SC Education Oversight EIA & Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

November 16, 2026

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Welcome & Approval of EIA Subcommittee Minutes

November 16, 2026

April Allen, Chair

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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SC Department of Education

Dr. Abbey Duggins, *SCDE Deputy Superintendent*

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

FY 2027-28 Budget Presentation

EOC EIA

November 16, 2026

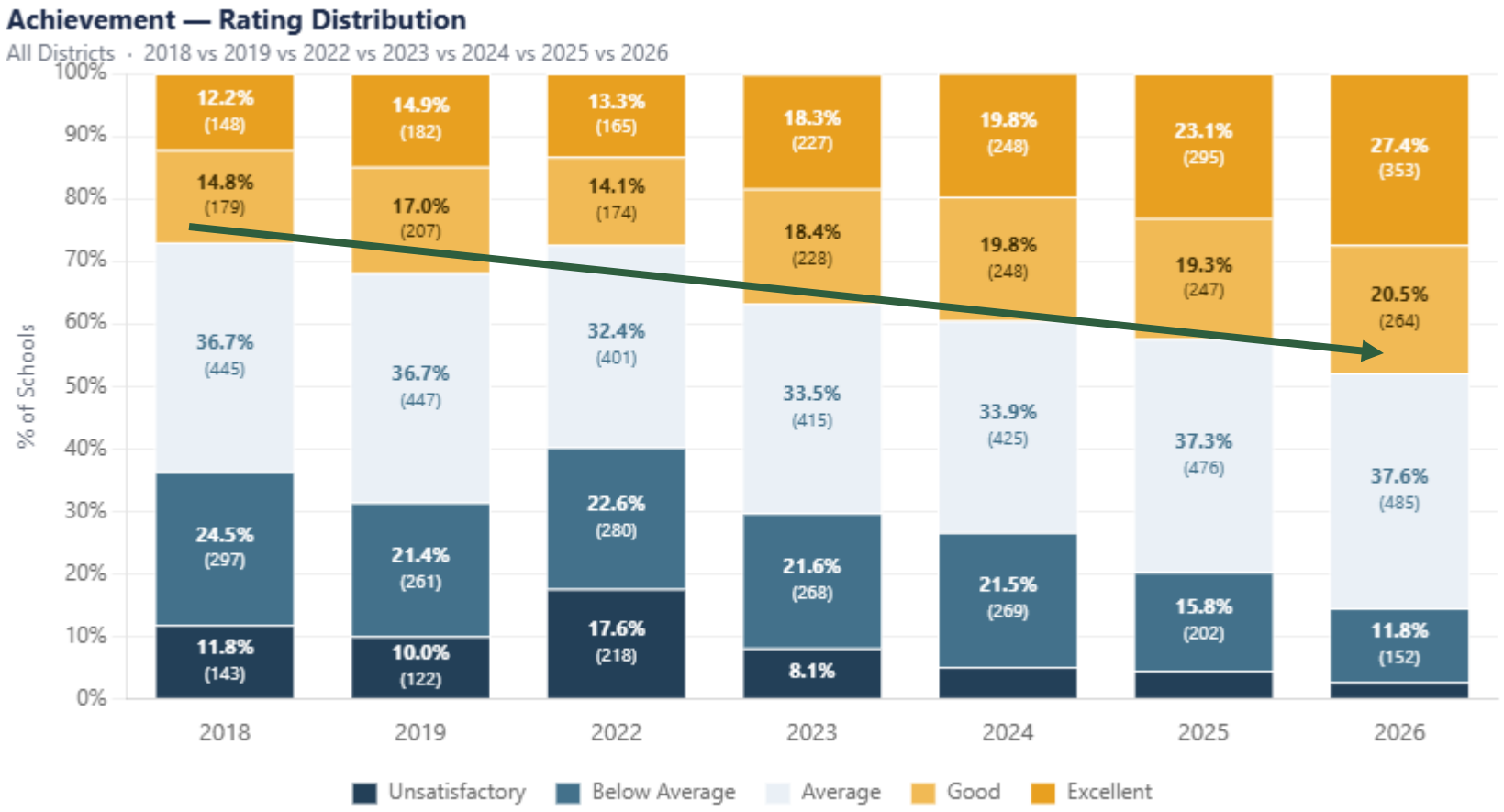
Our North Star

Student Achievement

At least 75% of students at or above grade level by 2030



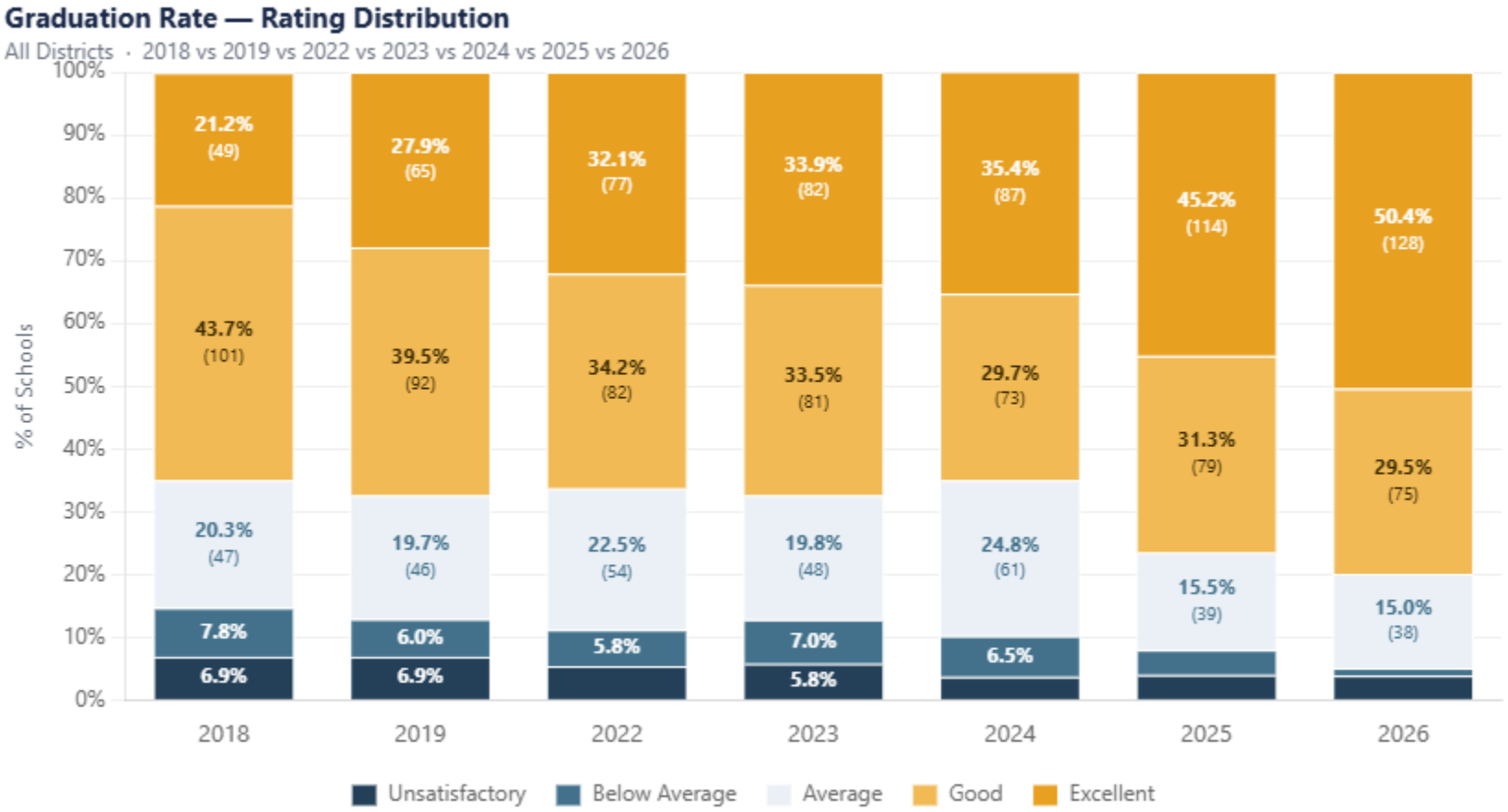
Academic Achievement: All Schools



Steady increase in Academic Achievement.

Highest percentage of Excellent and Good schools.

Graduation Rate: All Schools

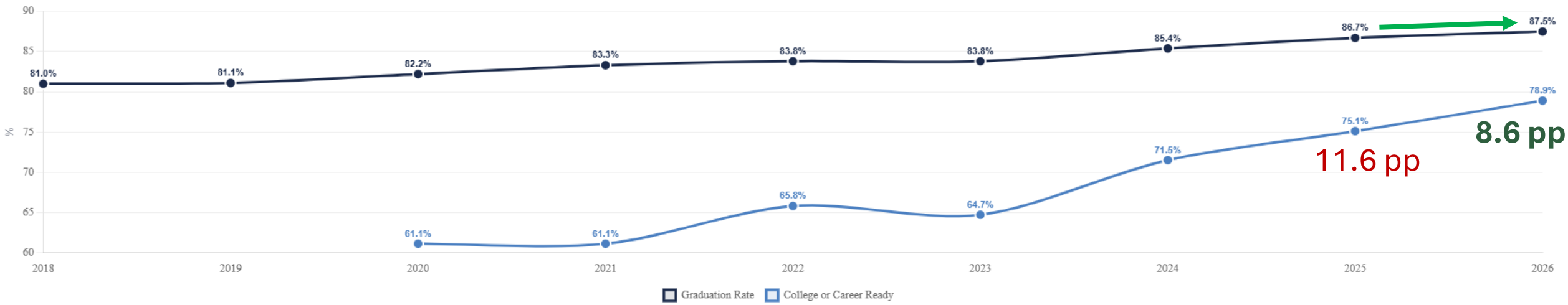


More than half of SC schools were rated Excellent (50.4%).

Highest percentages in Excellent and Good schools.

More Graduating Students are College or Career Ready

State Level
South Carolina
State Overview Trends



Highest graduation rate in the last decade (**87.5%**).

The **gap between graduating students and college or career ready** students is **narrowing** (8.6 pp).

Key Takeaways

Overall Outcomes:

- **Highest percentage and number of schools rated Good and Excellent (52.3%).**
- **Academic Achievement (4.3 pp)** and **College and Career Readiness (5.5 pp)** improved.
- **Highest graduation rate (87.5%)** in the last decade.

Key Takeaways:

- **Echoes: High Expectations + High Support = RESULTS**
- Positive trends in the assessments and other agency initiatives carried into these ratings.
- We are narrowing the gap between graduation rate and college/career readiness.

Why It Matters:

- These successes point us towards our agency vision:
    - Every student graduates college or career ready.
    - 75% of students perform at or above grade level.

CERDEP Per Pupil Allocation

- Currently serving approximately 15,750 students in full day, state-funded public 4K (CERDEP)
- CERDEP per pupil allocation last increased in 2023
- Since 2023, the K-12 minimum teacher salary has risen nearly 20%, and districts are increasingly using their CERDEP allocation to ensure CERDEP teachers receive the same salary increases as their peers

Strategic Compensation Pilot

Pilot Background

- Year One: 36 pilot schools operating awards based on student growth on SC Ready, End of Course assessments, interim assessments, and/or school-designed models
    - Over 400 teachers awarded for above average growth; pilot included the introduction of a rigorous summative assessment-based model
- Year Two: Increased to 97 schools

Pilot Learnings and Proposed Next Steps

- Pilot helped to identify and award high-performing teachers in understaffed schools, and helps districts identify characteristics of high-performing teachers they want to attract and retain
- Retention effects require a sustainable investment to incentivize strong teachers to sign contracts and stay at these schools
    - Pilot schools outpaced the state in the percentage of teachers returning year-over-year
- Braid two approaches: scaling individual awards for high-performing teachers, and differentiated pay for hard-to-staff schools and roles

Computer Science and Technology Strategy

- Computer science is the baseline for **all** technology education
  - AI, data science, cybersecurity, and new technology pathways build on strong CS skills
- Work already underway:
  - SREB AI Pathway
  - SREB Course Training (Summer 2027)
  - Industry-aligned pilot grants
  - No-cost AI pathway to widen access for districts
  - Internal research and external engagement

Student Success

Our commitment to “Student Success” ensures every child gains foundational skills for lifelong achievement. Through evidence-based programs like the Science of Reading and Palmetto Math Project, we strive to equip all students to excel in school and life.

