hybrid. Teachers needed to record F2F starting Jan 2021 just in case lessons needed, using Zoom. In-class students cannot see over partitions, so they had to use Zoom. Killing bandwidth. They are getting a new firewall.

	No inclement learning days.
Charleston **On hybrid days - What are parents saying?** **How are you handling children whose parents chose Virtual - when it was not best fit? How are you helping?**	Emily Woody, Buffy Roberts F2F five days a week since September 8 for all families wanting the option if room in the school (Plexiglass jungles). Families could switch Q2. Central virtual academy, F2F, and some temporary remote. Regional virtual. District staff has been subbing. Wi-Fi project. **No inclement learning days.**
Dorchester 2	Julie Kornahrens, Glenn Huggins, Kenneth Wilson Ended December in hybrid model, elementary ½ days. MS and HS hybrid. Rising COVID numbers - eLearning Schedule. Extended through month. eLearning - synchronous with daily schedule. Have break for lunches. Continuing feeding program. Opened up F2F hybrid for virtual. Can switch F2F/Virtual. Elementary - 150 moving into V; 500 out; Secondary - 425 moving into V; 600 out. Scheduling burden with this flexibility! **No inclement learning days.** D2 offered child care on hybrid ½ days.
Dorchester 4 **Will adopt Schoology more systemically at some point.**	Shelissa Bowman, Nancy Stevens, Monica Tudder, Elijah Delee Beginning of year (F2F, Synch Hybrid, Virtual). 4 Days with 1 day asynchronous. Students could move to different learning model at each quarter. More wanted to come back F2F. After Christmas break - fully synchronous eLearning through Jan. 20% Virtual, 30% Hybrid, 50% F2F. Will allow changes S2. Mi-Fi Hotspots out. Some bandwidth issues. **No inclement learning days.**
Erskine (Royal Live Oaks - Hardeeville)	
Pickens	Barbara Nesbitt, Sharon Huff Two learning models - Virtual and F2F with some built-in remote days/weeks. **Have used one inclement learning day for weather.** Our COVID numbers are getting challenging but we are trying to stay in school.

Region 4 Meetings for eLearning

July 21, 2020 at 10 am

September 29, 2020 at 10 am

October 27, 2020 at 10 am

December 1, 2020 at 10 am

Region 4 eLearning Pilot

July 21, 2020 at 10 am

Google Meet

Link to presentation click here

Google Meet Participants

Charlotte McDavid
Beth Taylor
Anna Baldwin
Greta Flinn
Stewart Lee
Kathryn Lee DAndrea
Kristen Hearne
Heather Holliday
Beth Dabney
Anna Shivar
Brenda Schrantz
Brandee Green
Randy Abbott
Brenda Schrantz

Minutes

- What Worked in 19-20
  - A3 - chromebooks in grades 3-12, PearDeck for elementary lessons, recorded lessons Mon-Thur and live lesson on Friday
  - A1 - Live lessons from their teachers, students enjoyed seeing their teachers virtually
  - Greenville - Greater Access and Equity, Track students in the Google Admin Dashboard (district computer and Google Classroom)
  - Oconee - IT Department was a strong support during eLearning, Phone helpline to answer technical questions and instructional questions, Help ticket system, weekly newsletter with strategies and what works to teachers
- Greatest Challenge
  - A2 -Access to wifi, made the lessons downloadable
  - Laurens 56 - Internet access was an issue, multiple students from the same household using the internet at the same time, bandwidth
  - A4 - Internet Access, Jet Packs for free, added to their Verizon plan for 200 families
  - A1 - Internet access and accountability, issues with live/recorded lessons, issued hot spots but not strong enough in some locations, so we are purchasing from several vendors (Verizon, TMobile, ATT, etc.) to be able to overcome those issues
  - A3 - Access wifi from school parking lots, wifi on buses from the state, leveraging relationships and calling homes to ensure student work was completed
- Next Steps
  - A1 - Ongoing PD (Interactive) for WebEx, Resources, Tips, Virtual apps for lessons, phone help

line, one to one in K-2 grades, Communication - formed a district committee
    - Greenwood 50 - Face to Face, Hybrid A/B schedule, Virtual, and Virtual SC, Wifi and IT support, strong delivery of instruction
    - A3 - Virtual for honors students, login to Google Meet during the face to face class time
    - A2 - Honors courses with SC Virtual Franchise (1st year is free) Offered computer science, teacher are trained from SC Virtual
    - A1 - Teachers will be teaching virtually, recording lessons, ordered mic for all teachers
    - Greenville - Leadership and Commitment, PD - UTC Online, Train the Trainer, Plan everyday as if it were an eLearning day
- Q&A
    - Thoughts on proctoring quizzes and test remotely
        - Netop and Google Meet
        - Securely - Special Ed/ESOL/Resource to support

September 29, 2020 at 10 am
Google Meet

- Link to presentation click here
- Google Meet Participants (13)
    - Anna Shivar
    - Beth Dabney
    - Beth Taylor
    - Brandee Green
    - Brenda Schrantz
    - Charlotte McDavid
    - Greta Flinn
    - Jody Penland
    - Kristen Hearne
    - Lee D'Andrea
    - Stewart Lee

Minutes - Agenda Items

- Professional development for teachers teaching digitally
- Communications with parents regarding expectations

October 27, 2020 at 10 am

Google Meet

        - Link to presentation click here
        - Google Meet Participants
    - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bQKWmdWNH-U88HnCifWZGmY10jQztVRXV4zZ5_6zEoQ/edit?usp=sharing
- Anna Baldwin
- Stewart Lee
- Greta Flinn
- Kristen Hearne
- Anna Shivar
- Lisa Simmons
- Brandee Green
- Lee D'Andrea
- Beth Dabney
- Brenda Schrantz
- Charlotte McDavid
- Beth Taylor
- Nichole Boseman
- Josie Kate Haupfear
- Laurie McCall
- Jody Penland

Minutes - Agenda Items

- Updates from Dr. D'Andrea
- Implementation of District LMS
- What is working and not working in districts' virtual deliveries
- Q & A

December 1, 2020 at 10 am

Google Meet

- Link to presentation click here
- Google Meet Participants

Minutes - Agenda Items

- Dr. D'Andrea Updates and Data Needed
- eLearning and Virtual Learning Updates from Districts
- Q&A

Appendix E

eLearning Questions and Information Collection Form

Introduction

The eLearning Pilot Project was originally designed to examine existing digital ecosystems in school districts (5 in year 1 and 10 additional in year 2) and the effectiveness of using the established resources for the continuation of instruction on inclement weather days. After two years, the findings clearly outlined elements of the digital ecosystem in the fifteen (15) districts which significantly contributed to the success of this project. The findings include:

1. **District leadership and organizational structure are vital and critical to the overall success of each district.**
2. **A well-established digital learning environment systemically exists within the district. This includes an identified Learning Management System (LMS) used with fidelity, adequate technical and instructional support for teachers and students and 1:1 hardware distribution.**
3. **Preparation and planning make a difference in the quality of the migration from digital learning environment. Clear and frequent communications with teachers, staff, students, and parents are essential elements of a successful implementation.**

The pandemic situation obviously accelerated the need for digital ecosystems in school districts. Forty-nine (49) districts have been included in the eLearning Pilot Project Year 3 Cohort. An accurate examination of the current landscape provides information for the final report of the pilot project and shapes recommendations for future actions (beyond pandemic). Please discuss with your district instructional and technology team to respond to the following questions. A "grade" will not be given for your response. It is important to know that no district will be identified by name (only non-responders are included in the report). Regional Cluster and statewide data will be included.

Completed forms should be returned on or before Monday, December 7th to 1leedandrea@gmail.com and dsigmon@eoc.sc.gov.

Questions and Information Collection

Completed forms should be returned on or before Monday, December 6th to 1leedandrea@gmail.com and dsigmon@eoc.sc.gov.

Date:

Form Completed By (list all participating & title):

DISTRICT PROFILE

DISTRICT (County & Number):

District Contact Name:

District Contact Email:

NUMBER OF CURRENT TEACHERS

Grade	*# Teachers*
4K (grade -1)	
5K (grade 0)	
1st Grade	
2nd Grade	
3rd Grade	
4th Grade	
5th Grade	

Grade	*# Teachers*
6th Grade	
7th Grade	
8th Grade	
9th Grade	
10th Grade	
11th Grade	
12th Grade	

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

According to the early findings, district leadership and organizational structure impact success in eLearning (and virtual/online) learning.

1. Which of the following statements best describes the status of your district and its digital ecosystem? Select from the list.

2. Which of the following leadership actions take place in the district? (check all that apply):
   - ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to district office.
   - ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to principals.
   - ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to teachers.
   - ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to parents.
   - ☐ District leadership monitors implementation analytics via dashboard.
   - ☐ District leadership monitors implementation via virtual engagement (joins Zoom meetings).
   - ☐ District leadership updates school board on digital ecosystem implementation.

3. Describe your district's digital ecosystem.

DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A well-established digital learning environment systemically exists within the district.

This includes:

- **a Learning Management System (LMS) used with fidelity**
- **adequate technical and instructional support for teachers and students**
- **1:1 hardware distribution**

4. Please provide information about your Learning Management System (LMS).

Do you use the same LMS for 4K through 12th Grade? Select Yes or No

If yes, what Learning Management System (LMS) are you currently using for all grades? Select from the list

If no, please answer the following:

	Learning Management System
4K	Select from the list
5K	Select from the list
1st Grade	Select from the list
2nd Grade	Select from the list
3rd Grade	Select from the list
4th Grade	Select from the list
5th Grade	Select from the list

	Learning Management System
6th Grade	Select from the list
7th Grade	Select from the list
8th Grade	Select from the list
9th Grade	Select from the list
10th Grade	Select from the list
11th Grade	Select from the list
12th Grade	Select from the list

Do you plan to change to a different LMS procured by SDE? Select Yes or No

If yes, what is your timeline?

If yes, what LMS will you be implementing? Select from the list

Which of the following best describes LMS implementation in the district? Select one from the list

Comments/Additional LMS feedback:

5. Please provide information about support for digital learning in your district.

a. Which of the following best describes the instructional technology support staff (ITSS) availability in the district? Select one from the list

b. Which of the following describes the status of the instructional technology support staff (ITSS) in the district?Select one from the list

c. Which of the following best describes the informational technology (IT/network) support (ITNS) in the district? Select one from the list

d. Which of the following describes the status of the informational technology support (ITNS) in the district? Select one from the list

6. Please provide device distribution data for your district (only include devices on hand).

The district has assigned a digital device for students which can be taken home daily.
Check the appropriate option for each grade level

	Devices Available
4K	Select from the list
5K	Select from the list
1st Grade	Select from the list
2nd Grade	Select from the list
3rd Grade	Select from the list
4th Grade	Select from the list
5th Grade	Select from the list

	Devices Available
6th Grade	Select from the list
7th Grade	Select from the list
8th Grade	Select from the list
9th Grade	Select from the list
10th Grade	Select from the list
11th Grade	Select from the list
12th Grade	Select from the list

How many devices are ordered and not received?

PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Preparation and planning make a difference in the quality of the migration from digital learning environment.

Clear and frequent communications with teachers, staff, students, and parents are essential elements of a successful implementation.

7. Teachers

Indicate all the methods the district has used to provide instructional technology professional development **with teachers**. (check all that apply)

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

During the past year, how many of your teachers have engaged in professional development dedicated to instructional technology elements? Select one from the list

Were these professional development opportunities for teachers created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the teacher professional development provided?

Do you see better results on teacher behavior/response depending on whether the PD was provided face-to-face, virtually or self-paced? Please describe.

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for teachers.

Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No

8. Students

Indicate all the methods the district has used to communicate about eLearning and/or virtual learning **with students**.

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

Were there structured opportunities for students to learn how to navigate in a digital ecosystem? Select Yes or No

If yes, how would you rate student participation? Select one from the list

If yes, were these opportunities created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the communication with students?

Do you see better results on student behavior/response depending on whether the information was provided face-to-face, virtually or self-paced? Please describe.

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for students.

Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No

9. Parents

Indicate all the methods the district has used to communicate about eLearning and/or virtual learning **with parents**.

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

Were there structured opportunities for parents to learn how to support their student in a digital ecosystem? Select Yes or No

If yes, how would you rate parent participation? Select one from the list

If yes, were these opportunities created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the communication with parents?

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for parents.

SUMMARY

10. Describe challenges that your district still faces as digital ecosystem implementation evolves.

11. In one or two sentences, describe the district's greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning.

12. In one or two sentences describe the district's next steps in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning.

Appendix F

Readiness Question and Information Collection Form

Introduction

The eLearning Pilot Project was originally designed to examine existing digital ecosystems in school districts (5 in year 1 and 10 additional in year 2) and the effectiveness of using the established resources for the continuation of instruction on inclement weather days. After two years, the findings clearly outlined elements of the digital ecosystem in the fifteen (15) districts which significantly contributed to the success of this project. The findings include:

4. **District leadership and organizational structure are vital and critical to the overall success of each district.**
5. **A well-established digital learning environment systemically exists within the district. This includes an identified Learning Management System (LMS) used with fidelity, adequate technical and instructional support for teachers and students and 1:1 hardware distribution.**
6. **Preparation and planning make a difference in the quality of the migration from digital learning environment. Clear and frequent communications with teachers, staff, students, and parents are essential elements of a successful implementation.**

The pandemic situation obviously accelerated the need for digital ecosystems in school districts. Forty-nine (49) districts have been included in the eLearning Pilot Project Year 3 Cohort. An accurate examination of the current landscape provides information for the final report of the pilot project and shapes recommendations for future actions (beyond pandemic). Please discuss with your district instructional and technology team to respond to the following questions. A "grade" will not be given for your response. It is important to know that no district will be identified by name (only non-responders are included in the report). Regional Cluster and statewide data will be included.

Completed forms should be returned on or before Thursday, December 10th to 1leedandrea@gmail.com and dsigmon@eoc.sc.gov

Questions and Information Collection

Completed forms should be returned on or before Thursday, December 10th to 1leedandrea@gmail.com and dsigmon@eoc.sc.gov.

Date:

Form Completed By (list all participating & title):

DISTRICT PROFILE

DISTRICT (County & Number):

District Contact Name:

District Contact Email:

NUMBER OF CURRENT TEACHERS

Grade	*# Teachers*
4K (grade -1)	
5K (grade 0)	
1st Grade	
2nd Grade	
3rd Grade	
4th Grade	
5th Grade	

Grade	*# Teachers*
6th Grade	
7th Grade	
8th Grade	
9th Grade	
10th Grade	
11th Grade	
12th Grade	

DISTRICT LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

According to the early findings, district leadership and organizational structure impact success in eLearning (and virtual/online) learning.

13. Which of the following statements best describes the status of your district and its digital ecosystem? Select from the list.

14. Which of the following leadership actions take place in the district? (check all that apply):
- ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to district office.
- ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to principals.
- ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to teachers.
- ☐ Superintendent (or designee) sets expectations through messages to parents.
- ☐ District leadership monitors implementation analytics via dashboard.
- ☐ District leadership monitors implementation via virtual engagement (joins Zoom meetings).
- ☐ District leadership updates school board on digital ecosystem implementation.

15. Describe your district's digital ecosystem.

DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A well-established digital learning environment systemically exists within the district.

This includes:

- **a Learning Management System (LMS) used with fidelity**
- **adequate technical and instructional support for teachers and students**
- **1:1 hardware distribution**

16. Please provide information about your Learning Management System (LMS).

Do you use the same LMS for 4K through 12th Grade? Select Yes or No

If yes, what Learning Management System (LMS) are you currently using for all grades? Select from the list

If no, please answer the following:

	Learning Management System
4K	Select from the list
5K	Select from the list
1st Grade	Select from the list
2nd Grade	Select from the list
3rd Grade	Select from the list
4th Grade	Select from the list
5th Grade	Select from the list

	Learning Management System
6th Grade	Select from the list
7th Grade	Select from the list
8th Grade	Select from the list
9th Grade	Select from the list
10th Grade	Select from the list
11th Grade	Select from the list
12th Grade	Select from the list

Do you plan to change to a different LMS procured by SDE? Select Yes or No

If yes, what is your timeline?

If yes, what LMS will you be implementing? Select from the list

Which of the following best describes LMS implementation in the district? Select one from the list

Comments/Additional LMS feedback:

17. Please provide information about support for digital learning in your district.

e. Which of the following best describes the instructional technology support staff (ITSS) **availability** in the district? Select one from the list

f. Which of the following describes the **status** of the instructional technology support staff (ITSS) in the district?Select one from the list

g. Which of the following best describes the informational technology (IT/network) support (ITNS) in the district? Select one from the list

h. Which of the following describes the **status** of the informational technology support (ITNS) in the district? Select one from the list

18. Please provide device distribution data for your district (only include devices on hand).

The district has assigned a digital device for students which can be taken home daily.
Check the appropriate option for each grade level

	Devices Available
4K	Select from the list
5K	Select from the list
1st Grade	Select from the list
2nd Grade	Select from the list
3rd Grade	Select from the list
4th Grade	Select from the list
5th Grade	Select from the list

	Devices Available
6th Grade	Select from the list
7th Grade	Select from the list
8th Grade	Select from the list
9th Grade	Select from the list
10th Grade	Select from the list
11th Grade	Select from the list
12th Grade	Select from the list

How many devices are ordered and not received?

PREPARATION AND PLANNING

Preparation and planning make a difference in the quality of the migration from digital learning environment.

Clear and frequent communications with teachers, staff, students, and parents are essential elements of a successful implementation.

19. Teachers

Indicate all the methods the district has used to provide instructional technology professional development **with teachers**. (check all that apply)

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

During the past year, how many of your teachers have engaged in professional development dedicated to instructional technology elements? Select one from the list

Were these professional development opportunities for teachers created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the teacher professional development provided?

Do you see better results on teacher behavior/response depending on whether the PD was provided face-to-face, virtually or self-paced? Please describe.

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for teachers.

Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No

20. Students

Indicate all the methods the district has used to communicate about eLearning and/or virtual learning **with students**.

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

Were there structured opportunities for students to learn how to navigate in a digital ecosystem? Select Yes or No

If yes, how would you rate student participation? Select one from the list

If yes, were these opportunities created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the communication with students?

Do you see better results on student behavior/response depending on whether the information was provided face-to-face, virtually or self-paced? Please describe.

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for students.

Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No

21. Parents

Indicate all the methods the district has used to communicate about eLearning and/or virtual learning **with parents**.

- ☐ Face-to-face
- ☐ Webinars
- ☐ YouTube videos
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Documents

Other

Were there structured opportunities for parents to learn how to support their student in a digital ecosystem? Select Yes or No

If yes, how would you rate parent participation? Select one from the list

If yes, were these opportunities created by the district or purchased from a vendor?

How is your district measuring/capturing the impact/effectiveness of the communication with parents?

If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for parents.

SUMMARY

22. Describe challenges that your district still faces as digital instruction evolves.

23. In one or two sentences, describe the district's greatest success in implementing digital instruction.

In one or two sentences describe the district's next steps in implementing a digital instruction

Appendix G

eLearning Application Petition

Readiness Cohort to eLearning Cohort Application Form: FY 20-21

Completed forms should be returned to mferguson@eoc.sc.gov and 1leedandrea@gmail.com on or before Friday, December 4th.

Date

DISTRICT PROFILE

DISTRICT (County & Number):

District Contact Name:

District Contact Email:

NUMBER OF CURRENT STUDENTS

(In PowerSchool, from the District, select System Reports, on System Tab, in Membership & Enrollment section, click *Enrollment Summary by Date*, click Submit, in the fields below, enter value representing the Total In Grade)

Grade	*# Students*
4K (grade -1)	
5K (grade 0)	
1st Grade	
2nd Grade	
3rd Grade	
4th Grade	
5th Grade	

Grade	*# Students*
6th Grade	
7th Grade	
8th Grade	
9th Grade	
10th Grade	
11th Grade	
12th Grade	

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
Change of Circumstance	Please provide specific information on the adjustments, additions and changes that would impact the district's capacity to provide eLearning since the eLearning 20-21 application was submitted.
Device Distribution For Students	The district certifies that **all** students in the district have access to a device or an app to complete all eLearning lessons. Select Yes or No

	The district has assigned a digital device for students which can be taken home daily. *Check the appropriate option for each grade level* 4K: Select from the list 5K: Select from the list 1st Grade: Select from the list 2nd Grade: Select from the list 3rd Grade: Select from the list 4th Grade: Select from the list 5th Grade: Select from the list 6th Grade: Select from the list 7th Grade: Select from the list 8th Grade: Select from the list 9th Grade: Select from the list 10th Grade: Select from the list 11th Grade: Select from the list 12th Grade: Select from the list

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
Device Distribution For Students	Please identify which devices have been assigned. 4K: Select from the list 5K: Select from the list 1st Grade: Select from the list 2nd Grade: Select from the list 3rd Grade: Select from the list 4th Grade: Select from the list 5th Grade: Select from the list 6th Grade: Select from the list 7th Grade: Select from the list 8th Grade: Select from the list 9th Grade: Select from the list 10th Grade: Select from the list 11th Grade: Select from the list 12th Grade: Select from the list
	Please provide information on the district's single sign-on process for students. Include screenshots in the box below if appropriate.

Device Distribution For Students	Single sign-on screenshots *(please copy/paste or use Insert pictures here)*

Demonstrated Access to Students of eLearning lesson plans	The district certifies that all students and teachers either have access to the Internet away from school buildings or have access to the eLearning assignments. Select Yes or No
	Please check all that apply below and provide any additional information on how the district will document access. ☐ The district will collect information from each teacher and parent/guardian documenting that the student has access to broadband internet access at home and can download necessary apps. Additional Information: ☐ The district will collect information from each teacher and parent/guardian documenting what devices that teachers and students use to access the internet outside of school. Additional Information: ☐ The district will work with teachers and parents to access discounted internet access at home. Additional Information: ☐ The district will allow students to download eLearning assignments onto their devices. Additional Information: ☐ The district will allow students to work offline in a learning management system like Google Drive or allow for offline work. Additional Information: ☐Other (Please specify)

<table>
<tr><td>Instructional Technology</td><td>Please tell us about your Learning Management System(s).

Do you use the same LMS for 4K through 12th Grade? Select Yes or No

If yes, what Learning Management System (LMS) are you currently using for all grades? Select from the list

If no, please answer the following
<table>
<tr><td></td><td>Learning Management System</td></tr>
<tr><td>4K</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>5K</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>1st Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>2nd Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>3rd Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>4th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>5th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>6th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>7th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>8th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>9th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>10th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>11th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
<tr><td>12th Grade</td><td>Select from the list</td></tr>
</table>
Do you plan to change to a different LMS procured by SDE? Select Yes or No
If yes, what is your timeline?
If yes, what LMS will you be implementing? Select from the list
Comments/Additional LMS feedback:</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Please provide evidence of the systemic use of instructional technology in the classroom. Evidence should include screenshots from lessons at early childhood, elementary, middle and high school levels.
Description:</td></tr>
</table>

Instructional Technology	Systemic Use of Instructional Technology Screenshots *(please copy/paste or use Insert pictures here)*

Monitoring Responsibility	Please describe the district's system for monitoring student and teacher engagement on the LMS (Google Admin Dashboard, etc.). How will this information be shared with principals, and what will be the expectations for follow up?
District IT Support and Infrastructure	Please provide evidence, including a narrative, of the IT and instructional technology support services provided at the district and school level. This should include a description of the support networks available to **parents and students** (phone calls, emails, texts, etc. and the hours of support available).
	If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for students. Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No
	If available, please provide the link(s) to digital/eLearning resources for parents.
Teacher Professional Development	Please describe and provide evidence of the support and professional development provided to teachers to assist in the transition towards eLearning and the inclusion of technology as a tool in the 21st century classroom.
	Please provide the link(s) to resources for teachers & staff. Does access to these resources require a login? Select Yes or No

Appendix H

Application for Year 3 eLearning Pilot Project and Scoring Rubric

School Year 2020-21 Application (pre-Pandemic restart)

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
School Access	The district certifies that eLearning will be implemented for **all** schools in the district for one or more make-up days due to inclement weather. **___YES ___NO**
Instructional eLearning Days	Section 59-1-425 of the South Carolina Code of Laws defines an instructional day and the requirements for make-up days. The law defines an instructional day for elementary students to be a minimum of 5.5 hours a day and for secondary students, 6.0 hours. Regulation 43-172 stipulates that "a pupil shall maintain membership in *a minimum of 200 minutes of daily instruction* or its equivalency for an annual accumulation of 36,000 minutes." For any eLearning day used, the district certifies that each eLearning day will be *5.5 hours for students in kindergarten through grade 8 and 6.0 hours for students in grades 9-12, or a minimum of 200 minutes of daily instruction.* Teacher hours should be 5.5 hours for students in kindergarten through grade 8 and 6.0 hours for students. Lessons provided should require a minimum of 200 minutes of instruction (video, reading, listening); the remainder of the time is for student engagement, studying and work completion, etc. These times are cumulative across subjects. **___YES ___NO** Will any eLearning days be used for specific built-in, make-up days like Martin Luther King Day, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, etc.? **___YES ___NO** **If Yes**, which days? _____ _____
Number of eLearning Days	Will the district limit the number of days of eLearning used for make-up days? **___Yes ___No** **If Yes** . . . At a maximum, how many eLearning days could be used for make-up days? _____ How will the district decide when/if eLearning days will occur? _____ _____

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
	How will the district notify parents and staff of implementation of an eLearning day? _____ _____ _____
eLearning Lessons	The district certifies that the eLearning lessons will address academic content or skills that would have been addressed if school had been in session in a traditional setting. **___Yes ___No**
Device Distribution For Students	The district certifies that **all** students in the district have access to a device or an app to complete all eLearning lessons. **___Yes ___No** The district has assigned a digital device for all students in grades __ through ___ which can be taken home daily. Please identify which devices have been assigned. _____ All students in grades ___ through ___ have access to a digital device or app as documented by _____. Please provide specific information on apps to be used to complete eLearning lessons.
Demonstrated Access to Students of eLearning lesson plans **Demonstrated Access to Students of eLearning lesson plans**	The district certifies that all students and teachers either have access to the Internet away from school buildings or have access to the eLearning assignments. **___Yes ___No** Please check *all* that apply below and provide any additional information on how the district will document access. ___ The district will collect information from each teacher and parent/guardian documenting that the student has access to broadband Internet access at home and can download necessary apps. ___ The district will collect information from each teacher and parent/guardian documenting what devices that teachers and students use to access the Internet outside of school.

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
	___ The district will work with teachers and parents to access discounted Internet access at home. ___ The district will allow students to download eLearning assignments onto their devices. ___ The district will allow students to work offline in a learning management system like Google Drive or allow for offline work. ___ Other (Please specify)
Instructional Technology	Please provide evidence of the systemic use of instructional technology in the classroom (instructional directions or teacher handbook, strategic plan, etc.) sample files, lessons from some classrooms including lessons in multiple content areas, etc. Please provide **at least 3** support letters from teachers and administrators.
Notification	The district certifies that students and parents/guardians will be informed of their eLearning targets for any day missed by inclement weather and made up with eLearning by 9 a.m. **___Yes ___No**
Teacher Responsibility	The district certifies that each classroom teacher of record will be responsible for uploading eLearning assignments and will have "office hours" to answer questions or assist parents/guardians and students in completing the virtual assignments. **___Yes ___No** What are the specific responsibilities of classroom teachers? _____ _____
Student Responsibility	The district certifies that each student and parents/guardians have a clear understanding of the responsibility of students to complete the eLearning assignments. **___Yes ___No** Please respond to the following questions:

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
	How will the district communicate to students and parents? _____ _____ _____ How many days will the student have to complete all make-up work? __ How will incomplete work be handled? _____ _____ _____
Accommodations	For students with disabilities who do not use an online platform for eLearning or for whom an online platform is not appropriate, teachers will provide parents/caregivers with appropriate educational materials and learning activities for student use. All students who have accommodations for instruction will be provided with or have access to those accommodations. For limited English proficient students, teachers will provide parents/caregivers appropriate educational materials and learning activities for student use per the Individual Learning Plan. **___Yes ___No** Please describe how the district will handle the above accommodations. _____ _____ _____
District IT Support and Infrastructure	If students or parents have problems with accessing the eLearning assignments, how will the district respond to questions or concerns? _____ _____ Please provide a copy of the district's organization chart that identifies IT and instructional technology support at the district *and/or* school level. Do NOT include the names of individuals; only include their titles and denote whether they are full or part-time employees. Please provide evidence, including a narrative, of the IT and instructional technology support services provided at the district and/or school.
Learning Management System	The district has a learning management system that will post the assignments for eLearning day and will document that student assignments are collected and completed. **___Yes ___No**

Assurances	Certification or Information Needed from District
	How long has the district used the current learning management system? _____ Please identify the learning management system or systems to be used. _____ Please denote grade levels served: _____
Other Support	Is the district interested in reviewing and using eLearning resources provided by Discus through the South Carolina State Library and/or SC ETV? **___Yes ___No**
Reporting	The district agrees to work with the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), its staff, and at least one school district that participated in the pilot program in the prior year to monitor and document the implementation and impact of eLearning for school make-up days. The reporting will include but is not limited to: methods of implementation utilized; advantages and disadvantages; barriers and opportunities; and feedback from administrators, teachers, students, and parents/ guardians. The EOC will not assess the impact on student achievement. **___Yes ___No**

SIGNATURES

By signing below, _____ (*District name*) certifies that it meets the above requirements to participate in the eLearning pilot for school make-up days and that it will provide the necessary data and cooperation to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to monitor and evaluate implementation of the eLearning pilot for school make-up days.

Superintendent: _____

Signature of Superintendent: _____

Date: _____

Chair of Board of Trustees: _____

Signature of Board Chair: _____

Date: _____

* The support of the full Board is best to implement the eLearning project. If the application was approved by the Board, please include a copy of the Agenda and/or Minutes.

District Application: _____ **Reviewer:** _____

eLearning Pilot Three 2020-2021 (initial; pre-pandemic)
Application Rubric and Scoring

Based on year one research, observations and feedback from pilot districts, the following rubric serves as the scoring basis for the selection of year two pilot districts. The application completed and submitted by the district, along with the assurances signed by the superintendent and board chair, serve as the document scored by the rubric.

Readiness to Implement.

	Zero Points	*1-4 Point*	*5-8 Points*	*9-10 Points*	*Dist. Score*
Device distribution among students	The district does not have a device distribution plan implemented	The district has a device distribution written plan including financing, less than seven grade levels have been implemented. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	The district has a device distribution written plan including financing, 7-9 grade levels have been implemented. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	The district has a device distribution written plan including financing, at least 9 grade levels have been implemented. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	
Teachers' familiarity and use of a Learning Management System.	The district does not have a K-12 Learning Management System	The district has systemic Learning Management System(s) (LMS) and the application describes how it is used. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	The district has robust Learning Management System(s) (LMS) that will aide in the implementation of eLearning and the application includes evidence (screen shots, files, etc.) how it is used. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	The district has robust Learning Management System(s) (LMS) that will aide in the implementation of eLearning and the application includes evidence (screen shots, files, etc.) how it is used. The application includes letters of support from teachers and administration. Range of points allows to consider time in implementation.	
Technology infrastructure.	The district's organization chart shows no IT or instructional technology support at the district or school level.	The district's organization chart shows ***some*** IT **or** instructional technology support at the district **or** school level. Titles may vary; responsibilities must be clearly articulated.	The district's organization chart shows IT ***and*** instructional technology support at the district or school level. Titles may vary; responsibilities must be clearly articulated.	The district's organization chart shows IT ***and*** instructional technology support at the district ***and*** school level. Titles may vary; responsibilities must be clearly articulated.	

	Zero Points	*1-4 Point*	*5-8 Points*	*9-10 Points*	*Dist. Score*
Current status of instructional technology as a part of the overall learning process.	There is no evidence of instructional technology as a part of the overall learning process.	Evidence is included for systemic use of instructional technology in the classroom (instructional directions or teacher handbook, strategic plan, etc.). Sample files, lessons from some classrooms are included less than five grades.	Evidence is included for systemic use of instructional technology in the classroom (instructional directions or teacher handbook, strategic plan, etc.). Sample files, lessons from some classrooms are included 6-8 grades.	Evidence is included for systemic use of instructional technology in the classroom (instructional directions or teacher handbook, strategic plan, etc.). Sample files, lessons from some classrooms are included 6-8 grades in multiple content areas and include support letters from teachers and administration.	
Sub-total Readiness					

Assurances

	Zero Points	*4 Point*	*7 Points*	*10 Points*	*District Score*
The superintendent and the board chair signatures are included in the application.	The district application does not have any signatures.	The district application does not have **one** of the signatures.	The district application has both the superintendent's and the board chair's signatures.	The district application has both the superintendent's and the board chair's signatures. The board voted to approve and support the application (minutes included).	
Sub-total Assurances					
Total Score (combination of Readiness and Assurances)					

Observations:

Strengths of the Application:

_____
_____
_____

Weaknesses of the Application:

_____
_____
_____

Name(s) of Individual(s) who Reviewed the Application.

_____

Signature(s) of Individual(s) who Reviewed the Application:

_____

Date of Submission: _____

Appendix I

District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for eLearning (during pandemic time)

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	As the digital ecosystem implementation evolves, the challenges our district still face deal with digital and resource overload. Teachers have been challenged with the new digital platforms that are being used to increase student outcomes in this unprecedented time. Notwithstanding, teachers have embraced the challenge. Some teachers have been identified as Tech Ambassadors and have been instrumental in addressing any deficits that have surfaced during the pandemic.
District	There are two challenges that we continue to face in developing our digital ecosystem. We became a one-to-one district seven years ago, and these two challenges are the same ones that we faced in the beginning as well. First, technology is ever changing, and you will get to a point where you have things working well and smoothly and an update will happen, or new technology will be introduced. There is no way to anticipate all the changes that may come, and the only way to stay on top of it is to make sure that you plan, research and prepare for any changes that are made. This preparation helps to minimize any interruption of instruction in the classroom. Second, creating new and innovative ways to provide professional development to teachers is an ongoing challenge.
District	Continued challenge with decision for e-learning day due to emergency situations being timely enough for all involved to be adequately prepared. Continued concerns over early preparation so that students without internet access have time to download materials for offline work at home. Dealing with negative parent perception of e-learning continues to be a concern, along with the quality of assignments being given on e-learning days.
District	The biggest challenge is providing online content and instruction to students who do not have access to high-speed internet away from school
District	The challenges that we face include the following: 1. Varied user skills 2. Lack of internet service in remote areas across the district 3. Additional technology support needed to support the additional technology that has been added 4. Early learners and learning in a virtual world are not best practice
District	I greatest challenge is to keep our students engaged for an entire day of eLearning. If we have 4 times during the day a student needs to attend a Google Meet, the first 2 meetings are well attended, but the last two are only attended by a small percentage of students. We are looking at our elementary schedule to see what we can do to deliver instruction during the time that we have all the students in a Google Meet. Currently, we are getting feedback from all our elementary teachers to revise the instructional day for an elementary eLearning Day.