High Quality Instructional Materials (3 & 4) – $15.3 (non-recurring), $20M (recurring)

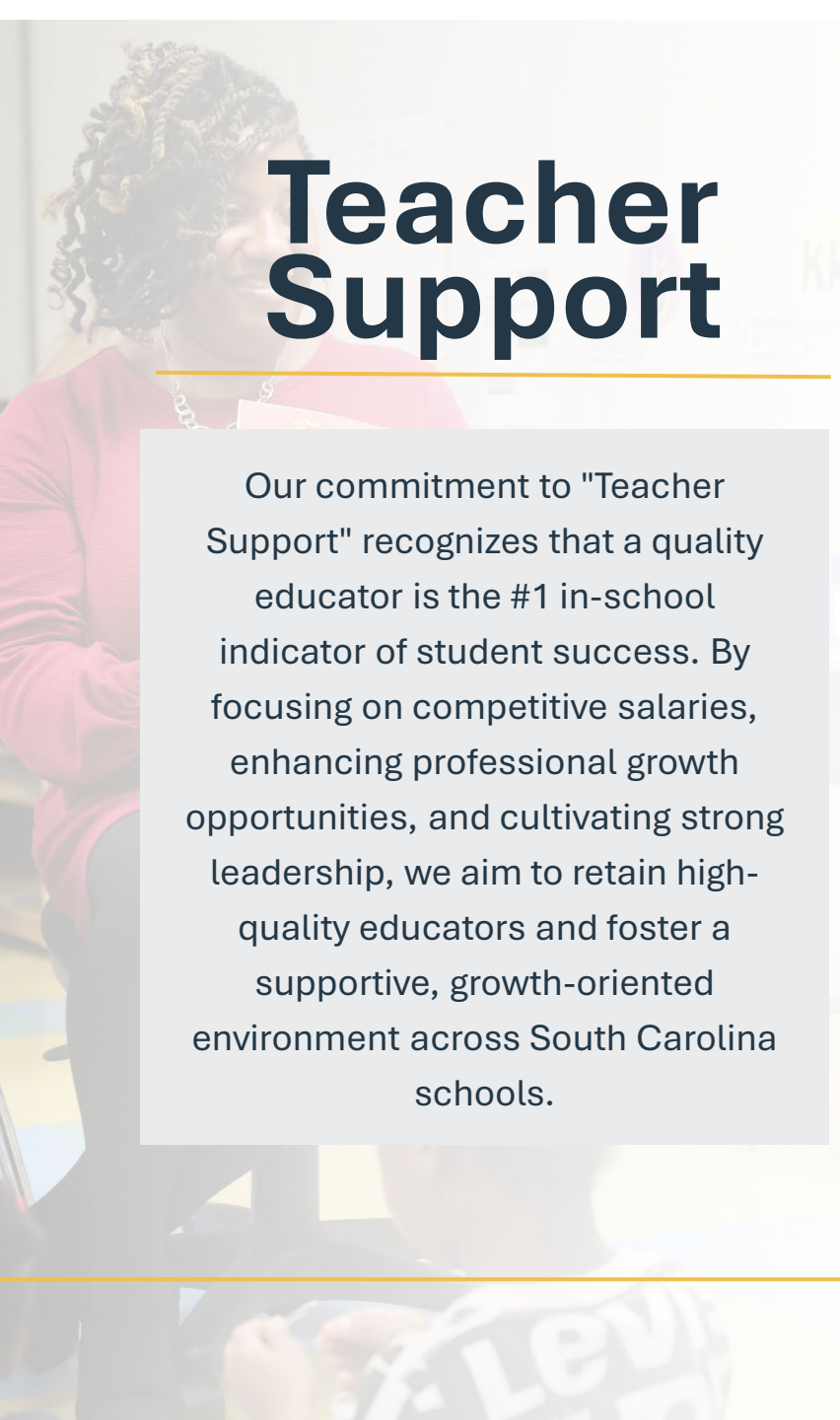
Funding for purchase of HQIM in multiple subject areas and to prepare for an upcoming statewide History & Civics purchase.

Education Scholarship Trust Fund (8) – $80.4M (recurring)

Funding for Year 4 of ESTF program

HOPE Resource Center Sustainment & Expansion (9) – $2.67M (recurring)

Funding will ensure that every district has the capacity, tools, and support needed for students to excel.



Teacher Support

Our commitment to "Teacher Support" recognizes that a quality educator is the #1 in-school indicator of student success. By focusing on competitive salaries, enhancing professional growth opportunities, and cultivating strong leadership, we aim to retain high-quality educators and foster a supportive, growth-oriented environment across South Carolina schools.

Teacher Compensation Modernization (1)
- $10M (recurring)

Funding will transition strategic compensation from a pilot into a recurring, sustained program.

Math High-Quality Professional Development (2)
- $10M (non-recurring)

Funding will provide mathematics HQPL for approximately 13,000 K-8 educators.

Child Early Reading Development & Education Program (CERDEP) Instructional Funding Adjustment (7)
- $6.8M (recurring)

Funding will increase instructional allocation from $5,100 per student to $5,508 per student to reflect corresponding increases in personnel costs.

State Aid to Classrooms: Teacher Salaries & Enrollment Growth
- $176.9M (recurring)

Increase starting teacher salary to $52,000

Safe Schools

Our commitment to "Safe Schools" prioritizes investments in infrastructure, transportation, and security, ensuring students have access to a safe, well-maintained environment conducive to learning. These initiatives support modern facilities, safety upgrades, and reliable transportation, all of which are essential to promoting access to an excellent education.

SC Education Infrastructure Bank (5) – $120M (recurring)

Establish a permanent, **comprehensive solution** to provide sustainable funding **for rural public and public charter school facility** construction, renovation, and modernization

Pilot of School Safety Personnel Program (6) – $347,500 (non-recurring)

Pilot will allow SCDE to partner with districts and law enforcement entities to develop and implement training

Transportation Bus Shop (10 & 11) – $3.36M (recurring) & $850k (non-recurring)

Funding will complete market alignment of bus shop compensation to the State HR job class midpoint and sustain HR infrastructure required across all statewide bus shops.

Technology Infrastructure Modernization & Student Information System (12 & 13) – $3.4M (recurring) and $2.7M (non-recurring)

Funding will enable SCDE to finalize and sustain IT modernization

Bus Lease/Purchase (14) – $40M (recurring)

Maintain the state-mandated **fifteen-year replacement cycle**

Proviso Requests

1A.24 – Full Day 4K

Aligns proviso with current practice. Allows the Department to refer to the student information system rather than a specific vendor to avoid confusion and keep the proviso workable over time.

1A.30 – PowerSchool Dropout Recovery Data

Aligns proviso with current practice. Allows the Department to refer to the student information system rather than a specific vendor to avoid confusion and keep the proviso workable over time.

1A.62 – Maintenance of Equity

Deletes proviso due to the expiration of American Rescue Plan funding.

Behavioral Support Study Committee

Proviso would establish a committee to gather information and make recommendations for improving the behavioral supports available to Students With Disabilities throughout South Carolina.

THANK YOU

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA)

Dr. Michelle Sweatman, ***Director, Budget & Administration***

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We are CERRA

Center for Educator Recruitment Retention & Advancement

Education Oversight EIA & Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

November 16, 2026

Impact of CERRA's Programs: A Snapshot

Pre-collegiate Programs	
ProTeam	
# Districts	35
# Schools	55
# Students (Grades 6-8)	1,565
Teacher Cadet	
# Districts	71
# Schools	164
# Students (Grades 9-12)	3,187
ProTeam continues to grow. Lancaster is an example of one district that has ProTeam at all of their middle schools.	

SC Teaching Fellows	
Pre-Service Teachers	846 Fellows
Students: Grades 9-12	215 Seniors awarded for 2025 Cohort
Post-secondary Students	846 Fellows
There are currently 14 Teaching Fellows Institutions with one program being a partnership among colleges.	

Mentor and Induction	
# Districts	All SC districts
# Schools	All SC schools
# Classroom Teachers (incl. guidance counselors)	1495 New mentors; 128 attended support sessions
# Guidance counselors	Incl in row above
# Administrators	68
Virtual office hours are now available for mentors, mentees, and induction leaders weekly as needed. The Premiere Educator's Guide to Year One now has an ISBN so colleges can order the resource.	

National Board	
# Districts	72 Districts 2 Special schools 3 CTE centers
# Teachers	3,336 Employed in districts
# Supplement Eligible FTEs	3,144 FTEs employed and eligible for the state supplement
SC is 4th in the nation for number of total NBCTs and 5th in the nation for the percentage of NBCTs in the teaching population.	

South Carolina Teaching Fellows

FY28 Budget Request

Teaching Fellows: Enrollment

South Carolina Teaching Fellows Institutions with Fellows Enrolled (FY26)			
Anderson University	110	Lander University	99
Charleston Southern University	43	Newberry College*	7
Clemson University	101	North Greenville University*	12
Coastal Carolina University	55	USC- Aiken	30
College of Charleston	65	USC- Columbia	141
Columbia College *	2	USC- Upstate	38
Francis Marion University	31	Winthrop University	122
Total Teaching Fellos Enrolled in FY26			**856**

**Columbia College, Newberry College, and North Greenville University are new programs and have one cohort of Fellows in FY26.*

Teaching Fellows: A Snapshot

Percentage of Teaching Fellows graduates who are loan satisfied either by teaching or by loan repayment	93%

Percentage of Teaching Fellows from the 2000-2020 cohorts have graduated from a Teaching Fellows Institution (TFI) and successfully completed the Program (usually within 4 years)	79%
Graduation rates for all majors offered in Teaching Fellows Institutions after 4, 5, or 6 years	50-60%

	FY24	FY25	FY26
Completed and scored applications for incoming freshman fellows	772	768	792
Incoming freshman fellows accepted awards	230	215	215
Fellows who received funds (all four cohorts)	781	826	856
Fellows who graduated from the program	162	177	193
Fellows teaching in a SC public school to fulfill service agreement	605	630	750

FY27: Allocated Budget vs Actual Funding

Source	Funding	Cost/Deficit	
Teacher Recruit Program (H030)*	$4,243,527 x 92% = $3,904,045 (92% goes to CERRA; 8% goes to SC State) $3,904,045 x 78% = 3,045,155.10		**$3,045,155.10**
CERRA Agency Funds (H470)	$500,000 for Teaching Fellows**		**$500,000**
Total Funding for Fellows			**$3,545,155.10**
		Estimated Cost for 856 Teaching Fellows***	**$4,600,000**
		Deficit (Amount still needed to fully fund current Fellows)	**$1,054,844.90**

*"seventy-eight percent must be used for the Teaching Fellows Program specifically to provide scholarships for future teachers, and of which twenty-two percent must be used for other aspects of the state teacher recruitment program, including the Teacher Cadet Program and $166,302 which must be used for specific programs to recruit minority teachers"