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	Teacher knowledge of providing strong instruction through a virtual classroom (those that do not teacher virtually on a daily basis).
District	The biggest challenges we face are continuing to find innovative ways to reach our students, streamline systems to make our work more efficient, and balance digital instruction to meet both the needs of our students and teachers while maintaining the rigor needed for quality instruction.
District	COVID has shed light on new challenges we see in our county especially when it comes to internet access. There are still many areas of our district that either have no options for internet connectivity due to geographic hurdles or the economic status of some of our families poses difficulties to keep students connected digitally. Though COVID has increased involvement from families to support their students, parent involvement is still a challenge. Another challenge we seek as we grow capacity in our teachers is the overall motivation and morale of our teachers. They are working tirelessly to do what's best for their students within their boundaries of technology comfort levels. Pacing of new information for them becomes vital to keep them updated but not overwhelmed.
District	Connectivity for rural students continues to be a challenge,
District	The internet access is still not available in some parts of the county, unreliable access, and awaiting additional bandwidth.
District	The district continues to face implementation challenges around infrastructure (bandwidth) and lack of internet service in some more remote areas in the county. We have also run into challenges that we have been able to resolve, related to provisioning of technology resources and digital content as we have shared teachers in regions based on school needs
District	Our biggest challenge is equity. We have many students who do not have access to internet through inability to afford or unable to access due to rural nature of the school district. Additionally, supporting our most vulnerable students (special education, EL, and SE Deficient) is challenging in a digital platform.
District	Lack of digital infrastructure with our local service provider has been a significant challenge for our district. Additionally, the rapid implementation of a new learning management system has been challenging, as a whole.
District	As our district's digital ecosystem implementation evolves, we still face challenges with wireless connectivity throughout all areas in our buildings. Therefore, we have begun to install more wireless access points in all buildings.
District	Maintenance of hardware.
District	• Teacher awareness of all available resources • Continuing to build capacity at the school level • Understanding when to use the right resource for different scenarios • Developing system-wide expectations while considering the many variables and exceptions • Creating a catalog of “How To” documents and keep them updated

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	Connecting MS Teams to Schoology may cause frustration and concern from teachers. Streamlining systemic processes for stakeholders to utilize. We continue to change instructional models due to fluctuation in disease activity and concerns with the pandemic.
District	While most students have access to the internet at home using Hot Spots, we still struggle with students having a disruptive signal because of bandwidth.
District	1. Internet accessibility continues to be a challenge for our County School District, a rural school district. Despite the availability of hotspots, due to the location of the student's physical address, internet service is nonexistent or unreliable in some areas of Fairfield County. Student engagement continues to be a challenge we will continue to face as our digital ecosystem implementation evolves. We are exploring best practices and strategies to increase student engagement during this pandemic.
District	Rural home internet, limited by CPU/GPU usage on our Chromebook fleet, funding for a google voice type communication tool for teachers. Additional instructional technology staff for schools. Additional PD, strategies, hardware for our virtual teaching environments. The industry challenges and shortfalls of receiving NEW devices in a timely fashion. Many districts have had orders in 6+ months and still not received devices for students.
District	The needed devices for grades PK-1 and replacement devices have been on backorder for 6+ months.
District	Our district still struggles with broadband internet availability. We are still awaiting delivery of devices to provide one to one access for our students. We also need to expand our instructional and informational technology support team.
District	Our greatest challenge continues to be bandwidth issues outside of schools due to the lack of infrastructure in the remote/rural areas of our County. We were able to secure partnerships with Verizon, T-Mobile and AT&T for the provision of hotspot devices for student households that did not have Internet access. A partnership with HTC provisioned parking lot wireless access for students at eight district schools.
District	The only challenge we are facing is to ensure all students are staying on pace for successful academic progress.
District	SEL for students and teachers, especially those in the virtual environment. Ways to fully integrate the traditional classroom/school experience in a virtual environment. Added personnel for support in the virtual program, dedicated staff.
District	Waiting on 4900 Chromebooks that now have been bumped back to January delivery were supposed to be here last September 1. Still have some connectivity issues in certain areas and the hot spots provided by state are very ineffective.
District	We are challenged with finding ways to enhance student engagement. We must find ways that positively impact a student's decision to connect to the learning.
District	Student participation and engagement in the virtual setting remains the largest instructional challenge of eLearning. Access to reliable internet connection for certain students and parental support in the home setting for the most at-risk learners

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
	contribute to this issue. Technical challenges related to interoperability standards among vendors remains the largest system technical challenge.
District	Some teachers are hesitant to move forward.
District	Rural Internet connectivity. Getting teachers to buy into only using district approved applications. The State Department of education and vendors keep sending promotional apps to teachers that in many cases are a duplication to what our district already has. In many cases, teacher think they need to try these. The impact is that students get confused by the different applications.
District	Our district continues to work to provide devices to all students 4K - 12th grade. Our district does not have a dedicated IT technician at each school. Instructional Technology Coaches and IT Technicians communicate regularly and utilize our district work order system and One to One Plus to document technology needs, however, offering a fully virtual option this year highlighted the need for an IT Technician per building. In addition, our five largest schools would benefit from an additional Instructional Technology Coach per building. Ideas such as implementing a Parent Academy to assist with meeting needs are being discussed.
District	Challenges include software/application management, funding to replace devices, video conferencing security and appropriate access, and funding for equipment to upgrade bandwidth.
District	Devices at the primary grades needs to be touchscreen Chromebooks versus iPads. Bandwidth is another challenge for our district, as well as limited connectivity to the Internet for some of our most rural families.
District	I would like to see consistency in the use of a defined set of technology tools all accessible within an LOR.
District	We are still waiting on 2100 devices to arrive which is making us must use some of our older devices. The at home wireless continue to be an issue even with the hotspots.
District	Purchasing challenges continue as most tools are unavailable for at least 3-6 months. We have preordered" for next year's replacement cycle to ensure on-time delivery for next fall. Additionally, as more students choose a virtual option districts need clear guidelines and protocols from the state for ensuring that students participate and are held to the same expectations as face-to-face students, purchasing challenges continue as most tools are unavailable for at least 3-6 months. We have "preordered" for next year's replacement cycle to ensure on-time delivery for next fall. Additionally, as more students choose a virtual option, districts need clear guidelines and protocols from the state for ensuring that students participate and are held to the same expectations as face-to-face students.
District	Initiative fatigue with being provided multiple LMS platforms for teachers to engage over multiple years. Building our capacity and expertise in executing effective, rigorous, and personalized e-learning. Measuring impact of training, engagement, and learning.

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	Consistent student attendance in virtual classrooms. Training and access have been an issue for substitutes.
District	Connection seems to be our biggest issue. We still have students with connection issues at home. We have some school connectivity issues as well. Students are still being dropped from their class meetings regardless of the platform.
District	As our digital ecosystem implementation continues to evolve, providing adequate support for both technical and pedagogical stance are areas that continue to present challenges. Professional development continues to be a need as mindsets shift to a digital age for administrators, teachers, students, and families. Ongoing funding and proper staffing continue to be hurdles as we continue to support our district's digital ecosystem.
District	This school year, we were 1:1 for the first time in early childhood. Those teachers needed more support than we anticipated with the fundamentals of our ecosystem.
District	Our greatest challenge continues to be the lack of sufficient internet access for rural communities (even with hot spots). Additionally, some of our parents remain challenged in using technology, although their competence in this area is certainly improving. Teachers are also becoming increasingly more comfortable using technology to support learning.
District	Providing the necessary amount of professional learning to teachers is always a challenge. Helping teachers learn strategies for increasing student engagement while at the same time sharpening their skills with new technology resources.
District	Challenges that the school faces as the digital ecosystem implementation evolves include the limited availability of dedicated technical and device support staff, the limited availability of instructional technology support staff for students and teachers, and difficulty acquiring additional devices in a timely manner.
District	The rigor and relevance of the lessons and activities continue to be a challenge. The LOR will be a huge benefit for us. We will be able to quickly import all of our district created resources and benefit from the vast collection available. Thank you.
District	The District still has a significant learning curve for parents, teachers, and students. We need time, in an already stressful environment, for collaboration and PD. We need more personnel who can work as instructional support. There is a strong need for students' engagement strategies in a virtual/hybrid model.
District	District had been contracting with Schoology and Seesaw for a number of years. As we kicked off 2020 in hybrid scheduling, we saw usage multiply. Even after returning to increased face-to-face instruction, we found a need for more individualized training on certain software. To meet this need, we have created (and continue to build) a website with how-to videos and continue to work one on one with teachers when possible. The Tech Team publishes a weekly email with tips and tricks of items that were presented as issues earlier in the year. We have updated our tech support system with phone lines and voicemail options, allowing us a faster response time for students and teachers. Moving forward, we hope that teachers will continue to use the tools in new ways and not just as a replacement for our current work structure.

Appendix I: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	The biggest challenge we have as we implement our digital ecosystem is finding ways to better engage those virtual students and parents who are disengaged and who do not respond to emails, phone calls, or requests for parental meetings.
District	As mentioned above, our district has a mature digital ecosystem (8yrs), but one of the biggest challenges we face is funding in terms of devices, software, and staff associated with training and support of students and teachers.
District	General acceptance from our traditional instruction" staff members. Also, the activities of last spring has harmed what virtual should be and this has been growing pains to learn that these activities are not only useful but required. Limited support staff that is now supporting at home virtual students via a help desk and still providing support for students attending at the schools has been a challenge especially with the addition of almost 1800 devices in a single year and no support staff additions. "
District	Connectivity in some of our communities continues to be our greatest challenge. Parent involvement is also a challenge as students are typically well-versed in how to access digital, but parents sometimes do not.
District	We have several ongoing challenges: 1. Parent communication and participation. We are planning on a united parent platform to push out later this year to address this issue. 2. Creating a systemic system of onboarding users, making sure users get what they need when they need it. 3. Creating a culture of systemic implementation with regards to software, as too often IT finds out about purchases after the fact, making it harder to support software from both implementation and PD sides.

Appendix J
District *Successes* in Digital Ecosystem Building

District	Successes
District	The greatest success for our district has been the implementation of Microsoft Teams and building capacity within teacher leaders as tech ambassadors to help support their colleagues around Teams and other instructional programs and resources we have implemented.
District	Our greatest success in implementing the district's digital ecosystem is supporting every student in our district to have the resources that are needed to learn and succeed. All our students have a device and access to WiFi, and this has been a gamechanger for our teachers and students.
District	Positive changes at the primary level with more student and teacher engagement in the digital platform. This has been a challenge for us.
District	Abundant adoption and utilization (with fidelity) of Google Workspace products and Google Classroom has allowed our teachers to adapt to the digital ecosystem quickly. Understanding the limited resources, we focused on peer support with intensive training of instructional leaders and highflyer teaching staff in order to provide as much support as possible with limited dedicated support staff.
District	The district has been able to provide a device for 4K-12th closing the technology accessibility gap. The district has provided a model that supports teaching and learning in two settings: face-to-face and virtual with the appropriate tools and resources to transition as needed with minimal disruption to instruction
District	I feel our greatest success is the ability and comfort level of our teachers to deliver their content on an eLearning Day. We worked very hard to deliver professional development to support our teachers in teaching virtually.
District	Ability to have 95% of our students accessing virtual classrooms regularly-- only a few families remain without internet access and we are working on getting them established.
District	Our staff is dedicated to providing quality education for our students, has committed numerous hours to ensure our students are successful, and is driven by making decisions that are focused on the best interest of our students.
District	Our biggest success has been building a solid collaboration with Technology Services and Instructional Services because without that strong teamwork, systems and learning can be met with frustration. It also allowed for us to quickly adapt to the many shifts we have had in a digital ecosystem whether it be in hardware, software, processes, or practices. The building of a strong team was vital in our successes.
District	Creating an environment that supports innovative practices has opened the door for teachers to create opportunities for their students that reflect real world learning and build work and life skills. This ecosystem

District	Successes
	has also supported personalizing learning for students in the way in which they access content and demonstrate mastery.
District	The greatest success is having Single-Sign-on, the 1:1 implementation that was done years prior, various resources to meet the needs of every student and having and Instructional Technology Coach at each school.
District	The district's move to a consistent LMS has been positive in several ways, including a consistent access point to learning for students and families, sharing resources across the district and supporting teachers with professional development and common resources. Additionally, the more frequent use of virtual conferencing tools (like Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx) has made collaboration across our large district more conducive and consistent, allowing for better communication and more aligned expectations.
District	Teacher buy in, collaboration, and growth in usage has been a tremendous success as our ecosystem has evolved into a working document has been developed and communicated.
District	Despite the challenges listed above, our dedicated teachers and district administrators have risen to meet the needs of our students and parents in the best manner possible.
District	The district's greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning is the creation, communication, and implementation of a comprehensive overview of expectations for our eLearning environment in CSD2.
District	Providing equal access to all students, regardless of disability, access to internet or other supplies, and historical achievement to high quality learning both in the classroom and remotely.
District	Before the pandemic, we were already 1:1 so that made the shift easier.
District	All students have received individual devices. Our teachers have worked hard to learn new ways to implement eLearning.
District	We have gone from not having eLearning to creating an eLearning Program, training teachers, parents, and students for a successful implementation in the span of a few months!
District	The district's greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem is the increased parent engagement and involvement. Parents from child development to high school are actively involved in their child's education by attending virtual parent conferences, assisting with assignments as needed, and communicating directly with teachers regarding any questions or concerns.
District	Our greatest success was our teacher being able to retool and fast track being able to teacher via eLearning an virtually.
District	The district is meeting our goal of the 1:1 initiative to reduce gaps in access to learning while providing every child with the tools needed to reach success. The project has been extremely successful during the

District	Successes
	spring school closures and since September 2020 allowing the district to offer a virtual school for 35% of the students in grades PK-12.
District	WE have been able to provide live certified teacher instruction to all students who chose virtual learning in both elementary and high school. We are also expanding our innovative opportunities in technology.
District	Esprit de Corps in that we are ALL committed to improving and promoting our learning experiences for ALL learners. Our teachers exhibited a positive and productive enthusiasm in preparing for our eLearning Mock Days and the actual eLearning days. district showed a great response to student attendance on our eLearning Days as compared to our normal" attendance."
District	We have found weekly work plans to clearly define student expectations for the digital environment that are communicated to parents and students and available through Google Classroom and the district website.
District	Quickly moving to launch a virtual program that serves over 20000 students. Ensuring we are meeting the basic needs of our students and teachers.
District	Infrastructure was designed and developed to handle a device for everyone in our buildings at the same time, which allowed us to work with students daily with both devices and platforms for a significant period pre-pandemic. Having the personnel and support in place to effectively meet the needs of our students technically and instructionally.
District	Our district implemented our LMS several years ago. This has been hands down the biggest factor in our recent success.
District	The greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem in our county schools has been the standardization of the primary platforms teachers and students are expected to use. This standardization has allowed for specific professional development opportunities, created consistency among classrooms at all levels, and streamlined support for all systems.
District	In the classrooms that are using Google Suites, teachers, students, and parents seem pleased.
District	In the last two years, our county school district has worked to streamline the instructional applications used by teachers and students. We adopted the Edmentum Suite because they are aligned with SC Standards and gives us the ability to collect data to help improve student growth. In the last month, we purchased and deployed Learning Explorer (LOR) because we wanted to help our teachers in this new environment.
District	The greatest success in implementing our digital ecosystem is the clear vision of the district to Put Our Children First through technology integration into standards-based instruction. The success is possible by offering district and school-based quality professional learning opportunities, school based coaching, communication with our stakeholders, reflective practices, and continuous communication Instructional

District	Successes
	Technology and Information Technology about how to best meet the needs of our students, staff, parents, and community.
District	In conjunction with a neighboring district, our district has created and implemented the District County Virtual Academy which began the school year with 1800 participants. School staff and leadership have been flexible and have met the shift in the digital ecosystem head on to support instruction and learning.
District	Our professional development for teachers was well-received and has strengthened the quality of instruction via a digital platform.
District	Establishing our learning management systems as a central hub for resources and communication.
District	Very proud of the district provided technology PD during July that taught teachers more about bending learning, as well as digital tools. This set teachers us for early success.
District	Maximizing our resources and utilizing digital learning coaches to support students and staff from the beginning of our 1:1 deployment has allowed us to be prepared for eLearning and all the virtual possibilities that have unfolded since last spring.
District	Systemically engaging virtual instruction across all content areas and courses. Engaging the LMS at the primary and elementary levels and authentically expanding the use and need for it with all stakeholders through actual use.
District	Professional development for teachers and staff has been very successful. We have also been pleased with the implementation of SeeSaw and Google Classroom in K-12.
District	By providing weekly professional development to teachers, the district has been able to identify strengths and weaknesses within the classroom and work on improving those issues.
District	Streamlining of district-provided instructional technology programs has been a great success in implementing our digital ecosystem that supports instruction and learning. Our technology department can roster all of our technology programs within Clever, protecting student data, while our instructional technology specialists are able to support using these programs with fidelity through professional development and coaching opportunities.
District	We strongly advocate for purchasing products that are interoperable, which includes rostering and single sign-on. Teachers love the magic" and insist on it. We believe this saves instructional and administrative time. We also intentionally tie our PD to supporting NIET instructional strategies for virtual learning with the effective teaching practices in the 4.0 teacher rubric.
District	Our district has provided outstanding professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders, and support for the use of technology to support learning continues to be provided. It is an expectation that all school leaders hold virtual rather than in-person meetings, which has forced everyone to become

District	Successes
	proficient in the use of Teams. Additionally, the district has purchased some excellent technology resources to support student learning and to increase teacher efficiency.
District	We had developed a technology infrastructure (hardware, internet, and technical support) that allowed teachers to focus on instruction. The district developed a professional learning plan that aligned with the instructional model and district goals.
District	The greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning is that the teachers were able to learn and establish a school-wide, uniform expectation for teaching and communication with students, no matter the grade level.
District	The technology implementation has been the greatest success. We were able to refresh 100% of our 1:1 devices Grades 2-12 during the summer and add Grades k and 1 to our 1:1 ecosystem. The refresh allowed us to standardize devices districtwide making training and support more streamlined and effective. We were also able to refresh teacher Chromebooks during the summer placing all students and teachers in the same digital environment. We were able to move systems to the cloud to improve network uptime.
District	In addition to adding an instructional support person, we will continue to implement a robust digital ecosystem that will require more professional development for students and teachers. Also, we will provide more support for our parents.
District	Our district was able to quickly transition to a more robust digital ecosystem because the infrastructure, equipment and training had been put into place over the last few years. Many teachers had already made the digital switch, which allowed them to assist others in their department or school.
District	Our greatest success in implementing a digital ecosystem that supports instruction and learning occurred at the elementary level. We had 55 elementary teachers assigned to directly work with students who chose the District Virtual Academy. These teachers quickly gained proficiency in a number of digital tools to provide effective classroom instruction. Additionally, we have seen a tremendous increase in the number of teachers who have earned Google Level 1 and Level 2 certifications.
District	When the pandemic hit and schools were required to shut-down in March, our district was able to carry on with instruction because of the digital ecosystem that was already in place. While things did not go perfectly, we were able to provide continuity of instruction for our students.
District	The students, especially at the lower levels, have embraced digital with open arms. When digital activities are planned and done correctly the students are engaged and enjoy the eLearning experiences. Network infrastructure, which may have been an issue for many, has not been an issue for our district with the increase in devices.