**$2,231,680 for CERRA Agency funding (After $500,000 to Teaching Fellows, remaining goes to salaries, Job Board, indirect costs)

***The estimated cost is based on FY25 and FY26 budgets.

CERRA

FY28 Funding Request

Needed Additional Funds to Cover Current Deficit			**$1,055,000**
	Adding additional 20 Fellows each year	80 (freshmen, sophomore, junior, seniors) x $6,000	**$480,000**
	Increasing Junior/Senior funding to $10,000 per year	435* x $4,000 per year	**$1,740,000**
Total Increase Requested			**$3,275,000**

*Estimated number of junior and senior Teaching Fellows including an increase of 20 per cohort

CERRA

SC Tech-to-Teach Scholars Program

Naomi Lett, *CEO SC Technical College System Foundation*

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South Carolina Tech-to-Teach Scholars Program

Year one of the persistence pathway pilot funded under Proviso 1A.63(2) — results through June 30, 2026, and a snapshot of where the program stands today



Naomi Lett, CEO South Carolina Technical College System Foundation

the system FOUNDATION
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PROVISO 1A.63(2), FY 2025–26 GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Proviso Directives

THE APPROPRIATION

$1.5M

One-time Education Improvement Act funds to the SC Technical College System, in partnership with the Foundation, to design and run a two-year pilot

Reports to the Governor, Senate Finance, House Ways and Means and the Education Oversight Committee

THE PILOT'S CHARGE

1. Increase the number of South Carolinians who earn an **associate degree in education** at a technical college
2. **Transfer** to a four-year institution and **complete a bachelor's degree** in education
3. Offer a **cost-efficient, accelerated** online, in-person or hybrid path close to home
4. Focus on **rural communities** and partner with **local school districts** on identification, work-based learning and long-term employment

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HOW THE FOUNDATION BUILT THE PILOT

A guided pathway from the technical college to the classroom

STEP 1
Education associate degree at a technical college

→

STEP 2
Transfer to a four-year institution

→

STEP 3
Educator Preparation Program and Praxis

→

STEP 4
A South Carolina classroom

Navigators

One consistent point of contact from the technical college through transfer and certification — individual success plans and monthly check-ins

Praxis Core preparation

Monthly virtual sessions, preparation software and exam vouchers — the clearest predictor of reaching an Educator Preparation Program

Milestone incentives

Up to $5,000 per scholar, released only after a navigator verifies each achievement — credit hours, Praxis, transfer, practicum

Emergency assistance

Up to $1,000 for a qualifying event that threatens continued enrollment — rent, tuition, transportation, medical costs

REPORTING PERIOD: JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2026

Year one of the pilot at a glance

159

Scholars enrolled between October 2025 and June 30, 2026 – **pilot goal was 100 scholars**

94.3%

Retention — 150 of 159 scholars still enrolled at June 30, 2026

10

Partner technical colleges enrolling scholars — expanded from the original 7 during the year. Now all 16 technical colleges are participating.

26

Scholars enrolled at a four-year institution — 22 of them holding an associate degree

189

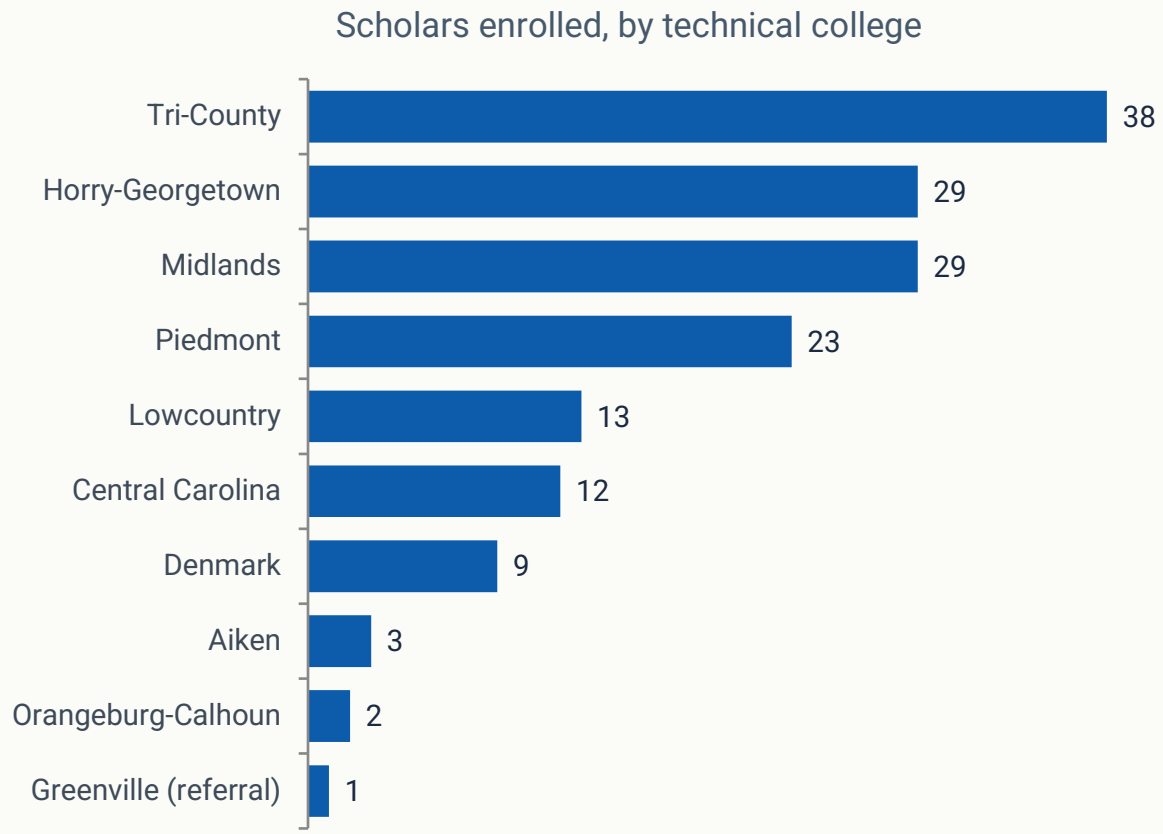
Verified milestone achievements, earned by 95 scholars (59.7%)

$586.6K

Spent in year one — 39% of the $1.5M two-year appropriation, at $3,690 per scholar enrolled

ENROLLMENT AND REACH · JUNE 30, 2026

159 scholars from 79 communities in 29 counties



63%

Of South Carolina's 46 counties are home to at least one scholar — 29 counties reached in the pilot's first nine months of enrollment

22.9%

Scholars from rural (nonmetropolitan) counties — 36 of 157 placed; the colleges serving the most rural territory joined most recently

29.1%

Scholars aged 30 or older — the program serves working adults as much as recent graduates (median age about 24)

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MILESTONE SCHEDULE

Incentives placed where students most often drop out.

AT THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

$250
Sign-on at enrollment

$300
15 credit hours

$300
30 credit hours

$300
45 credit hours

$300
60 credit hours

$600
Praxis Core complete or exempt ($200 per section passed)

$750
Start of practicum

$500
Completion of practicum

AT THE FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION

$400
University enrollment or registration

$600
Acceptance to an Educator Preparation Program

$500
Start of student teaching

Up to $5,000
Per scholar across the full pathway. Credit-hour milestones pay only for progress made inside the program, and every payment is released after a navigator verifies the achievement.



YEAR ONE · JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2026

Home-grown teachers for stronger schools

TRANSFER AND THE PRAXIS CORE · JUNE 30, 2026

Transfer is working; the Praxis Core is the binding constraint

WHAT THE PROVISO ASKED: TRANSFER

26

Scholars enrolled at a four-year institution (16.4% of the roster)

85%

Of transferring scholars held an associate degree first — 22 of 26.

Navigators coordinated with four-year partners on admission, registration and articulation, and advocated for scholars facing transfer barriers. Year-two target: raise transfers at least 20% over the baseline of 26.

WHAT HOLDS SCHOLARS BACK: THE PRAXIS CORE

12

Scholars met the Praxis Core requirement by June 30 — 9 exempt, 3 passed all sections

6 of 26

Transferring scholars who had met the requirement (23.1%)

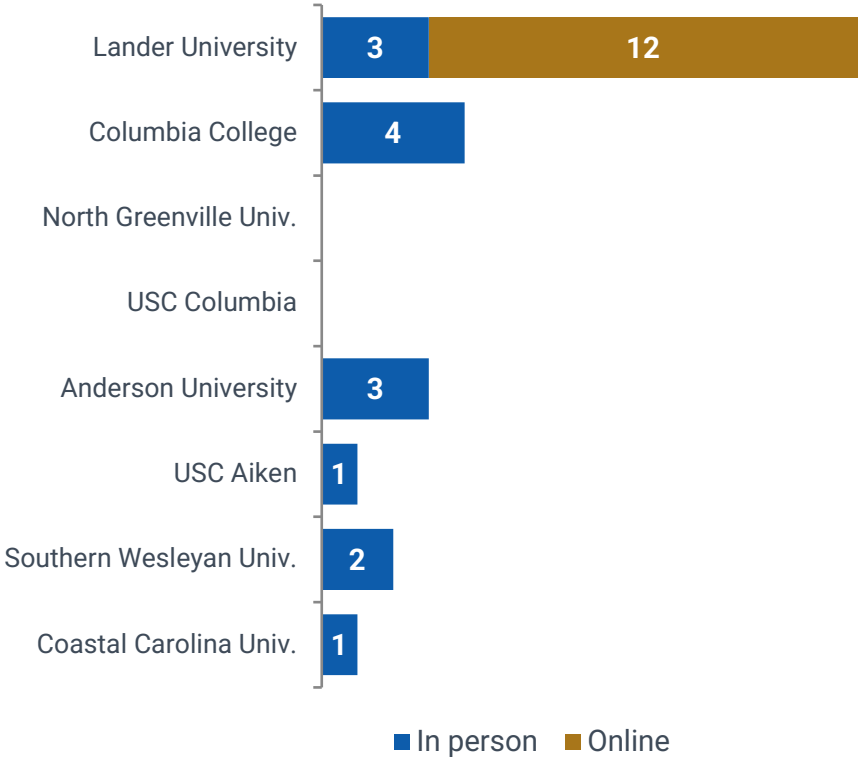
The Foundation's response: "Day One" Praxis preparation

Every scholar now begins Praxis Core preparation at enrollment — preparation software, Praxis-aligned skill development, targeted tutoring, and navigator tracking by section. Mathematics is the clearest barrier.

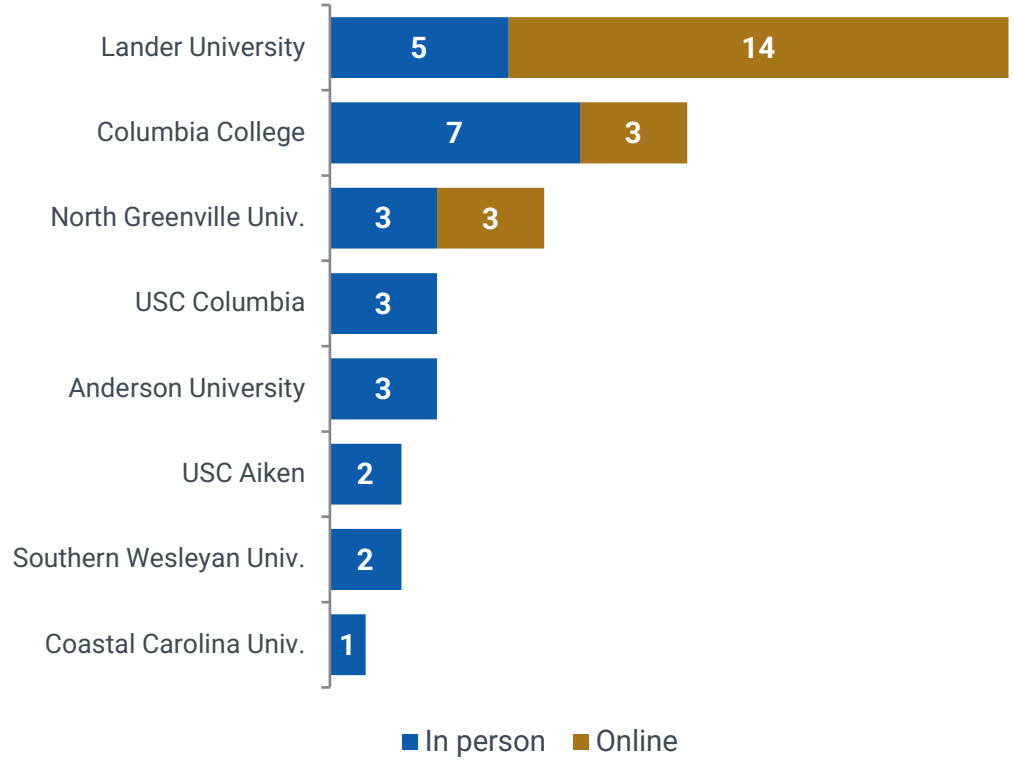
TRANSFER DESTINATIONS · IN PERSON AND ONLINE

Where scholars are transferring — and how they attend

June 30, 2026 · 26 scholars at a four-year institution



Today · 46 scholars at a four-year institution



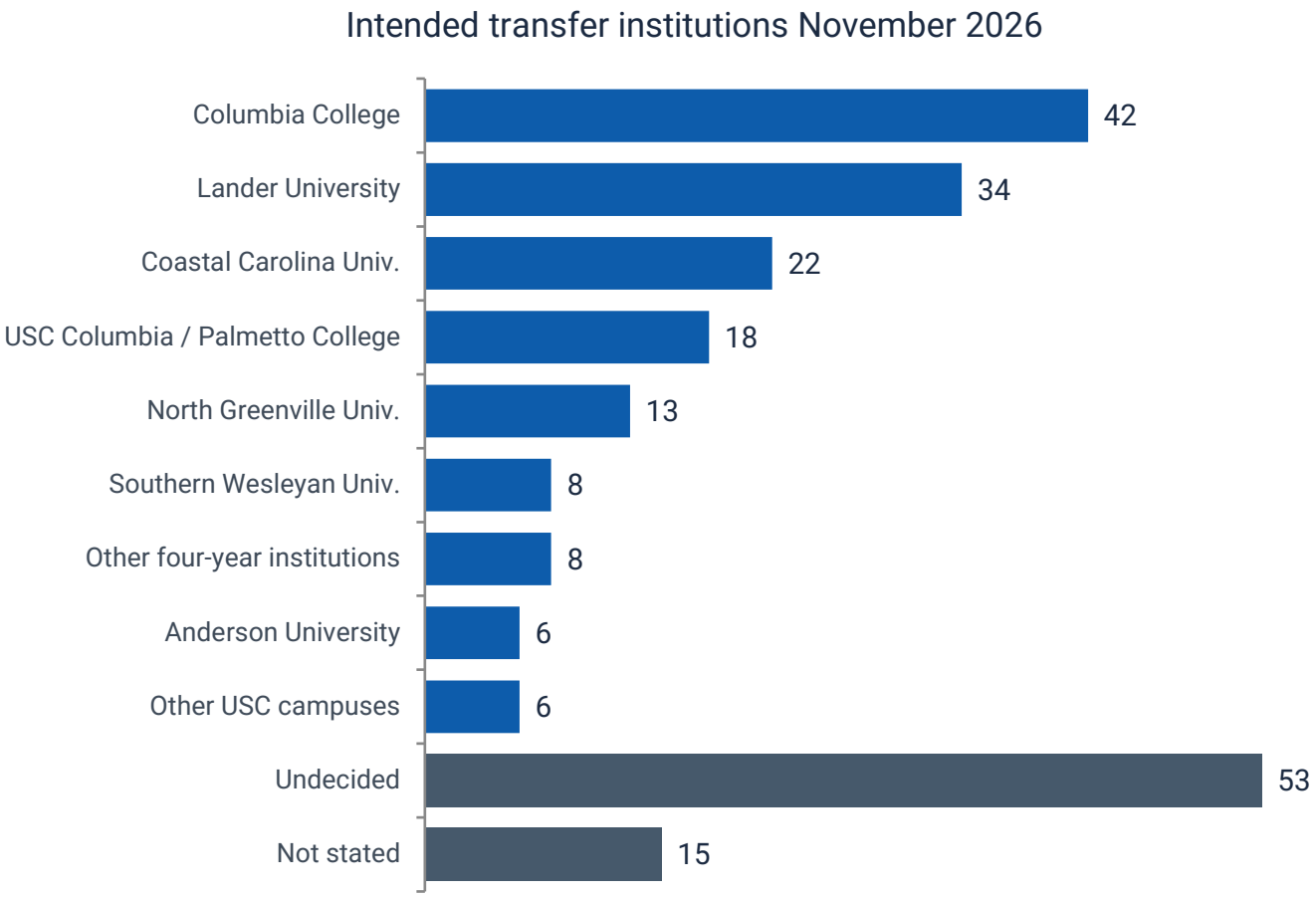
14 → 26 scholars attending in person

12 → 20 scholars in fully online programs

5 → 8 four-year institutions receiving scholars

INTENDED TRANSFER INSTITUTION · FROM SCHOLAR APPLICATIONS

Where scholars say they intend to transfer



30%

Of scholars are undecided— navigators help identify institutions that best support student needs and provide an accelerated path to the classroom.

Source: scholar application roster, intended transfer institution (free-text responses grouped; excludes applicants who did not participate or were waitlisted).

STEWARDSHIP OF THE APPROPRIATION · JULY 1, 2025 – JUNE 30, 2026

Every dollar creates verified progress

$586,634

Spent in year one of the $1.5M two-year appropriation; the balance carries into year two

≈ $12,000

Per-scholar cost at scale for the full pathway — navigation, Praxis preparation, milestones and emergency support ($3,690 per scholar in year one)

$143,000

Milestone payments earned by scholars — each released only after a navigator verified the achievement

$410,900

Designated for enrolled scholars' remaining milestones at June 30 — a commitment drawn only on verified progress

The pilot buys what the colleges and universities don't already provide — navigators, licensure-test preparation and achievement-based incentives — rather than duplicating instruction. Scholars' tuition continues to be covered by existing aid.

STATE DOLLARS LEVERAGED PRIVATE SUPPORT

Source	Award
South Carolina General Assembly (two years)	$1,500,000
Private foundation grant (awarded June 2026)	$200,000
Community partner support	$40,000
National partnership support	$20,000

$260,000

In private and philanthropic support attracted alongside the state's investment in the pilot's first year

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WHERE WE ARE TODAY

Four months on, the program has grown by nearly half

Measure	June 30, 2026	Today
Scholars enrolled since launch	159	**237**
Currently enrolled	150	**197**
Retention rate	94.3%	***83.1%**
Year-one scholars still enrolled today	—	**85%**
Technical colleges participating	10 of 16	**16 of 16**
Number of Milestones Earned	189	**354**
Scholars at a four-year institution	26	**47**
Scholars who passed all or part of the Praxis Core	12	**30**
Milestone commitment to enrolled scholars	$410,900	**$616,150**

40

Scholars have earned an Associate Degree since the program began

4

Scholars accepted into an Educator Preparation Program

21 of 47

Transfer scholars attend university online – staying rooted in their home communities while working toward certification with continued support from the tech colleges and the Foundation.

GROWING OPPORTUNITY

The pilot is a framework for a statewide public/private partnership model. All in one year.

All 16 technical colleges

From 7 partner colleges at launch to 10 by June 30 — and every college in the system participating today. Florence-Darlington and Northeastern enrolled their first scholars this fall; Williamsburg and York are onboarding.

Year-two plan: 260–280 active scholars, navigator caseloads of 65–75

A national partnership

Based on our work with the Tech-to-Teach Scholars Program, the Foundation was invited into a national partnership to design more persistence pathways in high-demand fields.

What works for future teachers can work for other workforce shortages

Private partners at the table

Foundations from across the state and region are investing in the program to expand our reach and create a career pathway for students that will transform their lives and strengthen local communities resulting in $260,000 in investment by June 2026 and $515,000 by November 2026

A state investment that keeps attracting matching support

RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE PHASE II REQUEST

What the Foundation is asking the state to consider

PHASE II REQUEST

$2M

non-recurring

Sustain the pathway for the scholars already enrolled and take the pilot statewide

A teacher pathway is multi-year — a scholar entering with fewer than 15 credit hours needs roughly four years to reach certification. Phase II funding carries the 197 scholars enrolled today through transfer and certification while every one of the 16 technical colleges comes on line.

1

Treat the Praxis Core as a state pipeline issue

Examine Praxis Core mathematics performance among all education-pathway students at two-year institutions, and consider coordinated preparation resources.

2

Keep expanding, prioritizing rural and high-need service areas

The proviso directs a rural focus; the measured rural share rises as the colleges serving predominantly rural counties enroll scholars.

3

Support school district and work-based learning partnerships

The district-facing element of the proviso is the least advanced after year one; formal agreements with districts on work-based learning are a year-two objective.

4

We will report on the outcomes that matter most

Beyond enrollment, the Foundation will track and continue to report associate degrees, transfers, EPP acceptances and certified teachers placed in South Carolina classrooms.

WHAT'S NEXT

Year two: deeper support, wider reach



- ✓ "Day One" Praxis Core preparation for every scholar
- ✓ Onboarding the remaining colleges and growing to 260–280 active scholars
- ✓ Formal school district and work-based learning partnerships
- ✓ Phase II: $2M non-recurring to add more statewide scholars and carry today's scholars through certification.

Questions and input

Thank you to the General Assembly for its investment in South Carolina's teacher workforce, and to our partner technical colleges, universities and school districts.

Naomi Lett, CEO
South Carolina Technical College System Foundation
naomi.lett@sctechfoundation.org

Science PLUS (Roper Mountain Science Center)

Robin Walsh, *Coordinator*

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Science PLUS Institute

Participatory Learning, Understanding, & Sharing

Roper Mountain

Robin Walsh, Science PLUS Coordinator
Lorraine Taylor, Science PLUS Assistant Coordinator
Michael Weeks, Director of Roper Mountain Science Center

Roper Mountain

Roper Mountain Science Center in Greenville, SC is a unique, 62-acre location featuring:

- **Environmental Science Building: Houses multiple interactive exhibits as well as traveling museum-quality summer exhibits**
- **Harrison Hall of Natural Science: Over 100 different animals and a Marine Touch Tank**
- **Symmes Hall of Science: Exciting physical science demonstrations and exhibits**
- **Hooper Planetarium: A 360° dome theater equipped with a Laser Fantasy projection system**
- **Daniel Observatory: Houses a 23” refractor telescope (the 8th largest in the US)**
- **Living History Farm: Offers a glimpse into early-1800s farm life**
- **Dinosaur Adventure Trail: Life-sized and animatronic prehistoric creatures**
- **Butterfly Garden: Pollinators and nectar/host plants.**







What is the Science PLUS Institute?