District	Successes
District	Our district has been 1-to-1 with a digital learning management system for six years. Additionally, staff had access WebEx prior to the pandemic and were fairly comfortable using the tool. Therefore, shifting to use these tools at home has been a smooth transition.
District	Our single sign on is averaging over 20000 logins a day. Students are finding applications easier than ever.

Appendix K

District Identified Next Steps in Digital Ecosystem Building

District	Next Steps
District	The district's next steps involve the full implementation and training of Schoology. The district has provided videos and self-paced courses to teachers as well as collaborated with our mentor district on how to best provide professional development and full implement the Schoology LMS. Our County School District will be working with tech ambassadors for the next couple of weeks to get them familiar with the roll-out plan so that they are able to facilitate and assist with Schoology training along with our mentor upon our return in January.
District	Our next steps will focus on creating more resources for parents and teachers in our district. We would like to have curated technical support videos and tutorials for all of the resources that we use, and we would like to have more videos and tutorials created for teachers as well.
District	Next steps- continued support of our teachers to fully understand the difference e-learning and remote learning. More intentional practice for students and students
District	Exploring how virtual instruction will continue to be an effective option outside of a pandemic situation along with how best to take advantage of virtual instruction with special populations (alternative school, special needs, homebound, etc.). Additionally, reflecting on what we have learned from this year and expanding upon the instructional strategies and digital tools to further enhance instruction beyond what was possible previous to the digital tool (i.e. - the Redefinition aspect to the SAMR model).
District	The district is working to revise the current technology model to ensure maximum use of resources and adequate support at all levels. The upper grades will continue to implement the various components to Schoology as a learning management system.
District	We are working to support our daycares and private centers during an eLearning Day. We are communicating and creating training modules to share with our community members, so they can support our students on an eLearning day.

District	Next Steps
District	Firm up instructional expectations for virtual classrooms; provide additional PD around teaching in a virtual setting.
District	We will continue to expand upon our foundation. We have a continuous focusing of supporting our teachers at the same time we work towards meeting the needs of our students. We are revamping our professional development programs to focus more on quality virtual instruction. We have even modified the delivery of our professional development to include more self-paced and on demand type sessions for our teachers. We have also invested many hours in developing digital resources aligned to our curriculum frameworks and the state standards to support our students and will continue to focus on this work.
District	Next steps include strengthening our virtual learning program with a great deal of focus will be on digital curriculum work and developing an efficient way to pace curriculum and assess students to ensure the virtual learning is just as effective as the face-to-face one.
District	The district will continue to provide training t support teachers, students, and parents as well as seek out opportunities to improve connectivity for students.
District	We will work to implement Canvas in the following phases: Introduction, training, implementation to go live.
District	The district is currently phasing in a data analytics platform for data management and analysis, to streamline consistent progress monitoring of various data sources. Our district is also working on system process improvements, including providing even more consistent and accessible district-wide communications, increased and uninterrupted Internet access, strengthening outreach to the community by establishing and continuing to support Learning Pods, and delivering ongoing and job-embedded professional development for teachers and leaders in best practices in instruction for online and blended learning environments as well as ways to maximize use of instructional, assessment, and reporting tools for continuous improvement in teaching and learning. The district is also working with the SCDE on phasing in the learning object repository (Safari Montage), so that teachers have access to a repository of organized, differentiated, and vetted standards-based lessons, resources, and tools.

District	Next Steps
District	Our next steps involve becoming more systematic in our plans. We are working on better parent communication, professional development, and tracking of device usage and teacher requests.
District	The district will continue to provide professional development for teachers and staff and will continue to provide support for students and parents based on individual need.
District	Our district's next steps in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning is ensuring that we have interactive panels in all classrooms in our district.
District	Ensuring devices are maintained and parents have received the training that they need to best support students learning remotely.
District	We plan to continue building capacity with our school level leadership, in addition to building the confidence of our teachers with using our technology. We definitely want to create communication structures that reach all stakeholders with messages that are clear with regards to where to find the resources that are available and system-wide expectations.
District	The district is working to learn more about Schoology and develop the implementation plan. The LOR will provide additional resources for collaboration.
District	Our district plans to have Google provide training for parents on using Chromebook and Google Suites. We also plan to train teachers, parents, and students on the use of Schoology for 21-22 implementation.
District	The district's next steps include the deployment of new Chromebook once they arrive and continuing to provide ongoing professional development for teachers and leaders in the effective blended learning instruction.
District	Implementation of the Schoology LMS, continuous improvement, and expansions of our Cohort and Virtual toolsets for teachers and students.
District	The district plans to continue offering technology and virtual school professional development for teachers and staff to provide meaningful virtual instruction and learning.

District	Next Steps
District	We would love to continue to build teacher capacity in instructional technology through targeted professional learning opportunities.
District	We will continue to learn and train teachers and students to improve what we do in this digital environment. Increased emphasis on asset management, infrastructure, and security to promote learning for all.
District	We are ensuring all students have the upgraded software and computers to be successful in the digital environment.
District	Finding a balance for virtual PD, ensuring fidelity while not overloading or overburdening the teachers. Fine tuning processes to technical support.
District	Next steps are replacing old with new (4900) Chromebook and moving forward with implementing new LMS without overwhelming and already overburdened faculty and staff.
District	Work on connectively issues (no wi-fi at home) and prepare for refresher devices.
District	Our district's next step in the implementation of a digital ecosystem is to create an annual evaluation cycle of all platforms and resources to ensure teachers and students are provided the most up-to-date and effective resources.
District	We hope to train teachers and fully implement Google Suites next year.
District	We adopted the Digital Convergence Framework to guide our digital ecosystem. Before COVID-19, we were on our way to implementing a number of strategies to help us move forward. Here are a few precovid plans that we still are looking forward to implementing. Moving from Google classroom to a true LMS (Canvas); designing a district virtual academy; setting up a research program that will take advantage of the data we constantly gather, to help develop a more informed PD program.
District	Our next steps include developing a coaching framework that includes common language, instructional strategies, coaching cycles with feedback that can be sustained for all school level coaches. In addition, we plan to acquire and distribute devices to become 1:1 in all grade levels, which will provide opportunities for additional parent, teacher, and student workshops. We also plan to add an Instructional Technology Coach to

District	Next Steps
	provide support for the Early Childhood Center, Career and Technical Center, alternative learning center, and our charter school.
District	Increase bandwidth, evaluate applications used and eliminate applications not being used or applications that are problematic. Additionally, continue to improve support and training for all employees.
District	The district is seeking resources to allow for the purchase of touchscreen devices for primary grades.
District	We are excited about the opportunity to implement the Safari Montage LOR next semester and leverage new/existing tools within a comprehensive ecosystem.
District	Continuing to get teachers to implement a blended learning model, as well as providing additional technology PD that is differentiated based on teacher skills.
District	Ideally, having a digital learning coach at each school would help us provide full-time support at all four schools. Currently with only two coaches, their time is split across schools.
District	We need to determine how to take strategic next steps in view of the current COVID constraints, sudden surplus of resources provided by us and the state. We need to develop effective program assessment measurements and protocols.
District	Ongoing professional development that is responsive to teachers' needs. We want to ensure teachers maintain their eLearning skills regardless of the instructional model.
District	The district is beginning a PD series on Teaching in the Virtual Environment which will focus on lesson planning, student engagement, motivation, and pacing. This plan was developed after receiving the results of a teacher survey.
District	Our district's next steps are providing targeted training for administrators, teachers, students and families when it comes to using our technology programs and becoming more digitally literate in an ever-evolving digital world.

District	Next Steps
District	Our PD includes learning and using the practical tools available to them. We also used the Fisher Frey & Hattie Distance Learnning Playbook as we developed PD. We would like to expand on the teacher-created content available for use in our LOR.
District	We are preparing now for our soft" transition from Microsoft Teams as a learning platform to Schoology and SeeSaw. We will continue to use Teams for communication and information sharing."
District	With the continuing evolution of technology tools, the district will take steps for continuous professional development for professional staff. With the implementation of a digital system, attention will also be given to the training of parents and students.
District	The next steps in implementing a digital ecosystem which supports instruction and learning are to continue professional development for teachers and to begin the implementation of Schoology.
District	We are not sure if eLearning can match traditional classroom model instruction, and maybe we shouldn't be trying to make it substitute. eLearning is a different tool and should be used as such to support instruction and learning rather than to hold students accountable for not being at school. We will continue to change mindsets by creating appropriate expectations for students, teachers and parents for eLearning.
District	Teachers have developed a growth mind towards new learning in unfamiliar settings. It has allowed them to embrace a multitude of new ways to teach.
District	Although we are not able to do face-to-face training at this time, we do hope to be able to provide some in-person training this next summer to continue to develop and refine the digital tools purposes and uses. The district plans to move forward with self-paced workshops and to also work on integrating the new state LOR as a resource to our teachers.
District	Our next steps in implementing a digital ecosystem is to create additional training resources for parents on how to assist their students who are working full-time in a digital environment.
District	Our district continues to build upon its strong digital ecosystem foundation. During the pandemic, teachers have used the utmost creativity and innovation to reach children using a wide variety of teaching methods and

District	Next Steps
	tools. As with any type of instruction, we will review the learning cycle to modify and enhance practices that we have evaluated as effective.
District	Our migration to Schoology and the addition of tools from the SDE (Safari, DreamBox etc) are our next major steps. Safari has already been setup and accounts have been created and integrated with both Teams and Schoology. Training will be in this area promptly as will the initial Schoology trainings. We already have a plan in place to replace the remaining older" machines that are at our lower levels and virtual to be able to migrate our wireless overlay to 5GHz exclusively to be able to support even higher speeds and more individuals per access point. "
District	Students are familiar with completing/submitting work via a learning management system. Our next steps would be to increase the rigor, relevancy, and interactivity of the assignments.
District	Creating a parent portal for parent support. Creating a process for approval of new devices and software.

Appendix L

Learning Management Systems by District

	Google Classroom	Blackboard	Canvas	Schoology	Microsoft Team	Comments
Clarendon Two		Blackboard				
Dillon School District 4					Microsoft Team	
Dorchester 2					Microsoft Team	
Jasper					Microsoft Team	
Orangeburg County School District					Microsoft Team	
Union					Microsoft Team	
Calhoun			Canvas			
Charleston			Canvas			
Cherokee County School District			Canvas			
Chesterfield			Canvas			
Kershaw County SD			Canvas			
Oconee (high school)			Canvas			elementary & middle - Google
Rock Hill (York 3)			Canvas			
Spartanburg 2			Canvas			
Williamsburg			Canvas			
York 2 (Clover)			Canvas			
York One			Canvas			
Allendale County Schools				Schoology		
Anderson 4				Schoology		
Barnwell 19				Schoology		
Barnwell 45				Schoology		
Berkeley				Schoology		
Chester				Schoology		
Daphne Wood				Schoology		
Darlington				Schoology		
Florence 1				Schoology		
Greenwood 51				Schoology		
Jasper				Schoology		
Laurens 55				Schoology		
Lexington 1				Schoology		
Lexington-Richland Five				Schoology		
Marion				Schoology		
Marlboro				Schoology		
Newberry				Schoology		
Pickens				Schoology		
Richland One				Schoology		Using Teams soft transition to Schoology

	Google Classroom	Blackboard	Canvas	Schoology	Microsoft Team	Comments
Richland Two				Schoology		
Spartanburg 3				Schoology		
Spartanburg 4				Schoology		
Spartanburg Five				Schoology		
Spartanburg 7				Schoology		
Abbeville	Google Classroom					
Anderson 3	Google Classroom					
Anderson 4	Google Classroom					
Anderson 5	Google Classroom					
Anderson 2	Google Classroom					
Bamberg 2	Google Classroom					
Beaufort	Google Classroom					
Clarendon 3	Google Classroom					
Dillon District Three	Google Classroom					
Dorchester District 44	Google Classroom					
Bamberg 1	Google Classroom					
Erskine Charter/Gray Collegiate Academy	Google Classroom					
Fairfield County School District	Google Classroom					
Florence 2	Google Classroom					
Florence 3	Google Classroom					
Georgetown	Google Classroom					
Greenville County Schools	Google Classroom					
Greenwood 50	Google Classroom					
Horry	Google Classroom					
Erskine Charter/Public Horse Creek	Google Classroom					
McCormick	Google Classroom					Pilot to Schoology
Lancaster	Google Classroom					
Laurens 56	Google Classroom					

	Google Classroom	Blackboard	Canvas	Schoology	Microsoft Team	Comments
Lexington Three	Google Classroom					
Lexington Two	Google Classroom					
Lexington Four	Google Classroom					OTUS - k-4; SC Virtual franchise; signed up for Schoology in SDE
Saluda	Google Classroom					
Spartanburg 1	Google Classroom					
Spartanburg Six	Google Classroom					
Sumter School District	Google Classroom					
Barnwell 29 (Williston)	Google Classroom					
York 4 Fort Mill	Google Classroom					
Edgefield	Google Classroom					
Count	**33**	**1**	**11**	**24**	**5**	**74**

Appendix M: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
District	We had great success helping students and parents navigate to the virtual learning environment. Teachers and media specialists worked to help parents assist their children successfully. As we venture into eLearning with a larger number of students and parents, we will need resources to help those parents as well.
District	There are homes in our district that do not have access to the internet. Even with hotspots, some students live in areas that are not serviced and therefore have trouble completing virtual assignments. The mix of teaching virtual students and face-to-face students is a strain on teachers. Even as teacher improve their devilry of digital instruction, many students have not mastered the self-discipline needed for virtual/ remote learning and often parents of these students struggle in helping due to a few constraints.
District	There are homes in our district that do not have access to the internet. Even with hotspots, some students live in areas that are not serviced and therefore have trouble completing virtual assignments. The mix of teaching virtual students and face-to-face students is a strain on teachers. Even as teacher improve their devilry of digital instruction, many students have not mastered the self-discipline needed for virtual/ remote learning and often parents of these students struggle in helping due to a number of constraints.
District	rural connectivity to Wifi, and not receiving new chrome books to distribute. Refurbishing old chrome books
District	1. Budgetary constraints for IT instructional support, additional network engineers, and recurring technology hardware (devices) 2. Availability of devices - still waiting on a few orders placed in June/July 2020; 3) Providing ongoing training and professional development for teachers/staff; 4) Rural district presents other problems with Internet access and availability to all households.
District	The greatest challenge is reliable internet access in outlying rural areas of the district.
District	Adequate IT support and devices
District	The biggest challenge we face is student engagement. Our middle school and high school are affected the most by lack of engagement.
District	We are looking for a more packaged" solution for our virtual solution as we look forward."
District	Internet in the rural areas, students not taking care of devices. Need additional instructional trainer.
District	The greatest challenge is internet connectivity for our families outside of the school building. While devices have been provided, 54.1% of our student population has unreliable to no internet access at home. Building the capacity of our teachers to use our LMS system effectively with a consistent design has also proven to be difficult. Additionally, due to the