- A professional development program for SC public and public charter school science teachers
- Founded in 1993, over 7,600 educators have been served by the program to date
- 20+ courses offered annually, taught by master teachers
- FREE to participants (includes materials, lesson plans, housing, breakfast/lunch, and recertification credit)
- Supports the 2021 SC College and Career-Ready Science Standards using innovative, hands-on methods





Current Science PLUS Institute Options

- **Mini PLUS (Saturday courses held at Roper Mountain):**
  - **Full-day Courses (8 hours recertification credit) with $500 in supplies**

- **Science PLUS on Tour (Debuted Spring of 2026):**
  - **Saturday Full-day Courses (8 hours recertification credit) with $500 in supplies**
  - **Held in areas of SC more accessible to previously underserved districts**

- **Summer Institute:**
  - **Four-Day Courses (30 hours recertification credit) with $1,250 in supplies**
  - **Two-Day Courses (15 hours recertification credit) with $750 in supplies**
  - **Courses held at Roper Mountain Science Center and Furman University**
  - **Optional Furman University graduate credit offered at a discounted rate to all participants**

Science PLUS Courses Offered in FY 2026

- Special Education Science Activities
- Kindergarten Science Activities
- 1st Grade Science Activities
- 2nd Grade Science Activities
- 3rd Grade Physical Science
- 3rd Grade Multi-Topic Science
- 4th Grade Life Science
- 4th Grade Physical Science
- 5th Grade Multi-Topic Science
- 6th Grade Multi-Topic Science
- 7th Grade Multi-Topic Science
- 8th Grade Multi-Topic Science
- 9th-12th Grade Biology







2026 FY in Review

188
Participants in attendance

48
Districts & Public Charter Systems represented

5,153
Recertification credit hours earned

42%
of participants represent Title 1 or Priority Schools/Districts

12,533
Projected SC student impact

119
First-time attendees (14 first-year teachers)

2026 FY in Review

99%
of participants felt more confident in their ability to teach science

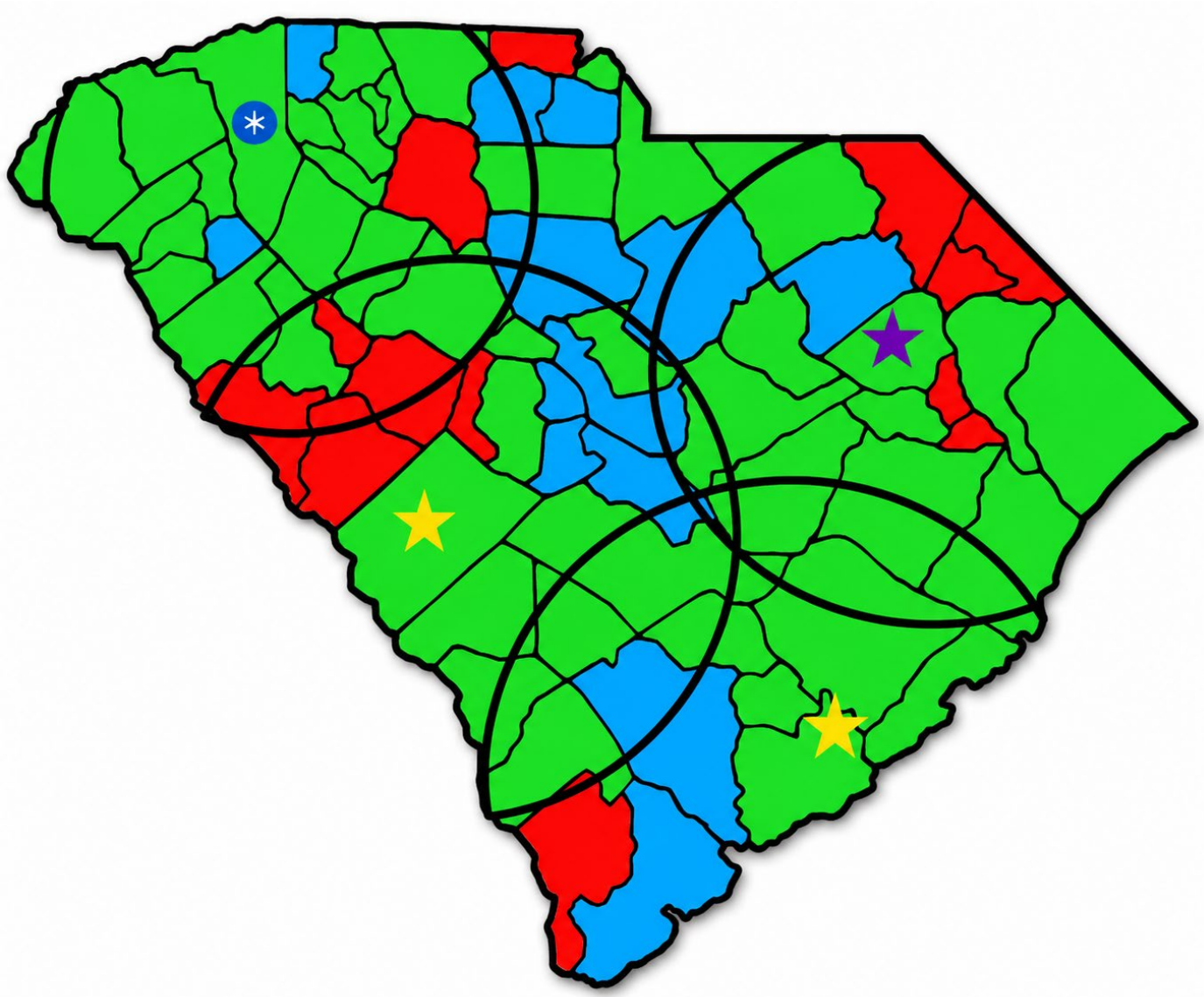
100%
of participants are likely to recommend Science PLUS to peers

100%
of participants felt the course provided them with new skills or increased their content knowledge of the science standards

98%
of participants felt their Science PLUS Instructor met or exceeded expectations

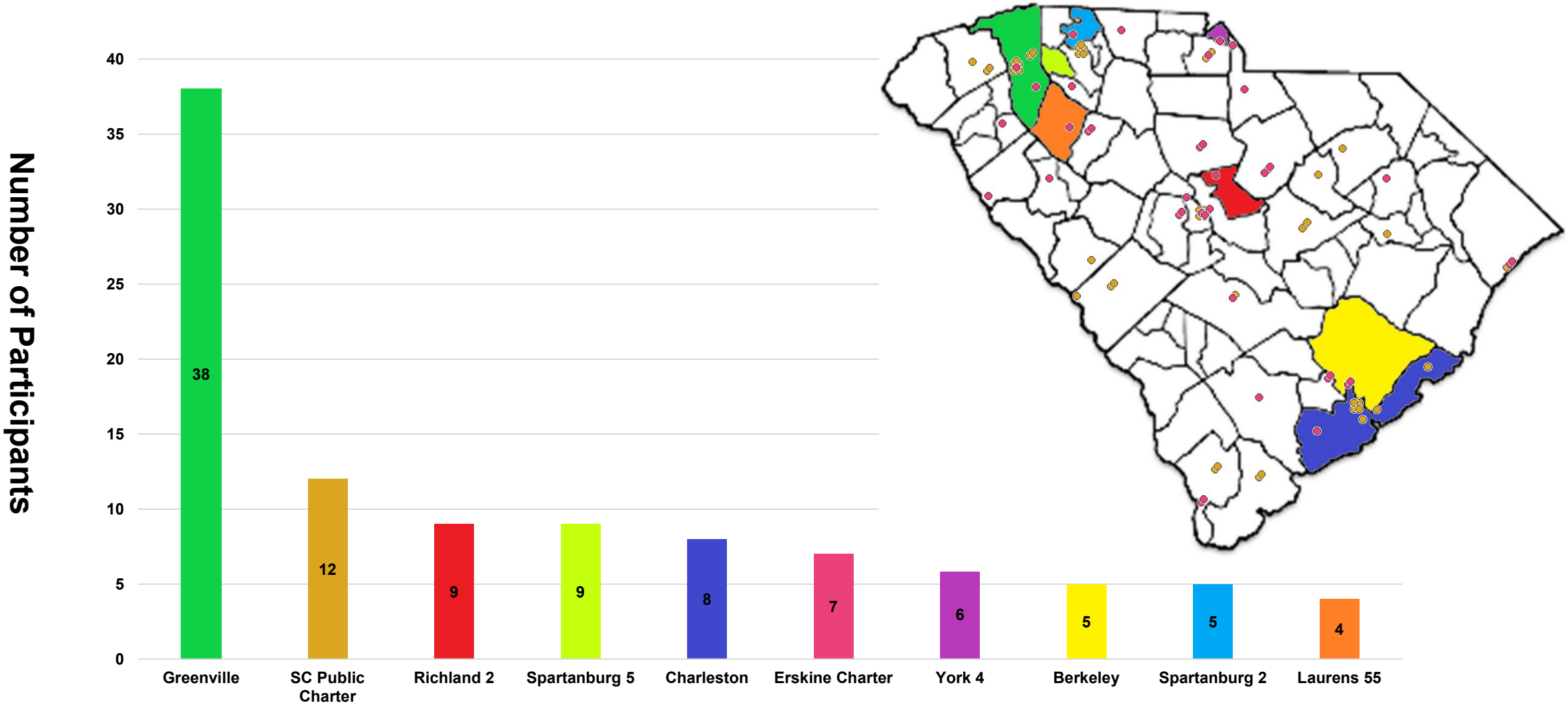
98%
of participants' pre-post course test data showed improved scores

District Participation Map, 2026



	Attended Science PLUS
	Applied, but did not attend
	No applications submitted
	Roper Mountain Science Center
	2026 Science PLUS on Tour (Florence)
	Upcoming 2027

Top Ten Participating Districts in 2026



The Impact of Science PLUS on Student Achievement: EOCEP and SC Ready Results

Comparing schools' scores before and after their teacher(s) participated in Science PLUS courses

Assessment	Results
4th Grade SC READY Science	88% of participating schools increased their average score on the Science portion of SC READY.
6th Grade SC READY Science	60% of participating schools increased their average score on the Science portion of SC READY.
Biology EOCEP	60% of participating schools

Source: 2025-2026 SC Ready scores and 2023-2026 EOCEP scores (https://ed.sc.gov/data/test-scores/state-assessments/)

Thank you from our participants:

"I have already reached out to colleagues at other schools and told them that it is something that they must do. I actually think that this should be required for any 4th and 6th grade science teachers in SC. I have been a teacher for 35 years, but I've only taught science for two, and I needed this so badly. Material was presented in such an easy way to understand. It pushed me and challenged me-and it gave me resources beyond my wildest dreams. Everybody associated with this weeklong course was friendly and thoughtful and kind and caring, and I could not recommend it more highly!" Antonia A. (Charleston County School District)

"It will be my 1st year teaching 6th grade science and I feel very confident going in after seeing all of the hands-on lessons I can do with 6th grade standards." Heather J. (School District of Pickens County)

"This was the best PD I've ever attended. Very well run and everyone was so incredibly friendly. It was a very safe space for learning and exploring new concepts to take back and share with the student of South Carolina." Amelia E. (Laurens County School District 55)

“This whole session at Science Plus truly felt like a dream. Not only did we receive top notch development on our science curriculum and lessons, but I was also blown away by the generosity of all of the materials, treats, vouchers, field trip explorations, and every little detail that was put into our time at Roper Mountain. I left feeling so prepared for teaching my plant and animals unit that I am beyond excited for the school year to start so that I can share what I’ve learned with my students and fellow teachers. This was one of the ONLY PD sessions where I not only stayed awake and alert throughout the entire thing, but I actually left knowing I will be using every single game and activity I learned in my classroom this year and in future years to come. I will most definitely recommend this program to every colleague I know; you'd be crazy not to sign up for one of these Science Plus courses! I definitely hope to be back for future sessions!” Alissa P. (Spartanburg District 2)

(Florence Location): “Entertaining, extremely organized and engaging! It was a fantastic day full of collaboration and meaningful lessons! Thank you so much! It was evident there was a tremendous amount of preparation even before we started. I really loved this one-day format on the road!” Sheryl M. (Chesterfield County School District)

“This has been an amazing experience for me. I have a $500 budget for almost 700 kids. Even when you add in the $500 from the state, I have less than two dollars to spend on each child. I have to buy … every basic thing that my classroom needs to minimally function. Then I have to buy consumables like baking soda, pipe cleaners, cardstock, etc. Even with spending my own personal money, as I’m fortunate to have, I am not able to buy science equipment along the lines of what you gave us. I was blown away by the sheer quantity and value of what you generously gave us. That rocket launcher is $200 alone, and it will be enjoyed by hundreds of children at my school. It will teach them mathematical angles that they otherwise would file away as ‘just something I had to learn for a test.’ They’re going to be able to see the world through the digital microscope you gave us…. Then there were not only the amazing colorful books, but also a teacher book full of foldable templates that I absolutely can use in science journals. If I were to list everything you gave us and how meaningful it was, this would go on for pages. Just please know that I am deeply appreciative of your generous science materials and equipment. It will be well used and well loved, not only by the 120 5th graders I teach, but by children in younger grade levels as well. Along with the first-class science training I received this past week, I am excited and energized to teach STEM again this upcoming year.” Kerry H. (school district redacted by request)

SC STEM Coalition
S2TEM Centers SC

Katherine Mulholland, *Executive Director*

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

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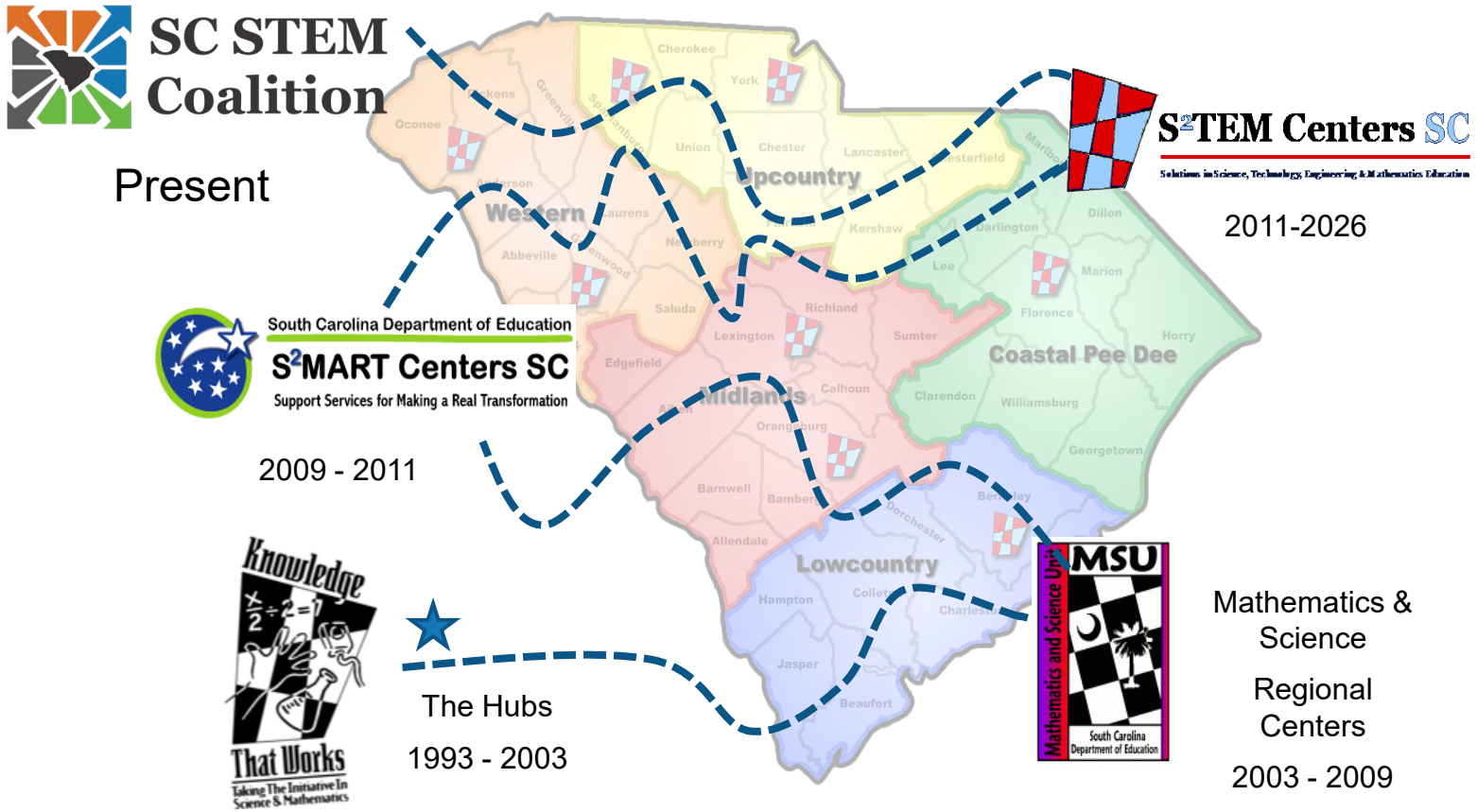
S^2TEM Centers SC

November 16, 2026

SC STEM Coalition

South Carolina's Statewide STEM Infrastructure

A Brief History



SC STEM Opportunity Act (A.142)

Session 126 - (2025-2026)

Printer Friendly
(pdf format)

H*3863 (Rat #0185, Act #0142 of 2026) General Bill, By Davis, M.M. Smith, Rivers, Henderson-Myers, Waters and Pope
Summary: South Carolina STEM Opportunity Act
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SOUTH CAROLINA STEM OPPORTUNITY ACT" BY ADDING ARTICLE 17 TO CHAPTER 1, TITLE 13 SO AS TO ESTABLISH THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) COALITION, THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION FUND, AND THE SC STEM COALITION ADVISORY COUNCIL, AND TO PROVIDE THEIR RESPECTIVE PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS, AMONG OTHER THINGS. - RATIFIED TITLE
View full text **View Vote History**

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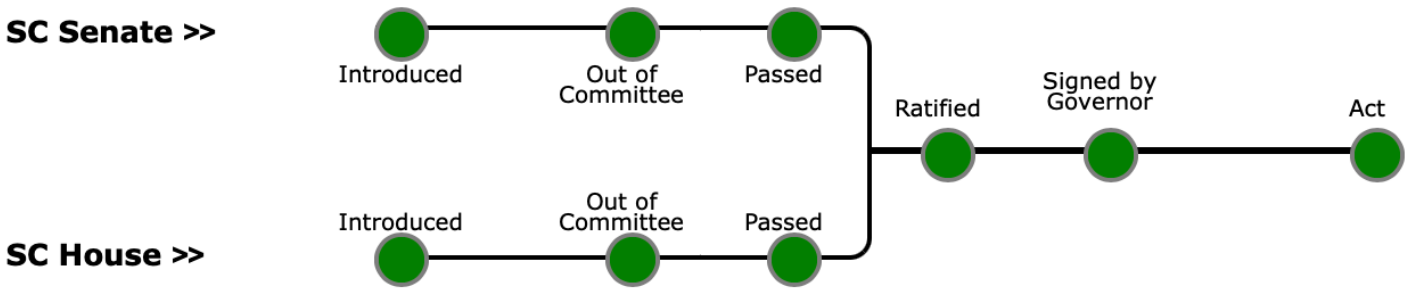
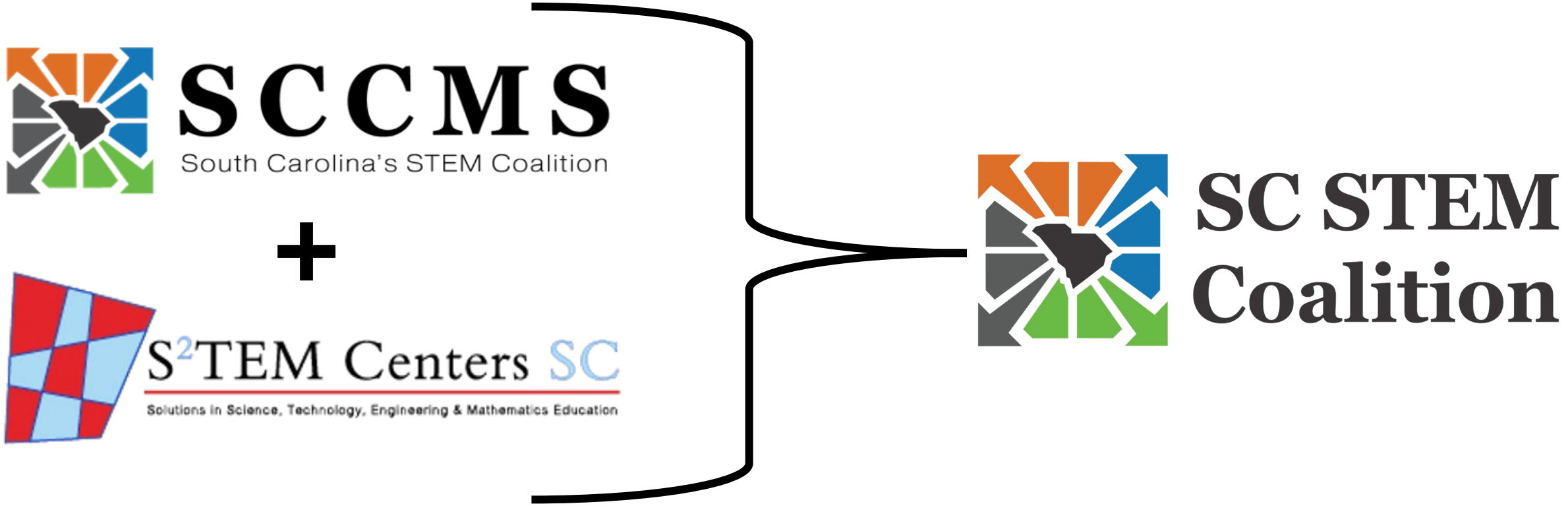


SC STEM Opportunity Act (A.142)



Mission and Vision

Mission: The SC STEM Coalition strengthens South Carolina's STEM ecosystem by connecting partners, building STEM educator capacity, and expanding access to meaningful STEM learning and career pathways.

Vision: A South Carolina where all learners see a place for themselves in STEM and have the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to shape a thriving future.