Appendix M: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
	size of our district, we lack manpower to truly provide structures/systems to support stakeholders with digital instruction, such as a help desk/chat system, a bank of video tutorials, etc.
District	Student access to internet in certain rural areas.
District	Student engagement is the greatest challenge we face in digital instruction.
District	Providing support to end users is a challenge. Differentiating the professional development needed for teachers at different places in the learning continuum is also a challenge.
District	We need continued professional development for all- teachers, students and parents.
District	Funding the replacement devices as they age, adequate IT and instructional tech support staffing
District	Current implementation of our LMS, Canvas, has been very successful. Our teachers were provided with self-paced professional development at the beginning of the school year. Teachers were also given essential knowledge as it pertains to Canvas and the set-up of courses in a Canvas course titled, "District Essentials." As our district has evolved in virtual learning, we realized the need for more clarity and consistency as it relates to student accessibility of content and presentation of instructional materials. As a result, all teachers and administrators received professional development in the area of teacher clarity. In this training, facilitators modeled how to set up the left-hand navigation for student ease of accessibility as well as to import the module template created by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. This module template will be used across grade levels and content areas for students in grades 3-12. Its purpose is to ensure that during the presentation of instructional content students know what they are learning and how they will be assessed, demonstrates why the student is learning the presented content, and contains activities that demonstrate how the student will learn the standards. Teacher clarity professional development as well as progress monitoring by administrators and district instructional technology facilitators will continue through December and part of January, with full implementation expected by December 14, 2020. Gaps that have been recognized include all teachers not fully understanding the process of editing and adding content to the Canvas module template. To address these gaps, district instructional technology facilitators are working with administrators to identify teachers who need small group professional development in this area. Over the next two weeks, district instructional technology facilitators will work with these small groups to provide support. As digital instruction evolves, our district faces some challenges. First, many of our students lack accessibility to Internet that supports the instructional software being utilized to provide not only synchronous instruction, but access to content and materials. Many of our students are using hot spots as their Internet source, but even the hot spots have limited capability,

Appendix M: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
	and our students are not able to perform virtual learning norms such as turning on their cameras in Teams meetings where they are receiving live instruction and should be able to interact with not only the instructor, but also their peers. Another challenge is students logging on and completing work. Many teachers have expressed frustration with their students not being active participants in instructional lessons and/or not logging on in the five-day window to complete assignments. As we move forward in this digital learning environment, District will have to continue to strategize on how we can ensure that all students are actively participating in learning. Finally, we have to continue to empower our teachers to grow as instructional designers. Many of our teachers lack the confidence and/or technology skills and are struggling with making effective virtual instructional decisions. As we continue to offer professional development, we will model instructional strategies as it relates to instructional technology and encourage teachers to grow and make meaningful decisions as they integrate technology into instruction. We hope that our Canvas module template will be the beginning of helping guide teachers in virtual instructional design as they will mirror their face-to-face lesson design in Canvas by adding relevant content and materials to the module template. In the last five months, the Curriculum and Instruction Division has been able to provide school level professional development to our teachers as they transition to this new virtual learning environment. This professional development has been in the form of self-paced Canvas courses, synchronous PD, handouts, videos, and face-to-face instruction. Our professional development has assisted our teachers in understanding the many instructional applications that our district is using to facilitate virtual learning. A significant limitation as it relates to implementing digital instruction is the lack of Internet for our students and their accessibility to Internet that supports the instructional software being utilized to provide not only synchronous instruction, but access to content and materials. Many of our students are using hot spots as their Internet source, but even the hot spots have limited capability, and our students are not able to perform virtual learning norms such as turning on their cameras in Teams meetings where they are receiving live instruction and should be able to interact with not only the instructor, but also their peers.
District	Comprehensive surveys have been sent out to all Saluda County Schools families. Among other questions, we asked households to report on their access to high speed internet. After analyzing survey responses, we have determined that the biggest challenge we face is the lack of high speed internet availability in our rural county. To mitigate this challenge, the district has identified hotspots both within the district and in the greater community where students can access wifi. Several area churches have partnered with the school district to establish hotspot zones and times during which students can access

Appendix M: District Challenges in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Challenges**
	wifi. A district device (Chromebook) is provided to each student. Students have been taught how to download eLearning assignments onto their devices. However, the availability of high speed internet in student homes would be ideal.
District	Everyone is still new at teaching totally virtually, so even with experts leading sessions, determining the best pathway forward is challenging. However, we do have years of experience with 1-to-1 instruction to help inform our practice, and we continue to seek out guidance from outside organizations and publications. |
District	Our biggest challenge faced at present is the understanding of our students regarding the importance of attending digital sessions and submitting work.
District	The district will continue to work on improving the rigor and effectiveness of virtual instruction. The district will improve our data collection, review, and implementation of support based on the data collection. Principals will receive additional support with using SAMR to collect classroom instructional data.
District	We need IT Instructional Coaches.
District	Internet connectivity in our community continues to be challenge, as a large percentage of our area has no access to subscribe to high-speed internet.
District	Through a combination of the State's home internet program and hot spots purchased through CARES Act funding, all students have internet access at home in the district. However, there is no long-term solution to this problem, and next year we will again have students without internet access at home.

Appendix N: District Successes in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Successes**
District	Our teachers embraced the digital programs provided by the district and explored others as well. Then they collaborated and shared the resources with one another. Professional growth and collaboration were evident. The students are excited to have the devices and are engaged with them. Our virtual students especially love the live meets with teachers and classmates.
District	Teachers have advanced from using Google Classroom for specific tasks to making it a focal point for instruction. They have transitioned well into organizing their content, adapting it so that it is useful for virtual students as well as students that come face-to-face, and providing assessments that help students on their way to mastery.
District	Teachers have advanced from using Google Classroom for specific tasks to making it a focal point for instruction. They have transitioned well into organizing their content, adapting it so that it is useful for virtual students as well as students that come face-to-face, and providing assessments that help students on their way to mastery.
District	Teachers, students, and parents are familiar with our digital implementations. We were able to go completely virtual across the district for 4 weeks when our school was compromised by contact of Covid-19.
District	Engagement of our teachers in accepting the challenge of teaching virtually in a very stressful environment. In addition, we were able to reassign a technical support individual to the instructional side to provide instructional technology support.
District	Our district has made tremendous strides in providing 1:1 technology devices to each student. The district has supported the eLearning opportunities of students and virtual learning environments by enhancing internet capacity through the purchase of related accessibility devices.
District	Teachers have been so open to learning new approaches to reaching students and developing online learning resources.

Appendix N: District Successes in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Successes**
District	Our district's greatest success in implementing digital instruction is being able to provide devices for all our students during this pandemic.
District	We were able to have school for every student during the pandemic and we learned how to make it more effective as we move forward.
District	All our students have devices. Hotspots and the ETV data cast project have helped us tremendously All teachers have been trained on using Skooler/Microsoft Teams prior to school starting.
District	Our greatest success is acquiring and issuing devices to become 1 to 1 in grades 5K-12.
District	Ensure that all students have a device and are able to successfully participate in eLearning activities. Making sure all teachers are speaking the same common language as we engage in professional learning with LMS and instructional strategies for online teaching and learning.
District	All students having access to a device and most having wi-fi support.
District	All students now have a device. When we observe some digital classrooms, some teachers have engaging interactive classroom experiences for our students.
District	Having all the technology necessary for virtual teaching in place prior to the Covid 19 crisis.
District	Distributing 1:1 devices, procuring and using a Learning Management System, stakeholder buy-in to creation of virtual-only school
District	Since August 2020, we have provided mobile devices and proactively trained students, parents, and teachers to use eLearning instructional tools for the first time to more than two-thirds of our county. Moreover, we have initiated and nurtured a budding culture of collaboration and innovation that has supplied us with numerous training resources and progress monitoring tools.

Appendix N: District Successes in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Successes**
District	We believe our greatest success in implementing digital instruction is our in-house, collaborative approach to developing our digital instructional plan and the corresponding learning for all stakeholders. Digital learning is working for Saluda County Schools because of the involvement of all stakeholders.
District	Also, we have limited personnel dedicated to instructional technology support we have limited personnel dedicated to instructional technology support which can make getting one-on-one support challenging for our teachers. We have mitigated this by providing instructional technology training to our coaches and by utilizing expert teachers (champions) for informal peer support and formal PD sessions.
District	Our greatest success is the procurement and distribution of devices during a pandemic. It seems this was one of the greatest stresses in a time of the unknown. Students, parents, teachers, and administrators have embraced the addition of a 1:1 environment.
District	Our school district began its 1:1 initiative in 2015. With the implementation of the One-to-Global plan, Chromebooks were available for all students, teachers were trained on how to effectively use the Google suite applications, and all classrooms were equipped with new interactive boards. Sumter School District was able to quickly adjust to assigning each student a device and transition to virtual instruction.
District	The greatest success was bridging the gap of learning from brick & mortar to implementing remote learning. Our teachers were forced into becoming 21st Century learners and educators.
District	In only six months, our district moved to a 1:1 model in grades 7-12, developed a 3-year comprehensive instructional technology plan including distributed device plan for eLearning Days for grades 3-6, provided professional development for teachers in all grade levels as a part of our district-wide LMS use, distributed over 400 internet hotspots to households in our district, and created a community help desk for our parents and students.
District	One of the district's greatest successes has been increasing teachers' ability to create engaging and meaningful lessons through instructional technology. The district was positioned well from the STEAM initiative and the

Appendix N: District Successes in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Successes**
	last eight years of instructional technology training to respond to teachers' and students' needs as the district pivoted to eLearning during the pandemic.

Appendix O: District Next Steps in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Next Steps**
District	We would like to help teachers create content that has more, higher order thinking and is more differentiated.
District	We would like to help teachers create content that has more, higher order thinking and is more differentiated.
District	Most of our goals have been met up to this point. We are looking into Swivl technology for webcams and virtual instruction.
District	Our superintendent is planning to present a plan moving toward 1:1 with our school board in January 2021. With board approval, we hope to have the additional resources (through a budgetary recurring line item) to sustain a digital instructional program for the district. We have more professional development scheduled for teachers in the spring semester. We will explore ways to engage parents in the eLearning process and support them with the new technology.
District	The district has a well-qualified and experienced IT department that supports teachers. The next step is the full implementation of the learning management systems.
District	Continue to inventory and image devices as they arrive. Then they will be pushed to reach as many students as possible. Educating parents on available hot spots and as devices become available, as well as how they can better help their child with online learning.

Appendix O: District Next Steps in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Next Steps**
District	Our next steps are to aggressively pursue our students that are not attending any of our educational programs, whether it is face-to-face or virtual. We are planning to continue providing professional development to teachers and training to our parents/care givers.
District	Implement a more packaged" solution for student virtual learning to support students and teachers even after the pandemic is over."
District	Providing more support for teachers, students, and parents through more resources, webinars, and recordings. This was planned to be done by our trainer and hopefully they will be back soon.
District	We need to continue to provide specific targeted professional development to increase the capacity of our teachers with the use of our LMS system. Additionally, we need to provide structured opportunities for students and parents to learn how to navigate our digital ecosystem.
District	Ensure expectations/intended outcomes for continuous improvement are articulated from the district level down to all stakeholders and that their informal opportunities at the building level to share professional practices through peer observations and/or other forms of professional practice. Collect and analyze data to monitor or assess the effectiveness of the digital learning structure in improving student learning and professional practice to adjust and guide improvement.
District	Putting information out about our virtual school, such as registration, expectations, and requirements for remaining in the virtual program.
District	We will develop Tech Savvy Teachers to support other teachers with technology implementation. We will also provide more support for end users so that they will be ready for the 21-22 school year.
District	We plan to provide some additional professional development on Google Classroom this summer for all staff. We will plan on also hosting some parent workshops this summer.
District	Continuing to expand professional development opportunities for teachers, creating additional resources for parents, and establishing consistent norms and requirements for digital instruction throughout the district

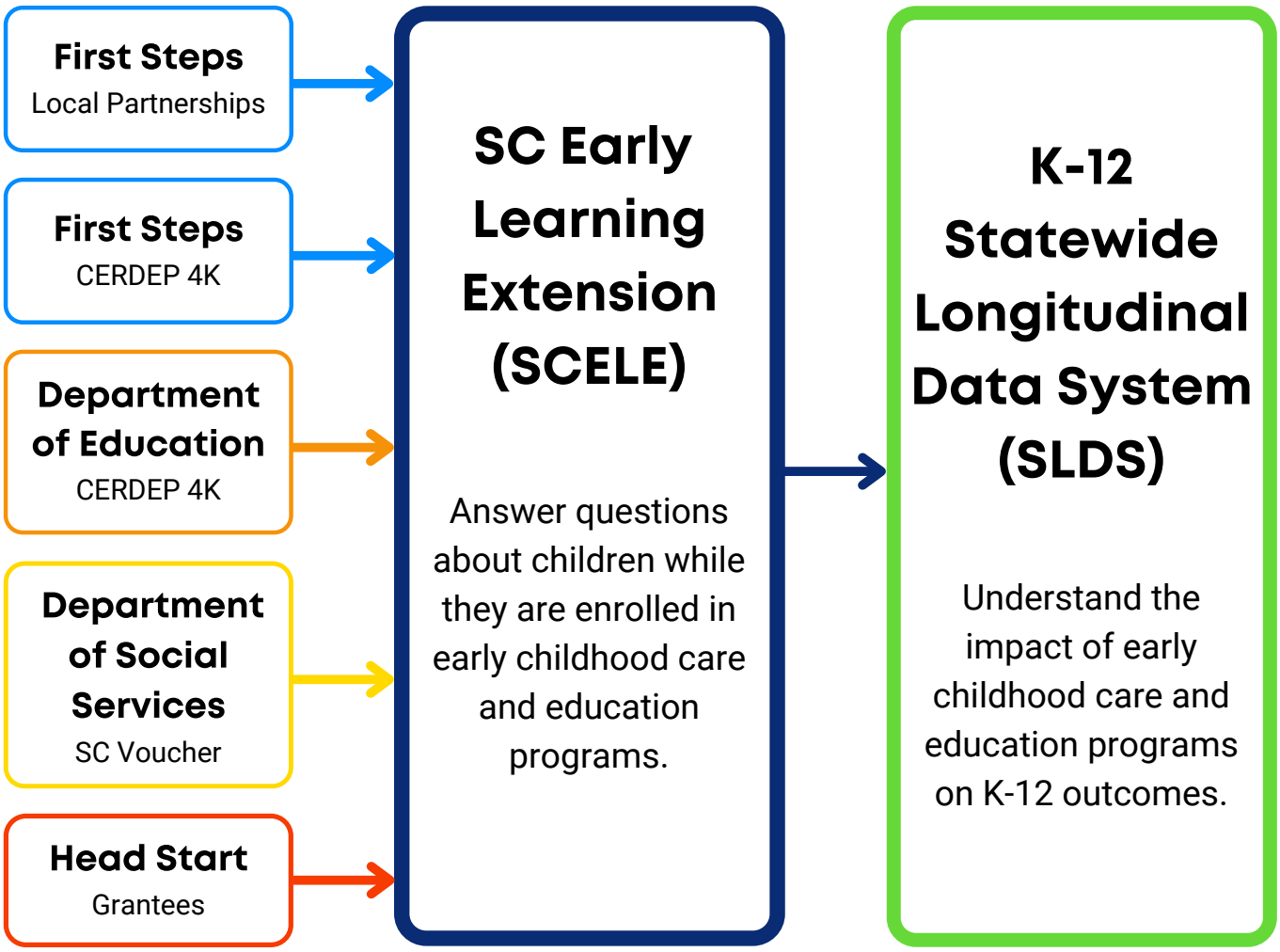
Appendix O: District Next Steps in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Next Steps**
District	Our next steps include planning and implementing progress monitoring measures to ensure consistent high quality virtual instruction is provided to our students. Our progress monitoring data will be used to personalize professional development and craft support strategies for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
District	As we learn more, we are moved to do more! Our teachers are becoming more adept at managing the digital environment as their experience increases. As they gain more instructional technology skills, they are better able to align their delivery modes to their instructional goals. We will continue to support all stakeholders in digital instruction. In January, we will begin a consistent roll-out of online safety and digital citizenship lessons through our partnership with learning.com. On the funding side, we will continue to have conversations to ensure digital learning is sustainable.
District	Our other main challenge is that we have provided a great deal of flexibility in what tools teachers can use over the years. While we have naturally begun gravitating toward a narrower set of tools we need to continue to solidify the same set of tools for students and teachers so that all members of the learning community (including parents) become familiar and comfortable with how tools work. Our goal is to allow innovation but also ensure that our digital ecosystem is easy to use we need to continue to solidify the same set of tools for students and teachers so that all members of the learning community (including parents) become familiar and comfortable with how tools work. Our goal is to allow innovation but also ensure that our digital ecosystem is easy to use sustainable over time and supportable given our resources." We are much more proficient at utilizing formative assessment to quickly and efficiently shape instruction to meet individual learner's needs. By utilizing tools like iReady and teacher created digital quizzes and assessments, teachers can quickly gather evidence of student learning that they can then use immediately in the classroom. We want to standardize use of our core tools in all classrooms so that teachers and students have a more comfortable and therefore effective experience using digital tools. We also want to grow our understanding of most effective practices for teaching and learning that is completely virtual/eLearning.
District	We will continue to exchange our digital environment with additional Professional Development to increase knowledge/comfort of teachers within a digital platform. Increasing knowledge/comfort will increase student participation within the platform.