SCCMS/S²TEM Centers SC Staff

22 staff/ 19.5 FTE

EOC Funded Staff: 15.8

Non-EOC Funded Staff: 3.7



Kerry Branch
Education Specialist
Retired



Alice Gilchrist
Director of Client Services
Retired



Tom Peters
Founding Executive Director
Retired

Nationally Recognized in STEM



STEMx™

Our Services

Support



- Math instructional support and coaching
- Professional development for effective STEM teaching
- Standards implementation support with evidence-based practices

Align



- STEM festivals and community events
- Educator awards and recognition programs
- Advisory and strategic board participation

Collaborate



- After school and summer programs
- Educator leadership programs
- Grant applications and letters of support

Inform



- Conference presentations and proposals
- Community networking events

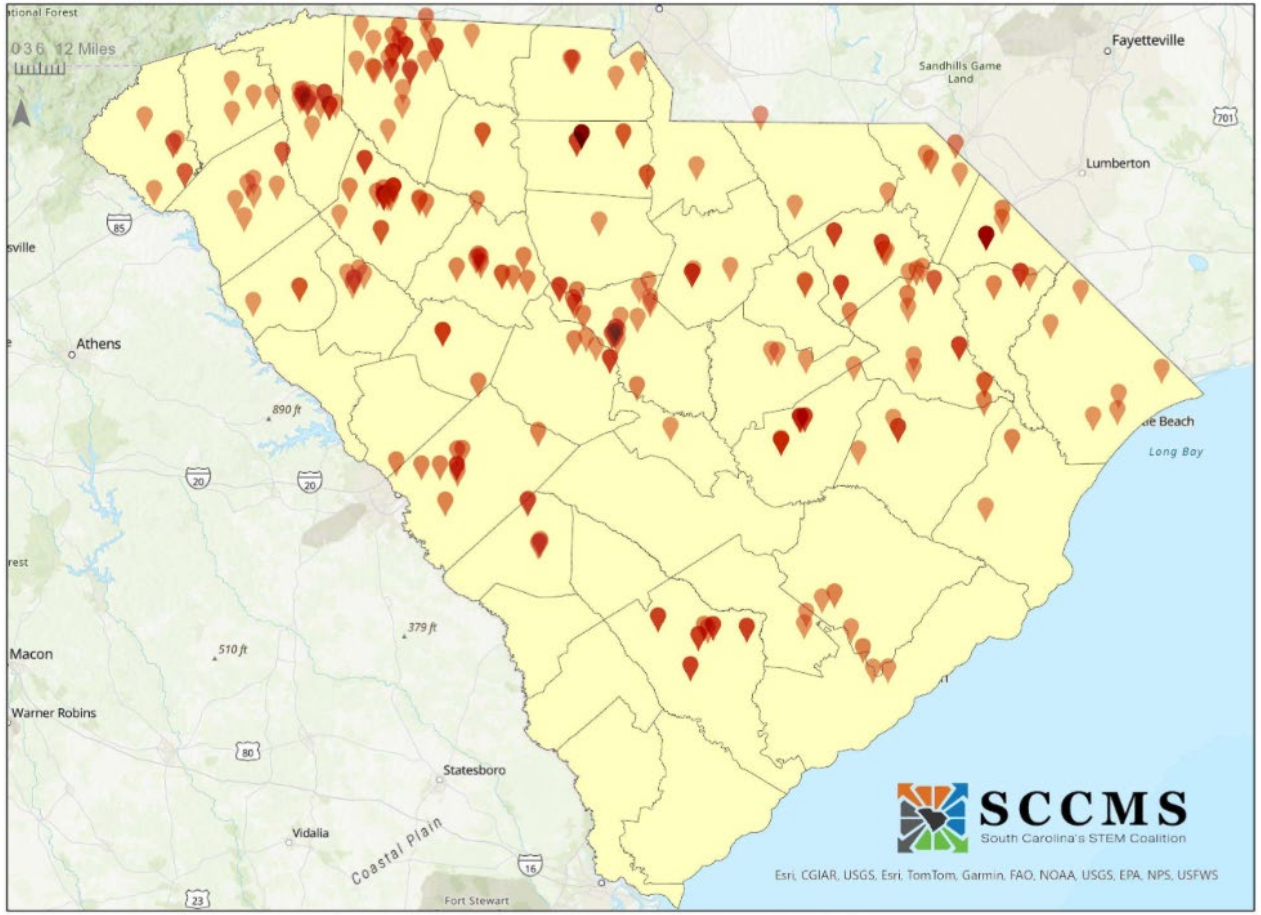
Create



- Tangible products that inform learning for school and community partners

Our Reach & Impact

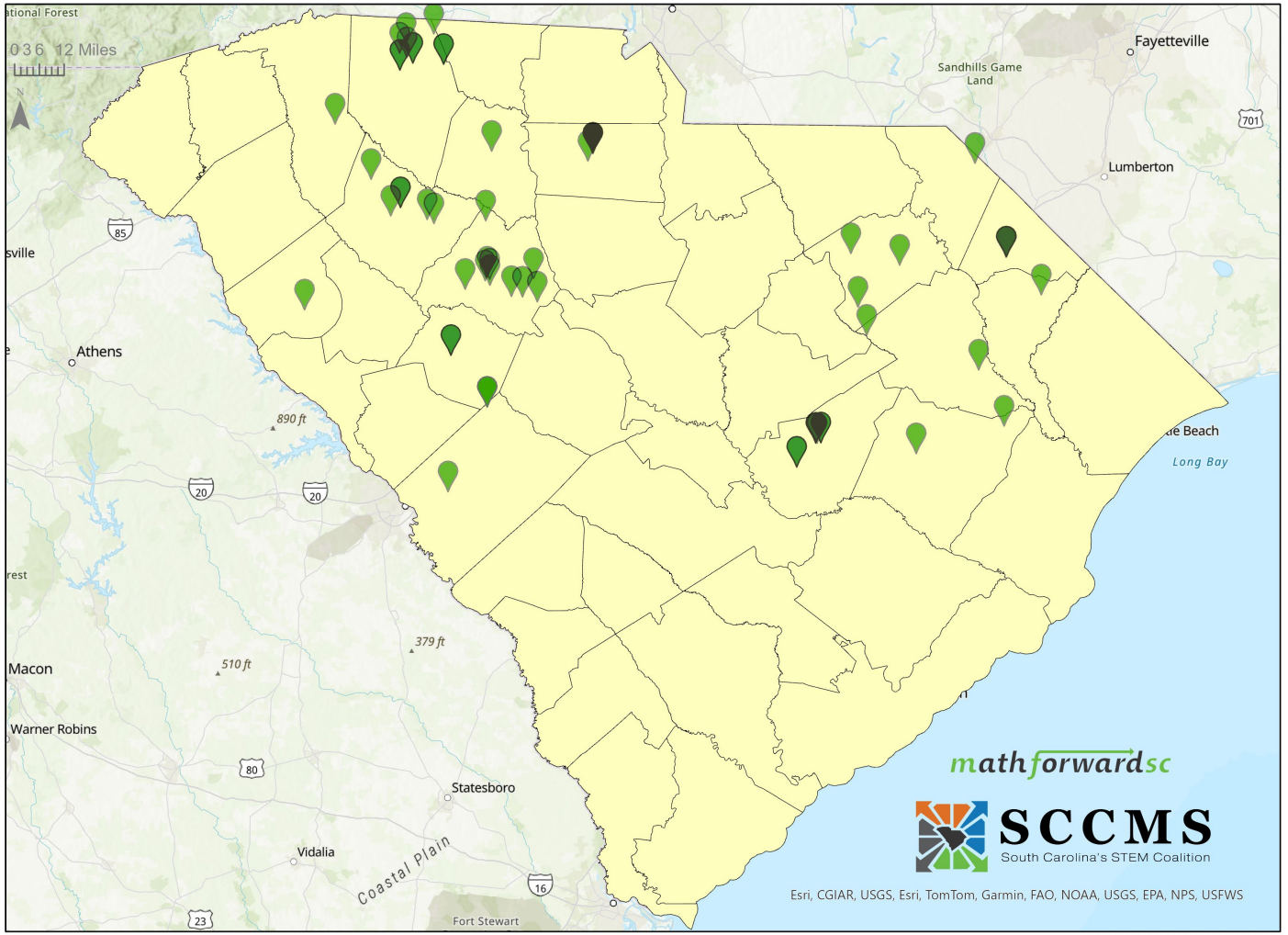
- 4,440+ Educators
- 33,200+ Individuals
- 58 School Districts
- 185 Schools
- 105 Events
- 38 Counties



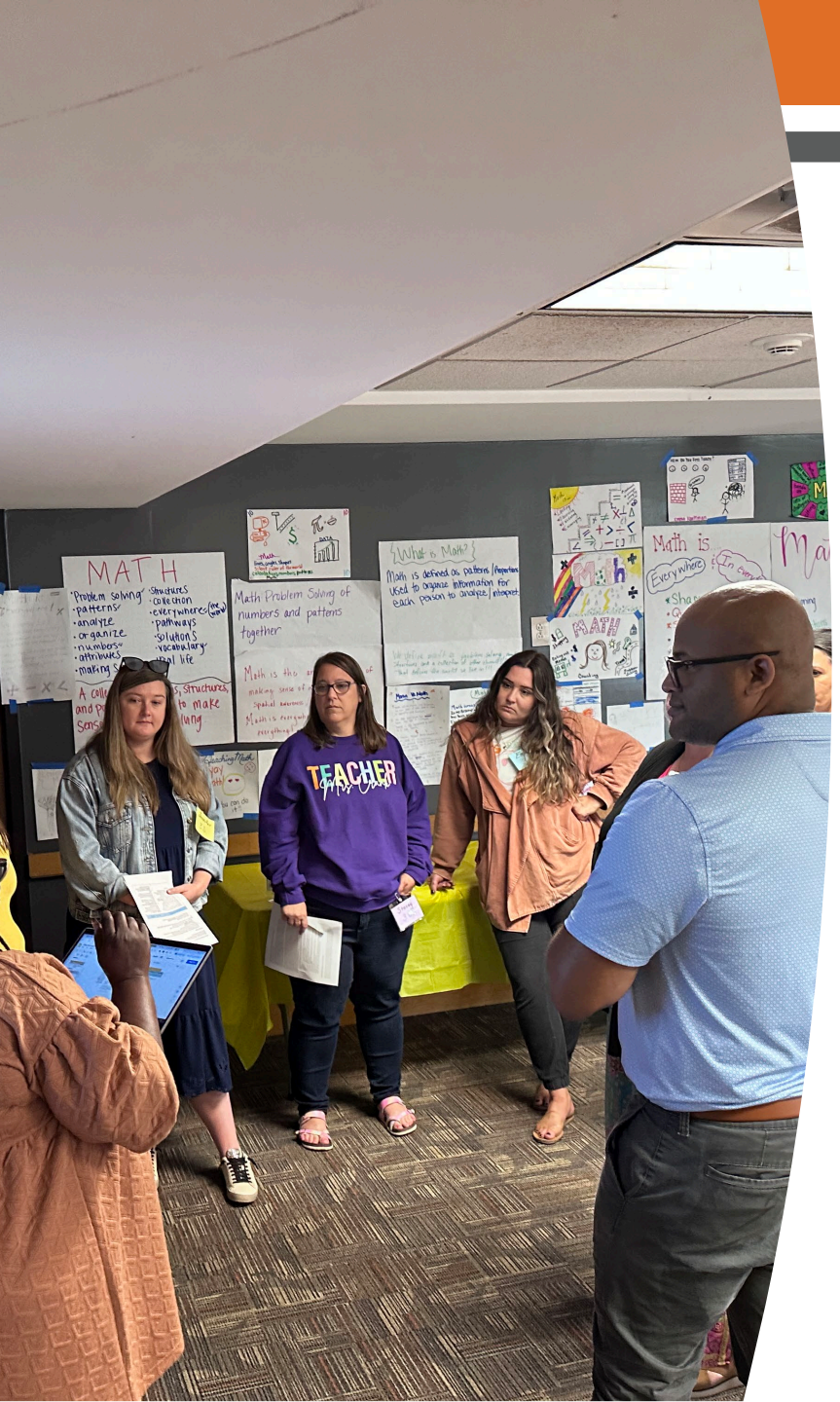
South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics & Science
2025-2026