Appendix O: District Next Steps in Developing Digital Ecosystem for Learning	
District	**Next Steps**
District	Our school district is upgrading its LMS to Schoology. Schoology will support greater integration of resources, management, and support for virtual learning. The district will also implement the Safari Montage learning objective repository. The focus of the academic team over the next year is to implement these tools with fidelity.
District	As noted by our District Strategic Plan, if we were able to hire coaches the coaches would train teachers on how to integrate technology into lesson plans to continue the use of technology from this point forward. We would also like to develop a virtual school within our district and we've even thought of alternative ways to meet the needs of all our students.
District	We intend to continue to support teachers by providing professional development in the use of instructional technology. We also plan to expand our resources to parents to support their students at home.
District	The district is now in the process of implementing a formalized approach to adopt new digital resources and standardize resources across grade levels.

SC Early Learning Extension

South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council

The mission of the South Carolina Early Learning Extension (SCELE) is to improve outcomes for young children and their families through an aligned system for data-informed decisions and policies.



The SCELE will provide insight into utilization of early childhood care and education programs and articulate the return on public investment in early childhood to better understand their impact and to build the case for more long-term investment.

This publication was made possible by the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program, Grant Number R372A200048, from the U.S. Department of Education.

Updated 02/12/2021

SC Early Learning Extension

South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Council

THE SCELE IS A SYSTEM TO:

- Provide information to families and the public about the impact of early childhood care and education programs
- Evaluate alignment of programs and child progress to highlight opportunities for growth and new developments
- Help program administrators, teachers, and service providers identify and analyze short- and long-term outcomes for continuous program improvement
- Articulate the return on current investments in early childhood programs and build the case for future funding

THE SCELE IS A TOOL FOR:

- Families and the public to learn with near real-time dashboards about early learning programs and their long-term impact
- Policymakers to inform community needs, resource allocation, and program impact
- Researchers and evaluators to access data quickly and efficiently

THE SCELE IS NOT:

- A replacement for individual program data systems
- A duplication of the Department of Education's K-12 longitudinal data system
- An infringement on privacy or confidentiality of young children and their families
- A system that rates, ranks, or evaluates the performance or development of young children on the individual level
- A duplication or replacement of Palmetto Pre-K, a portal for families to connect with publicly-funded pre-K programs

On the horizon for SCELE:

The Early Childhood Advisory Council will take the lead in establishing the Data Governance Committee in early spring of 2021. The Data Governance Committee will safeguard program and outcome data and its accessibility. The Data Governance Committee will work to align the program data to K-12 and build a portal accessible to stakeholders by February 2024. The work of the Data Governance Committee is supported by the Early Childhood Advisory Council Data Governance Coordinator.

FIRST STEPS SOUTH CAROLINA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DSS SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT of SOCIAL SERVICES

Head Start

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Updated 02/12/2021

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: April 12, 2021

ACTION ITEM: 2021 EOC Annual Report

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

SECTION 59 6 10. (B)(1)(c)(2) Members of the committee shall meet no less than once a quarter and annually shall submit their findings and recommendations to the General Assembly before March first of each fiscal year.

CRITICAL FACTS

This year's report was sent to members of the SC General Assembly on March 1, 2021. It reports on the work of the EOC from March 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021. It is also posted on the EOC website at https://tinyurl.com/458ns5v9.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

100 copies of the report were printed this year, at a cost of $655.73.

ACTION REQUEST

☐ **For approval** ☒ **For information**

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

prioritizing strong students and schools as we emerge from the pandemic

www.eoc.sc.gov

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business people, and elected officials appointed by the Governor and General Assembly.

The EOC is charged with encouraging continuous improvement in SC public schools, approving academic content standards and assessments, overseeing the implementation of the state's educational accountability system, and documenting improvements in education.

CONTENTS

Dear Friend,

When we raised a glass to auld lang syne and turned our calendars ahead, no one could have predicted the chaos 2020 would hold for South Carolina students, families, and educators. On behalf of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), I wish to extend a heartfelt "thank you" to everyone who has sacrificed to continue students' education under these incredibly difficult circumstances.

I would also like to commend EOC's dedicated staff—now under the leadership of our new Executive Director¬—Matthew Ferguson, who faced the unenviable challenge of moving and starting a new job at the onset of a global pandemic! The team's on-the-ground education experience, unwavering commitment to student success, exemplary initiative, and "can-do" attitude allowed the Committee to quickly pivot to engage critical questions around the impacts of COVID-19 on South Carolina's students and public education system.

In 2020, the EOC faithfully pursued our mandate from the General Assembly to report facts, measure change, and promote student progress. That included conducting the various studies and reports required by law that you will find listed in the following pages. I am grateful for the numerous task forces, focus groups, committees, and organizations around the state and nation that assisted us in accomplishing this work; many are noted in this report.

However, the significance of the EOC's education impact extends far beyond words on paper. Since its inception, clear-eyed foresight has been the hallmark of EOC's work, and 2020 proved no exception:

- Leading the Innovative eLearning Initiative

  In 2018, the Committee partnered with 15 school districts to pilot a high-quality eLearning program to allow continued instruction on inclement weather days. While eLearning was never intended to sustain months of virtual instruction such as we have experience in this pandemic, best practices culled from the eLearning initiative—as well as direct expertise provided by EOC staff to districts pursuing online remote learning for the first time—have proved invaluable and continue to guide the ongoing development of new distance learning capacity across the state.

- Reporting the Impacts of COVID-19 on Student Learning

  As a trusted, independent source of reliable information, EOC was commissioned to review the education challenges and opportunities presented by COVID-19 and point to emerging best practices across South Carolina and the nation. Gathering a broad array of stakeholder perspectives through surveys, personal interviews, and robust data analysis, EOC delivered the first statewide look at COVID's anticipated impact on student learning. The findings were stark, if not surprising: seven (7) in ten (10) 3rd-8th graders are now projected to not be on grade level at the end of this school year. The EOC will continue to monitor and report on this crisis of learning, and lead and shape conversations about how to help South Carolina students recover and thrive.

- Reviving Critical Structural Reform Conversations

  In 2001, a fledging EOC delivered reports detailing the urgent need for reform to South Carolina's education governance and funding structures. In the 20 years since, what was then urgent has become a five-alarm fire. Accordingly, the Committee has commissioned a new review of South Carolina's governance statutes and engaged in robust discussions around how to sustainably and equitably fund all students, including those in public charter schools. Look for these critical conversations to continue.

Education after COVID will never look the same. Indeed, this challenge may be South Carolina's golden opportunity to push our long-struggling education system beyond the limitations of outdated paradigms to foster greater equity, flexibility, and fulfill our responsibility to support every child, wherever and however they learn best.

The work ahead is daunting and will require strong leadership and tremendous courage. But the future of our students demands nothing less. The EOC remains committed to our mission to support and illuminate this urgent work.

Together for Students,

Ellen Weaver

Ellen Weaver, EOC Chair

The Year in Review

Analyses, Updates, and Program Summaries from March 2020 to February 2021

2019 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Analysis

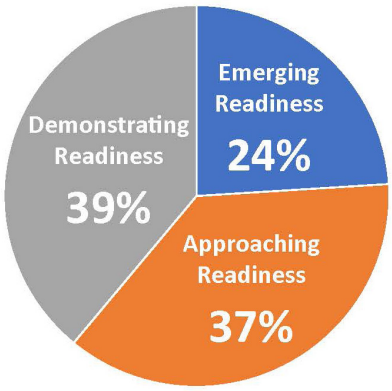
The Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), which provides information on children's preparedness for kindergarten, is administered to each child entering kindergarten in the SC public schools at least once during the first 45 days. In 2019, South Carolina schools began a third statewide administration of the assessment, which provides the only "snapshot" of kindergarten readiness in the state currently. Other states, like Maryland and Ohio, also administer the KRA, to kindergarten students.

The KRA is comprised of four domains:

- Language and Literacy: skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- Mathematics: skills such as counting, comparison, and sorting
- Physical Well-Being & Motor Development: abilities such as dexterity, muscular coordination, and balance
- Social Foundations: demonstration of following rules, asking for help, task persistence, and other skills necessary to the functioning within the kindergarten classroom

School Year	Number of Students	Emerging Readiness	Approaching Readiness	Demonstrating Readiness
Overall Readiness				
Fall 2017	54,927	26%	38%	36%
Fall 2018	54,904	25%	38%	37%
Fall 2019	55,694	24%	37%	39%

2019 Statewide KRA Overall Results 55,694 children



More information and downloadable resource:
https://tinyurl.com/1k4nbj79

Key Results

- Scores from the 2019 KRA administration showed that 31 districts met or surpassed the overall state average for *Demonstrating Readiness.*
- Among White children, about 48 percent performed at the *Demonstrating Readiness* level on the Overall scale, while 29 percent of African American children and 24 percent of Hispanic children were at that level.
- KRA test results for students who attended a 4K program, either full or half-day, in a non-CERDEP eligible district were compared with results for students who attended a 4K program in a CERDEP-eligible district. Both groups showed slight increases in the percentage of kindergartners performing in the *Demonstrating Readiness* category in 2019 as compared to 2018. In CERDEP districts, 39 percent of kindergartners scored *Demonstrating Readiness.* In non-CERDEP districts, 42 percent of kindergartners who participated in 4K programs performed in the *Demonstrating Readiness* category.

What do the results of the KRA provide for policymakers?

- Provides information on state and county school readiness efforts, and trends over time.
- Provides information so that local communities can take action to support growth and development of all young children in South Carolina.
- Assesses state's efforts in language, literacy, math instruction and social, emotional and physical development.
- Provides policymakers information about the impact of full-day four-year-old programs funded with state investments of approximately $64 million each year.

Community Block Grant Program

In the 2019-20 Appropriation Act, the South Carolina General Assembly authorized and funded the South Carolina Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program in Proviso 1.64. For school year 2019-20, six initiatives throughout the state were awarded funding through the one-year block grant program.

In October 2020, the EOC received a report on the seven districts/consortia who received funding for school year 2018-19. Following an independent review of applicants by a grants committee, the recipients of the grants in 2018-19 were: Berkeley; Chesterfield; Greenwood 50; Lexington/Richland 5; Pee Dee Consortia (eight districts and Head Start; Spartanburg consortia ((five districts)); and York One.) Funding ranged from $84,156 to $240,050. The EOC contracted with USC and Clemson University to evaluate the impact of these grants.

Participation numbers for 2018-19 Grants

Overall Numbers

- 94 schools
- 248 classrooms
- 5,005 students
- 2,876 parents

Professional Development

- 857 professional development sessions or activities completed
- 131 professional development sessions or activities cancelled due to COVID.
- 1,253 educators or stakeholders participated

SC School Districts Awarded Community Block Grants by School Year

2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-2020
Cherokee, $250,000	Cherokee, $10,000	Cherokee, $206,857	Berkeley, $113,650	Charleston, $85,580
Chesterfield, $250,000	Chesterfield, $10,000	Chesterfield, $105,613	Chesterfield, $114,410	Chesterfield, $132,100
Clarendon 2, $249,086	Lancaster, $164,000	Lancaster, $126,923	Spartanburg Consortia, $204,733	District Five of Lexington/Richland, $57,550
Florence 1, $250,000	Lexington 4, $201,000	McCormick, $147,283	District Five of Lexington/Richland, $106,889	Lexington One: $74,222
Florence 2, $239,000	Pee Dee Consortia, $250,000	Pee Dee Consortium, $187,350	Greenwood 50, $84,156	Pee Dee Consortia, $221,900
Jasper, $250,000	Richland 1, $118,000	Spartanburg Consortium, $128,724	Pee Dee Consortia, $240,050	York One, $77,179
Lexington 3, $216,437	Spartanburg Consortia, $142,000	York One, $97,250	York One, $86,112	
Spartanburg 7, $194,466	York One, $84,000			

Community Block Grant Outcomes: School year 2018-19

Berkeley

- Improved teacher-student interactions in targeted classrooms from baseline to mid-year in three domains of CLASS
- Improved district means on the PALS assessment in language tasks from baseline to mid-year

Chesterfield

- Expanded 4K in district by six classrooms to better meet needs of community
- Developed alignment between language/literacy and mathematics instruction in 4K and 5K
- Improved school-home partnership through repeated reading initiative based on common titles in classrooms that are also provided to families for at-home reading

Greenwood 50

- Increases in teachers' efforts towards relationship building with students
- Student referrals decreased by 61% from 2018-19 to 2019-20 when comparing August-March of each school year
- Increase in IGDIs in the areas of picture naming, counting, quantity comparison, and one-to-one correspondence

School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties

- Increase in total key practices from 55% at the beginning year to 85% at mid-year
- Increase in the number of teachers who improved key practices from 72% to 100%
- Decrease red flags observed from 30 at the beginning of the year to 6 at mid-year
- Decrease in the percentage of teachers with red flags from 31% to 7%

Pee Dee Consortia

- Approximately 85% of teachers scored a 75% or higher on the TPOT in Fall 2019
- Coaches worked with teachers in areas identified for improvement
- TPOT data over time indicated positive correlation between improvements and amount of professional development
- Social-Emotional Assessment Measure (SEAM) piloted with Florence 1 teachers; teachers shared SEAM data with parents and goals for each student with the parent

Spartanburg Consortia

- Expanded initiative to include eleven new 4K classrooms within three new districts
- Developed Quality Improvement Plans for classrooms based on ECERS-3 and CLASS scores that were used to focus professional development and coaching

York One

- More than 50% of children who participated in summer program demonstrated improved skills in letter/number recognition
- Parents who participated in Parent Institute indicated improved knowledge/skills
- Children enrolled in CERDEP outperformed a comparison group in reading skills at kindergarten entry with more than 70% scoring in the 40th percentile or above (compared to 59% of non-CERDEP participants)
- Children enrolled in CERDEP demonstrated similar mathematics skills to a comparison group with approximately 53% scoring in the 40th percentile or above

More information and downloadable resource: https://tinyurl.com/xg3ypgkn

Report of Publicly Funded 4K Programs

The General Assembly first created and funded the Child Development Education Pilot Program by a budget proviso in Fiscal Year 2006-07. In 2014 the General Assembly codified the program in Act 284 and renamed it the South Carolina Child Early Reading Development and Education Program. The program, referred to as CERDEP or state-funded full-day four-year-old kindergarten, provides full-day early childhood education for at-risk children who are four years of age by September 1. In school year 2018-19, eligibility is defined as an annual family income of 185 percent or less of the federal poverty guidelines as promulgated annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, or Medicaid eligibility. Both public schools and non-public childcare centers licensed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) may participate in the program and serve eligible children. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) oversees implementation of CERDEP in public schools and South Carolina Office of First Steps to School Readiness (OFS) oversees implementation in non-public childcare settings, including private childcare centers and faith-based settings.

This year's report, which was transmitted to the SC General Assembly on December 15, 2020, reflects the period in which the global Coronavirus pandemic significantly impacted enrollment, attendance and overall teaching and learning. The cohort of Pre-K four-year-olds served during the 2019-20 school year lost one-fourth of the school year in face-to-face instruction. Both enrollment and instruction in public four-year-old programs has been impacted in the 2020-21 school year, and it is reasonable to expect that a greater acehviement gap will occur as student progress through the grades.

In school year 2019-20, over 35,000 four-year-olds, or 61 percent of all four-year-olds in our state, lived in poverty. Just over 18,200 of these children participated in either CERDEP or Head Start; therefore, at a minimum, 51 percent of four-year-olds in poverty in South Carolina received a full-day, publicly funded, education program.

Summary of Four-Year-Olds in Poverty Served Statewide, FY 2019-20, and 2020-21

	2019-20	2020-21
Public CERDEP Enrollment (45-day count)	10,561	7,822
Non-public CERDEP Enrollment (45-day count)	2,455	2,145
Total CERDEP Enrollment	**13,016**	
Total Head Start Enrollment*	5,188	
Estimated Number of Four-Year-Olds Served by CERDEP or Head Start	**18,204**	
Estimated Number of Four-Year-Olds in Poverty	**35,520**	
Estimated Percentage of Four-Year-Olds in Poverty Served by CERDEP or Head Start	51.2%	
Estimated Percentage of Four-Year-Olds in Poverty Not Served by CERDEP or Head Start	48.8%	

* Head Start enrollment has been impacted by the global Coronavirus pandemic. The federal office has provided guidance regarding attendance recording and enrollment which precludes full reporting at the time of this report.

Recommendations: 2021 CERDEP Report

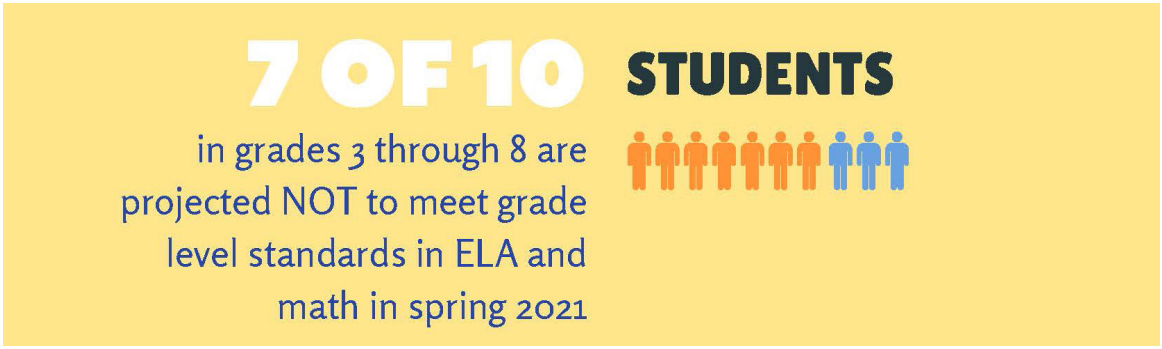
1. Continue to share waiting lists for the purpose of serving as many children as possible. SCDE should maintain a master list with schools, number of 4K classrooms, 45-day count and 135-day count enrollments and make available to the public and other agencies (through a website or statewide coordinator for 4K data collection). The OFS should maintain a list of provider classrooms with vacancies noted on October 1 and March 1. Continue to focus on increasing numbers of children served while reaching the efficiency of full classrooms.
2. While the ideal statewide system would have all state-funded, pre-kindergarten program operating in one office, this may be too ambitious at the current time. The recommendation is the designation of a 4K data collection office/center. With the input of all involved agencies serving 4K children using state monies as well as benchmarking other state models, a centralized place for the collection of information in similar formats, matched expectations including assessment data, hours of instruction, district of residence, level of teacher training, etc., be established. Therefore, the data and accountabilities help establish consistencies in programs and allow for research to provide the General Assembly meaningful information regarding investment in 4K in South Carolina.
3. OFS student enrollment data should include the student's district of residence. Inclusion of district of residence would improve the accuracy of the number of CERDEP students served as indicated by their district of residence.
4. The stable number of identified students living in poverty and small percentage increase in the overall population of four-year-olds must be addressed through continuing and expanding services to include more of the eligible population.
5. The current multitude of assessments used in Pre-K 4, kindergarten, first and second grade do not provide an accurate student growth continuum for teachers to use in determining next steps in instruction. Neither does it provide parents with substantive information regarding their child's progress, including the growth needed to meet third grade targets. Since the stated focus of Act 284 is a "comprehensive, systemic approach to reading," it is necessary to have a comprehensive and systemic assessment continuum established. Districts should be required to adopt or establish a continuum of assessment for students in Pre-K 4 through 2nd grade. The requirements of the choice should include growth measurements, correlation to the SC Standards and alignment with the SC READY third grade ELA. Private providers would use the same assessment "adopted or established" by the home district where the provider is located. Teacher professional development and student progress could be coordinated.
6. As soon as safely possible, crisis intervention instruction must begin for the cohort of students now in kindergarten (2019-20 PreK 4-year-olds). Perhaps, extended day during the last quarter of the School Year 2020-2021 can be established for students who were enrolled in the prior year cohort. Summer instructional events should be provided in face-to-face environments. Triage delivery should include meals, transportation and direct instruction in reading and math. The currently enrolled cohort of PreK-4, plus additional students in the qualifying districts should also be offered extended day during the last quarter and summer of 2021.

More information and downloadable resource:
https://tinyurl.com/1qp9ts2m

Remote Learning Study

Recognizing the "unprecedented upheaval to the education of students in every corner of the state" and the need for a data driven approach to the state's response to COVID-19, on January 11, 2021, the EOC staff released a thorough review of the opportunities for innovation, lessons learned for future planning, and barriers to the success during emergency remote learning.

Using data from approximately 222,000 South Carolina students in grades 3-8 who took MAP Growth assessments in 2019 and 2020, it is projected that nearly 70 percent of those students will not meet grade level proficiency standards in English Language Arts and math in spring 2021. The "COVID Slide", as it is widely referred to, is expected to be more dramatic in mathematics, among elementary students and for students who are often identified as vulnerable, such as those living in high-poverty households or who do not have access to reliable internet access.



Impact on Student Learning

- SC students declined in projected proficiency and in median percentile rank in both mathematics and reading. The decline was most dramatic in elementary and math.
- Significant achievement gaps among historically underachieving students and their higher achieving peers continue to exist but do not appear to have widened during emergency remote learning.
- For SC students in a sample of 14 districts, there was no statistically significant difference observed in the COVID slide of student with respect to instructional method.

Obstacles Identified

- Unequal distribution of internet access and 1:1 devices.
- Lack of a digital ecosystem to support long-term virtual instruction.
- Lack of clearly defined instructional strategies for forward progress in remote learning.
- COVID expenses will be recurring.

Opportunities for Students

- Accelerated student access to technology across the state.
- Investment in instructional technology resources by districts and the State.
- Increased learning opportunities for students, flattening the classroom and providing a global perspective.
- District virtual school offerings will remain, but state level guidance needed.

Emerging Issues

- Many vulnerable students are opting for virtual options while more resourced students are opting for brick-and-mortar schooling.
- Concerns with reliability of assessments delivered remotely.
- Recognition of the need for quality assessments to make data-informed decisions.

More information and downloadable resources:
https://tinyurl.com/1f0enzmz (Full Report)
https://tinyurl.com/3k4k78sc (Report Brief)

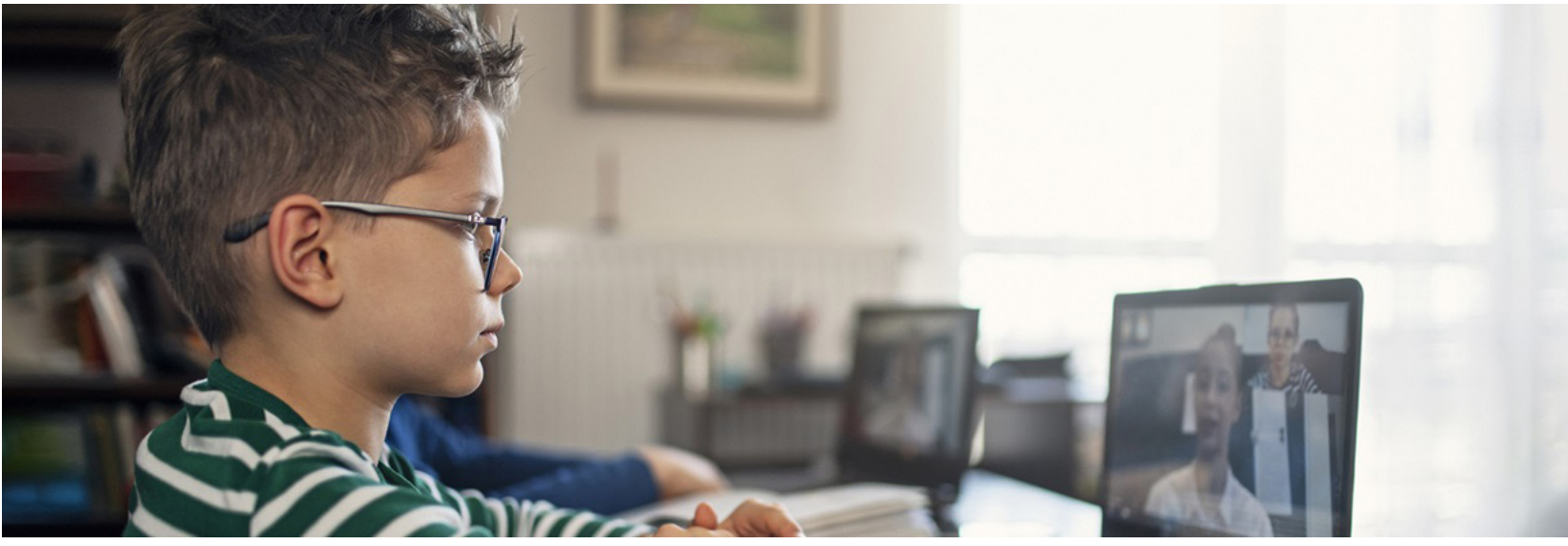
Recommendations

- Strategically design and implement curriculum focused on student learning gaps and priority standards.
- Better coordinate efforts to accurately track student attendance, completion of assignments, and mastery of grade level standards.
- Require coordinated efforts and deploy strategies to establish communication with students who are not attending school or disengaging from instruction.
- Continue regular assessment of all students, allowing for individual and system academic performance to be monitored, guiding instruction and policy decisions.
- Continue to address disparities in learning opportunities by ensuring that supports, such as access to the internet and a device, are in place for students.
- Provide access to a robust virtual curriculum for students in remote learning.
- Provide tutoring services and extra interventions for students identified at-risk.
- Create a process to allow districts to develop and create innovative programs and/or community partnerships to provide after-school, summer, or Saturday ARCs in mathematics and reading.
- Provide meaningful and responsive professional development to staff to address needs in remote learning.
- Prioritize the return to face-to-face classrooms as soon as safely possible.

Academic Recovery Camps

Section 5 of Act 142 requires districts to administer student assessments in reading and mathematics to students who participate in Academic Recovery Camps and directs the EOC to evaluate the camp's impact on student learning:

Of the students identified as needing intervention, far fewer students attended Summer 2020 Academic Recovery Camps (ARCs). The students who did attend ARCs came in with significant learning deficits. They did make gains in both reading and math although they remained significantly behind in grade level expectations once they completed the ARCs in Summer 2020.



Survey of the Effects of Remote Learning in SC

In the Summer of 2020, the EOC surveyed South Carolina educators and parents on four areas related to remote learning. All of the surveys were distributed online; 847 educators participated as well as 263 parents.

Both parents and educators recognized difficulty related to the abrupt closure of schools in March 2020. In terms of delivery mode of learning, the most popular options were asynchronous lessons and distributing physical packets of materials.

The level of rigor was recognized as an issue in the surveys. Educators recognized activities at a lower level of rigor compared to in-person instruction. Parents viewed some work as largely "busy work." Student grades were reported by parents as largely the same at the end of 2019-20 as in previous quarters of the school year.

EDUCATORS

Top Benefits of Remote Learning in Spring 2020

- Concern for Health
- Worked as a team
- Proud to meet challenge

Top Challenges of Remote Learning in Spring 2020

- Students not turning in assignments
- Less rigorous lessons

Top Challenges of Remote Learning in Fall 2020

- Increased stress on teachers and administrators
- Failure of students to turn in work
- The amount of time needed to prepare lessons

PARENTS

Top Benefits of Remote Learning in Spring 2020

- Children able to work remotely
- Concern for my child's health
- School materials helpful

Top Challenges of Remote Learning in Spring 2020

- Working remotely with children at home
- No peer interaction
- Less rigor

Top Benefits of Remote Learning in Fall 2020

- Free meals for students
- Devices provided by school are functioning adequately
- Safety measures in place at school

Top Challenges of Remote Learning in Fall 2020

- Lack of social interaction for students
- Monitoring children's school work with family and work duties
- Increased stress on children and families

More information and downloadable resource:
https://tinyurl.com/bcrwl1ap

Rethink K-12 Education Grant

The EOC is a partner with the South Carolina Department of Education in the federal Rethink K-12 Education Model Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

South Carolina's application, titled *Return to Learn: Delivery Quality Instruction Virtually Anywhere*, once carried out, is designed to:

- Increase availability of remote learning resources to students and teachers in areas of SC that lack broadband access;
- Improve education resources for specific, identified gaps by developing and curating engaging, high-quality content;
- Increase teacher experience, confidence, and proficiency with remote learning technology and resources;
- Improve communication between families, teachers, and schools to support remote learning.

The EOC's portion of the grant is focused on communicating with parents and families.

eLearning Pilot Project

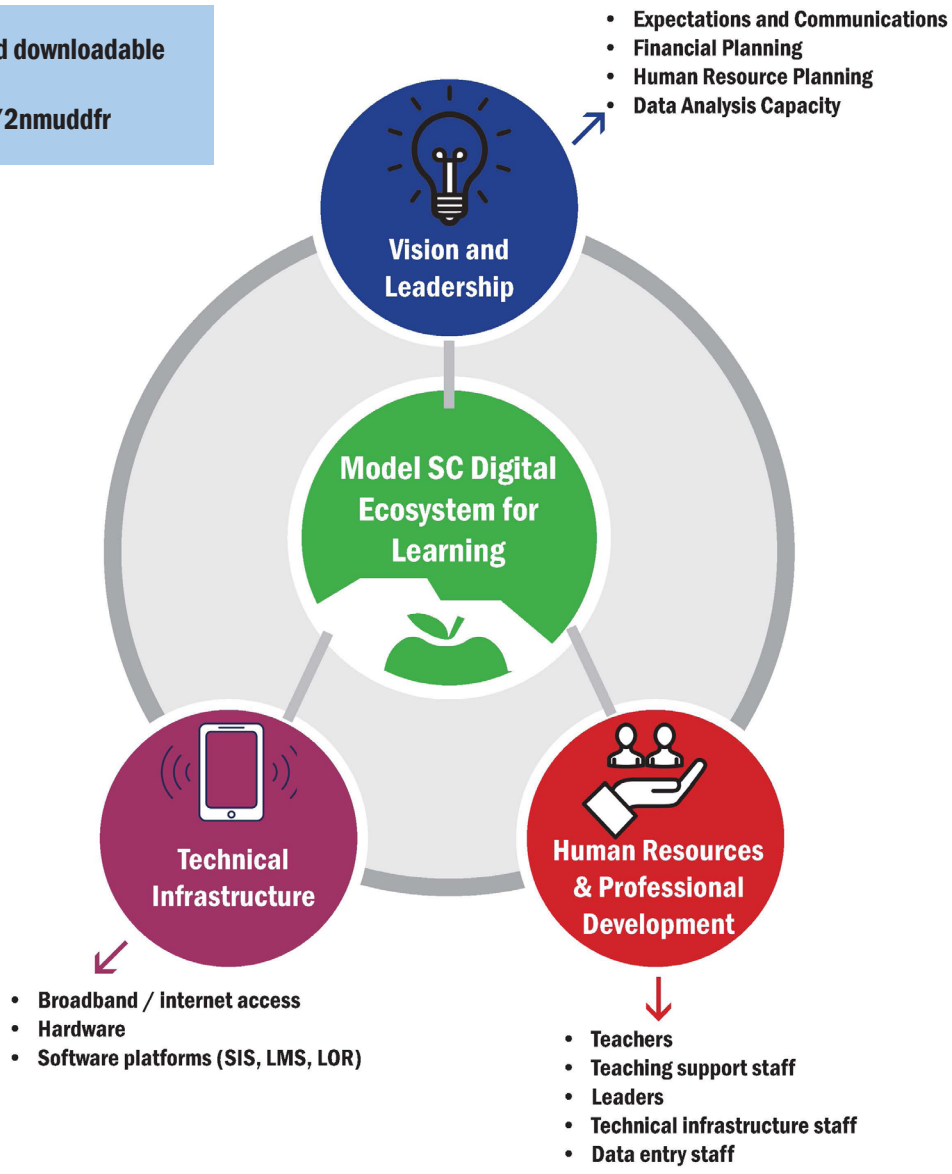
Pursuant to Proviso 1A.69 of Act 135, signed by the Governor on May 18, 2020, to continue normal operations of state government, the EOC constructed and implemented the third year (2000-21) of a pilot program for alternative delivery methods of instruction during short term disruption of school, such as inclement weather, utility outages, etc.

For Cohort 3 (2020-21), it was originally planned to add an additional 10-15 districts and work towards the transition of the eLearning pilot to SCDE. However, because of school closures due to COVID and fall restart plans, EOC staff pivoted. Recognizing that many more districts would be required to offer some form of virtual instruction during emergency remote learning, it was decided to add an additional 27 school districts and 2 public charter schools through a streamlined application process. A Readiness Cohort was also created that would eventually include 18 districts. A process was established for a Readiness district to petition for eLearning status when the districts attained the elements identified as necessary for a working instructional technology environment. In August 2020, seven districts successfully petitioned to move from Readiness to the eLearning cohort. In addition, 15 districts joined the Readiness cohort during the summer of 2020.

Throughout the year, information and data were collected which substantiated the findings from Years One and Two. The capacity of the district to provide engaging and effective instruction in a digital environment depend on having a digital ecosystem within the district. A Model SC Digital Ecosystem for Learning (see below) was presented to the EOC in February 2021 which describes the necessary elements/components of a successful digital learning model. Behind each of the elements/components is an extensive organization of planning, processes, and professional development. The eLearning Project now will transition to the SC Department of Education for implementation.

More information and downloadable resource:

https://tinyurl.com/2nmuddfr



Impact of COVID-19 on school accountability

The impact of the pandemic on schools and accountability is far-reaching. Following the U.S. Department of Education's approval of a waiver of Spring 2020 assessments, the EOC voted to suspend school report card ratings for school year 2019-20. While the committee also recommended the suspension of ratings for the 2020-21 school year, they further emphasized that statewide testing of students continue despite the interruptions brought about by the pandemic.

Work on the Cyclical Review of SC's Accountability System continued, pursuant to Section 59-18-910 of the SC Code of Laws.

"Navigating these uncharted waters will require careful listening, clear communication, and a large dose of common sense. But keeping students and their learning needs as our North Star, we may also find unexpected opportunities to address long-standing challenges in new ways"

-- Ellen Weaver, EOC Chair, in a March 24, 2020 memo to EOC members

Cyclical Review of SC's Accountability System

Section 59-18-910 of the South Carolina Code of Law calls for the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), working with the South Carolina State Board of Education (SBE), and a broad-based group of stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive cyclical review of the accountability system. One of the key charges for the cyclical review is to consider how the state's accountability system reflects evidence that students have developed the skills and characteristics outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.

Pursuant to this legislative mandate, the EOC and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) convened the South Carolina Accountability Advisory Committee (AAC), comprised of members who represented the interests and priorities of various educational stakeholders in South Carolina. The EOC and SCDE contracted with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (the Center) to facilitate the cyclical review process. The AAC met a total of seven times from February to December 2020. The primary focus of the AAC's work was to identify educational policy priorities, discuss system design and implementation considerations and constraints, review key elements of the current accountability system, and, if deemed necessary, recommend changes to the accountability system. During the review process, the AAC was encouraged to offer innovative ideas for improving the existing accountability system and not be constrained by prior practices. However, the committee also attended to critical technical and operational considerations to ensure that the accountability system is coherent, defensible, useful, feasible, and compliant with state and federal requirements. The following two pages outline the AAC's key findings and recommendations.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR *REVISING THE ESSA SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM*

Develop and report new information related to achievement gaps in academic performance that:

- Includes all student groups,
- Is tied to a fixed and meaningful criterion, and
- Measures progress toward elimination of gaps.

Achievement gap measures should be prominently and clearly reported in a manner that is easily accessed and understood by stakeholders. Schools with achievement gaps that are large and persistent should NOT attain favorable ratings.

Evaluate the current school performance ratings to ensure they reflect clear, appropriate, and consistent criteria. This includes the following:

- Study the range of 'school profiles' for each rating level to certify these patterns are appropriate and consistent with the state's educational goals, especially related to equity,
- Revise performance expectations as necessary, and
- Clearly communicate the meaning of each rating in terms of the expected performance.

Consider the following changes to the graduation rate and college and career readiness (CCR) indicators:

- Evaluate and potentially adjust the weights of graduation rate and the CCR indicators, and
- Include extended (5-year) graduation rate, but with the following parameters:
  - Extended graduation rate should have less influence than the traditional 4-year rate to maintain on-time graduation as the primary goal, and
  - Extended graduation rate alone should not decrease accountability scores.

Career-ready credit should be awarded to qualifying students who earn the South Carolina High School Credential. The state should engage in ongoing evaluation and monitoring to ensure that students are not inappropriately routed to this option.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR *ENHANCING DATA COLLECTION AND/OR REPORTING*
The state should conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all career readiness measures to ensure patterns of participation and performance demonstrate that students are well-prepared for post-secondary career success. Evaluation results should be publicly and prominently reported.
The committee supports research, development, and implementation of a reporting initiative to better communicate *Conditions for Success* for South Carolina's districts and schools. This component should include factors such as: • Educator quality, training, and competencies, including cultural competencies, • Diversity of educator and leader workforce, • Rates of disciplinary actions, such as suspension and expulsion, including for early learners, • Access to resources within the community (e.g., mentoring programs, parent engagement, corporate partnerships), and • Data to inform readiness and capacity for remote learning such as infrastructure (e.g., device availability, connectivity) and training.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR *ENGAGING IN FURTHER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT*
Research alternatives for developing academic and trans-academic measures for students in kindergarten to grade 2.
Consider developing state guidance and standards for performance demonstration (e.g., capstone projects, service initiatives, research studies) for South Carolina high school students.
Evaluate alternatives for through-course assessment.
Assess whether the criteria for student progress, for both the academic content areas and English language proficiency, are appropriate.
Social sciences, especially citizenship, is not adequately addressed. Consider additional measures, perhaps for each grade.

More information and downloadable resource:
https://tinyurl.com/4y3cymdp

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Program Update

The Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program was created by the SC General Assembly (Act 247, signed into law on May 18, 2018) to provide grants and parental tax credit to eligible students attending approved schools. Within the law, the EOC is charged with determining the eligibility of schools within the program and evaluating the impact of the program on student performance.

More information: www.eoc.sc.gov/ecenc-program

Charter School Funding Project

Pursuant to Proviso 1A.59 of the 2019-20 General Appropriation Act, the EOC issued a report to the General Assembly in June 2020 regarding the funding of charter schools. The report focuses on establishing a funding model based on the principles of performance funding.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/14c9o5dl

English 2 End-of-Course Assessment Approval

In June 2020, the EOC approved the English 2 End-of-Course Field Test. The approval occurred after the results of the field test were reviewed for alignment with state standards, level of difficulty and validity, and for the ability to differentiate levels of achievement.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/1gnfejg8

Performance of Military-Connected Students

This report, produced annually per the direction of SC law, details the demographics of military-connected students; provides an update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students in school year 2018-19; and summarizes the trainings for educators and families to enhance support of military-connected students at home and in school.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/2pvtqf3e

SC Teacher Loan Program

The Teacher Quality Act of 2000 directs the EOC to conduct an annual review of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program This year's report examines the teacher recruitment and retention issues in South Carolina for fiscal year 2018-19.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/1ji2o4ja

2019 Parent Survey Results

This report, produced annually per the direction of SC law, details the results of the parent survey which is given to all parents of children in the highest grade of each school.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/2f3gypuu

K-12 English Language Arts (ELA) Standards Review

Pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A) of the Education Accountability Act, the EOC and the State Board of Education (SBE) are responsible for reviewing South Carolina's standards and assessments to ensure that high expectations for teaching and learning are being maintained. The EOC worked with parents, business and industry persons, as well as teachers of special education, to make recommendations on the K-12 ELA standards.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/9vjbvghd

Industry Credentials for Accountability

In December 2020, the EOC approved Industry Recognized Credentials for the 2020-21 school year, as recommended by the SC Dept. of Education. A total of 59 credentials were added and 15 were deleted from the previous year, and will be used to designate student career readiness in the current accountability system.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/5y4uiqi1

EIA Budget Recommendations

As required by state law, the EOC approved budget and proviso recommendations in December 2020 for Fiscal Year 2021-22. These recommendations focus on the revenues generated by the one-cent sales tax, the Education Improvement Act. The committee's recommendations are dedicated to improving educational opportunities and outcomes for students and to supporting the teaching profession. The recommendations were forwarded to the Governor and General Assembly for their consideration.

More information: https://tinyurl.com/6gd84jwt

ADVISORY GROUPS

KINDERGARTEN READINESS ASSESSMENT (KRA) ANALYSIS

Christine DiStefano, University of South Carolina
Fred Greer, University of South Carolina
Jin Liu, University of South Carolina

COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW, 2018-19

Leigh Kale D'Amico, EdD, University of South Carolina
Xumei Fan, MA, University of South Carolina
Anna Hall, PhD, University of South Carolina
Hall West, PhD, University of South Carolina

COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT AWARD REVIEW, 2019-2020

Laura Bordeaux, Zeus
Christopher Cox, AOC Partners
Quantina Haggwood, Richland County School District One
Robin Harriford, EdVenture Children's Museum
Jean Hiers, Dominion Energy
Lynn Kuykendall, SC Department of Education
Peggy Torrey, TransformSC

REPORT OF PUBLICLY FUNDED 4K PROGRAMS

Mark Barnes, SC Office of First Steps
Michele Bowers, SC Department of Social Services
Wendy Burgess, SC Department of Education
Mary Lynne Diggs, SC Head Start Collaboration Office:
David Mathis, SC Department of Education
Georgia Mjartan, SC Office of First Steps
Quincie Moore, SC Department of Education
Taylor Seale, SC Department of Education
Martha Strickland, SC Office of First Steps

CYCLICAL REVIEW OF SC'S ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Jo Anne Anderson, community member
Melanie Barton, SC Governor's Office
Sandy Brossard; SC district instructional leader
James Burton, Continental Tires
Betsy Carpentier, SCDE
Chris Domakeski, Center for Assessment
Cynthia Downs, SC State Board of Education
Ian Feigel, SC parent
Wanda Hassler, SC school board member
Jessica Jackson, Boeing
Chandra Jefferson, SC teacher
Leslie Keng, Center for Assessment
Sarah Longshore, SCDE
J.T. McLawhorn, SC Urban League
Georgia Mjartan, SC First Steps
Brian Newsome, EOC member
John Payne, SCDE
Takesha Pollock, SC parent
Dan Ralyea, SCDE
Hope Rivers, SC higher education representative
Sylvia Sievers, SCDE
Molly Spearman, SC State Superintendent
Neil Vincent, SC district superintendent

SURVEY OF THE EFFECTS OF REMOTE LEARNING

Christine DiStefano, University of South Carolina

2019 SC PARENT SURVEY

Marisa Garcia-Quintana, Columbia
Cynthia Hearn, Columbia

MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENT REPORT

Kevin Bruch, Department of Defense State Liaison Office
Judy Glennon, Military Child Education Coalition
Cynthia Hearn, SC Department of Education
South Carolina School Liaison Officers

2018-19 TEACHER LOAN PROGRAM

Kathryn Crews, SCDE
Jennifer Garrett, CERAA
Cynthia Hearn SCDE
Mary Hipp, SCDE
Ray Jones, South Carolina Student Loan Corporation
Jeff Thompson, SC CHE
Jane Turner, CERRA

K-12 ELA STANDARDS REVIEW

Lorin Anderson, Columbia
Addy Aranda, teacher, Fort Mill
Melody Bradley, principal, Blacksville
Alicia Williams, teacher, Charleston
Amy Condon, teacher, Pawleys Island
Barbara Foorman, New York, NY
Kimberly Gibbs, community, Greenville
Carley Hansman, teacher, Chesnee
Amanda Hayes, spec. education, Dillon
Tom Henz, business, Hilton Head
Alejandra Hursey, ELL, Lake View
Annia Knight, community, Columbia
Nicole Kosinski, business, Sumter
Jacquelyn A. Malloy, Clemson
Staci Miller, spec. education, Pamplico
Lessa Owens, business, Greenville
Janie Neeley, parent, Columbia
Cassandra Poole, spec. education,Darlington
Latrece Quattleman, teacher, Graniteville
Kimberly Robson, teacher, Easley
Yamekia Robinson, parent, Lake City
Kelly Scott, parent, Rock Hill
Timothy Shanahan, Chicago, IL
Dywanna Smith, Elgin
Angela Spearman, teacher, Easley
Sarah Tew, spec. education, Hartsvile
Elizabeth Thompson, teacher, Hartsville
Kristina Turner, teacher, Anderson
Connie Williams, higher education, Folly Beach

EOC MEMBERS

current February 10, 2021

Ellen Weaver, Columbia *(Chair)*
Barbara B. Hairfield, Charleston (Vice Chair)
Rep. Terry Alexander, Florence
April Allen, Columbia
Melanie Barton, Columbia
Rep. Neal Collins, Easley
Bob Couch, Anderson
Rep. Raye Felder, Fort Mill
Barbara B. Hairfield, Charleston
Sen. Greg Hembree, Myrtle Beach
Sen. Kevin Johnson, Manning
Sidney Locke, Greenville
Brian Newsome, West Columbia
Neil Robinson, Charleston
Jamie Shuster, Columbia
State Superintendent Molly Spearman, Columbia (ex-officio)
Patti Tate, Rock Hill
Scott Turner, Greenville

Others serving on the EOC during 20-21:
John Stockwell, Spartanburg
Sen. John Matthews, St. Matthews

Special thanks to the numerous individuals who provided expertise and assistance on one or more projects during the period March 1, 2020 - February 28, 2021

SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

www.eoc.sc.gov

FYI

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

3/26/2021

The Honorable Molly Spearman
State Superintendent of Education
South Carolina Department of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Superintendent Spearman:

I am writing in response to the South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE's) request on November 20, 2020, for a waiver of section 1111(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) that the State administer the same academic assessments to all public elementary and secondary school students in the State. SCDE originally requested this waiver so that it would not administer its statewide reading/language arts, mathematics, and science assessments as well as the English language proficiency (ELP) assessment in the 2020-2021 school year, though SCDE has since moved forward with administering its science and ELP assessments. The State proposed that, in place of the statewide assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics, the State would permit its local educational agencies (LEAs) to administer a formative or diagnostic assessment. The State would include all data on State and local report cards that are available or calculable based upon the data, including the results of the local assessments. I appreciate the information that SCDE submitted in its request and shared in conversation between our staff.

The Department remains committed to supporting all States in assessing the learning of all students. Obtaining data on student learning includes high-quality statewide assessments, which can help identify where opportunity gaps are persistent and have been exacerbated – particularly during the pandemic – and, along with other data, can help States direct resources and support to close those gaps. At the same time, we must also recognize that we are in the midst of a pandemic that requires real flexibility.

SCDE has not demonstrated, however, specific circumstances that would warrant granting a waiver of the annual statewide assessment requirements in mathematics and reading/language arts and, specifically, not administering statewide assessments at all. As a result, and after carefully considering SCDE's request, I am declining to approve the State's request because it does not meet the statutory requirements for a waiver outlined in section 8401(b)(1) of the ESEA. Namely, SCDE does not sufficiently demonstrate how the request will advance student academic achievement (section 8401(b)(1)(C)). It also does not describe how schools will continue to provide assistance to the same populations served by the Title I, Part A program, particularly low-achieving students, or describe how the State will maintain or improve transparency in reporting to parents and the public on student achievement and school performance, including the achievement of the subgroups of students identified in section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the ESEA (section 8401(b)(1)(F)).

The Department believes that, consistent with the ESEA, States should do the best they can to maximize the number of students who are assessed with comparable, reliable, and valid statewide summative assessments. Still, we recognize that some schools and school districts will face circumstances where they are not able to successfully administer statewide summative assessments to all students. Certainly, we do not believe that if there are places where students are unable to attend school safely in person because of the pandemic that they should be brought into school buildings for the sole purpose of taking a test. The Department has provided flexibility for States to administer assessments in ways that support students and educators during this unprecedented period as part of our commitment to effectively address existing and increased gaps in opportunity exacerbated by the pandemic.

In cases where students are unable to take the statewide summative assessment, we hope that States and school districts use other assessments to measure student learning and progress and to provide information to parents and educators. These interim, diagnostic, or formative assessments do not replace statewide summative assessments, but they can serve to provide valuable information to meet our goal of maximizing the number of students for whom we have quality data this year.

SCDE may revise its waiver request, consistent with section 8401(b)(4)(B)(ii) of the ESEA, to meet the requirements of section 8401(b)(1) and resubmit the revised waiver request. If SCDE decides to resubmit, it must do so no later than 60 days from the date of this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at: ESEA.Assessment@ed.gov. We are eager to continue to work with SCDE on a plan that addresses your State's specific circumstances and maximizes the amount of comparable, reliable, and valid student learning data.

Sincerely,

Ian Rosenblum
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs
Delegated the Authority to Perform the Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: John Payne, SCDE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

March 26, 2021

The Honorable Molly Spearman
Superintendent of Education
South Carolina Department of Education
1429 Senate Street, Room 1006
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Superintendent Spearman:

I am writing in response to South Carolina's request on March 11, 2021, that the U.S. Department of Education (Department) waive the accountability, school identification, and related reporting requirements for the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the authority in section 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Specifically, South Carolina requested a waiver of:

- Accountability and school identification requirements in sections 1111(c)(4) and 1111(d)(2)(C)-(D): the requirements that a State measure progress toward long-term goals and measurements of interim progress; meaningfully differentiate, on an annual basis, all public schools, including by adjusting the Academic Achievement indicator based on a participation rate below 95 percent; and identify schools for comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement based on data from the 2020-2021 school year.

- Report card provisions related to accountability in section 1111(h) based on data from the 2020-2021 school year. These include:
    - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(i)(I)-(IV) and (VI) (Accountability system description, other than the list of comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement schools).
    - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(iii)(I) (Other Academic indicator results for schools that are not high schools).
    - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(v) (School Quality or Student Success indicator results).
    - Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(vi) (Progress toward meeting long-terms goals and measurements of interim progress).
    - Section 1111(h)(2)(C) with respect, at the local educational agency (LEA) and school levels, to all waived requirements in section 1111(h)(1)(C).

After reviewing South Carolina's request, I am pleased to approve a waiver of the requirements listed above. The intent of these accountability waivers is to focus on assessments to provide information to parents, educators, and the public about student performance and to help target resources and supports. This is particularly crucial this this year, due to the COVID pandemic. As a result, we also encourage you and your school districts to consider other steps within your purview to further reduce the stakes of assessments this year, such as excluding their use from students' final grades, grade promotion decisions, educator evaluations, and local school ratings.

As part of this waiver, South Carolina assured that:

- The State will make publicly available chronic absenteeism data, either as defined in the State's School Quality or Student Success indicator, if applicable, or ED*Facts*, disaggregated to the extent such data are available by the subgroups in ESEA section 1111(c)(2), on State and local report cards (or in another publicly available location).

- The State will make publicly available data on student and/or teacher access to technology devices and high-speed internet, disaggregated by the subgroups in ESEA section 1111(c)(2), to the extent such data are collected at the state or LEA level.

- Any school that is identified for comprehensive, targeted, or additional targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year (i.e., any school that was in that status as of the 2019-2020 school year), except for comprehensive support and improvement schools identified based on low graduation rates that meet the State's exit criteria, will maintain that identification status in the 2021-2022 school year, implement its support and improvement plan, and receive appropriate supports and interventions.

- The State will identify comprehensive, targeted, and additional targeted support and improvement schools using data from the 2021-2022 school year in the fall of 2022 to ensure school identification resumes as quickly as possible.

Finally, it remains vitally important that parents, educators, and the public have access to data on student learning and success. The Department encourages States, when posting State assessment results for the 2020-2021 school year, to prominently and in clear language provide information about the context of the data, including its limitations as a result of the pandemic. For example, in a situation where participation rates are low and/or uneven across student groups as a result of the pandemic, the results should include clearly worded context that such data are incomplete and, where applicable, are not representative of the make-up of the State, district, or school population. As always, assessment data should also be viewed alongside other important measures of student outcomes and opportunity to learn data to provide a more complete perspective on resources, support, and student success.

Note that the Department is responding separately to the South Carolina request to waive the requirement to administer the same statewide assessments to all public and elementary and secondary students in the State. I continue to thank you for the work you are doing to help support the social, emotional, and academic needs of your State's students in this difficult time. If you have any questions about this waiver, please contact my staff at OESE.Titlei-a@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Ian Rosenblum
Delegated the Authority to Perform the
Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education

cc: John Payne, SCDE