math forwardsc

- 160 educators
- 17 school districts
- 54 schools
- 1,669 contact hours



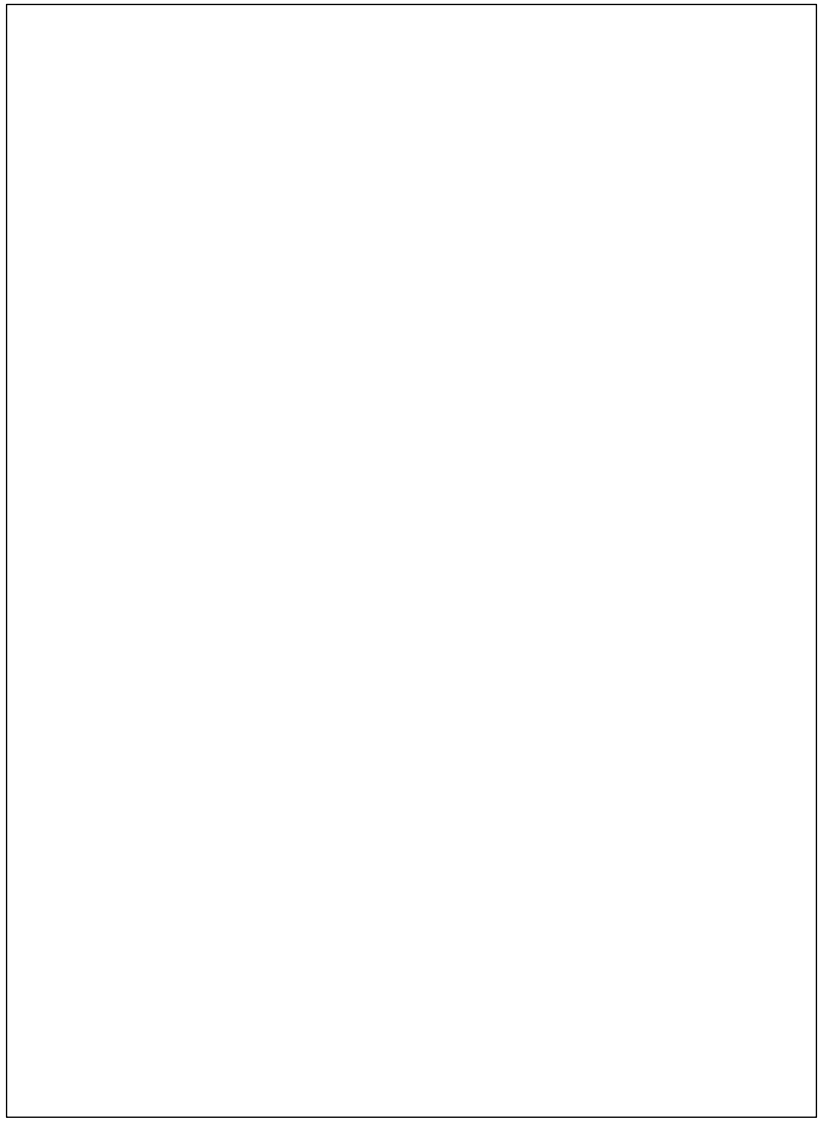
South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics & Science
Math Forward SC Initiative 2025-2026

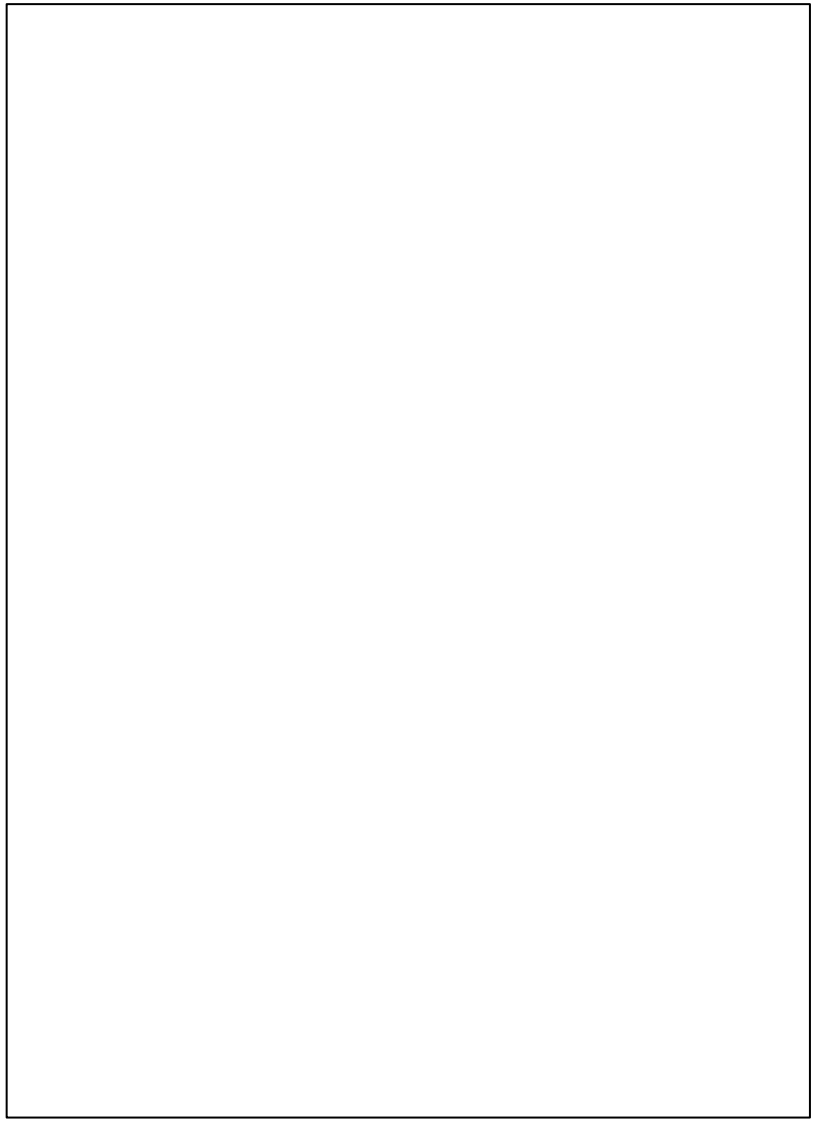


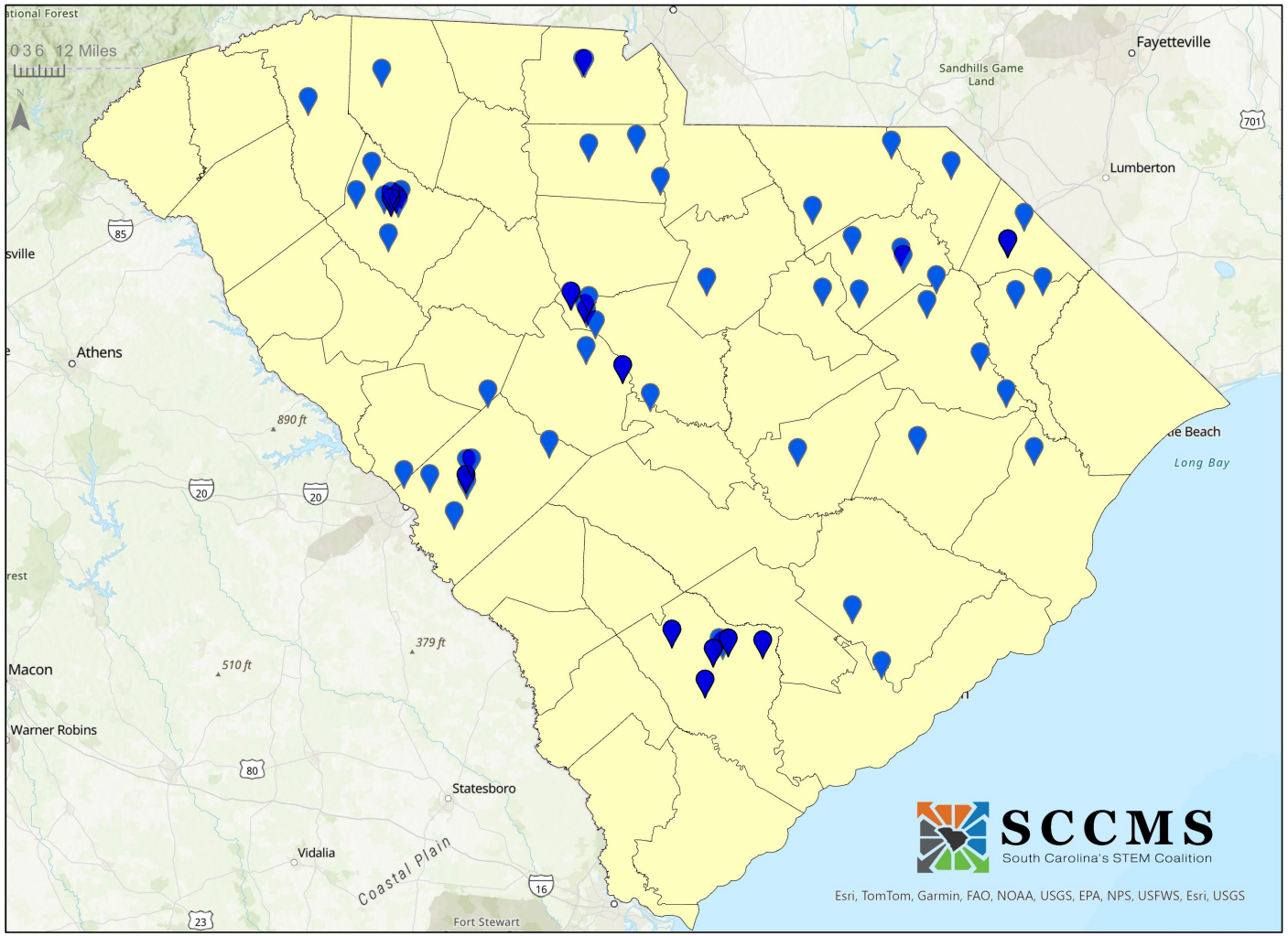
mathforwardsc

- Equipping Instructional Coaches to Support Mathematics with Cognitive Coaching℠
- Mathematical Readiness: Early Childhood (PK-3) Teaching and Learning Program
- S²TEM Centers SC Math Institute: Growing Teacher Leaders for Grades 3-5
- Mapping Shifts & Impacting Practice in the K-8 Mathematics Classroom
- Customized Mathematics Support

Math Institute: Growing Teacher Leaders for Grades 3-5







South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics & Science
Other Support 2025-2026

STEM Service Work

- 239 educators
- 1 state agency
- 25 school districts
- 63 schools
- 5,637 contact hours

STEM Service Work

- Cognitive Coaching℠
- Customized Science Support
- School Wide Instructional Support



Testimonial from Service Work Participant

The S²TEM Centers SC professional learning and coaching support have furthered my professional goals in several meaningful ways, ***particularly by strengthening my instructional practices, deepening my content knowledge, and increasing my confidence as an educator****. One of the most impactful aspects has been* ***the shift toward more student-centered, inquiry-based instruction****. Through coaching cycles and professional learning sessions, I've been able to design lessons that* ***prioritize problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking rather than just direct instruction****. The ongoing coaching support has provided me with targeted, actionable feedback that I can immediately apply in my classroom.* ***Rather than one-time professional development, the continuous cycle of planning, implementation, reflection, and revision has helped me grow more intentionally and refine my teaching practices over time****."*

Ryan Bell, Teacher
Clarendon County School District

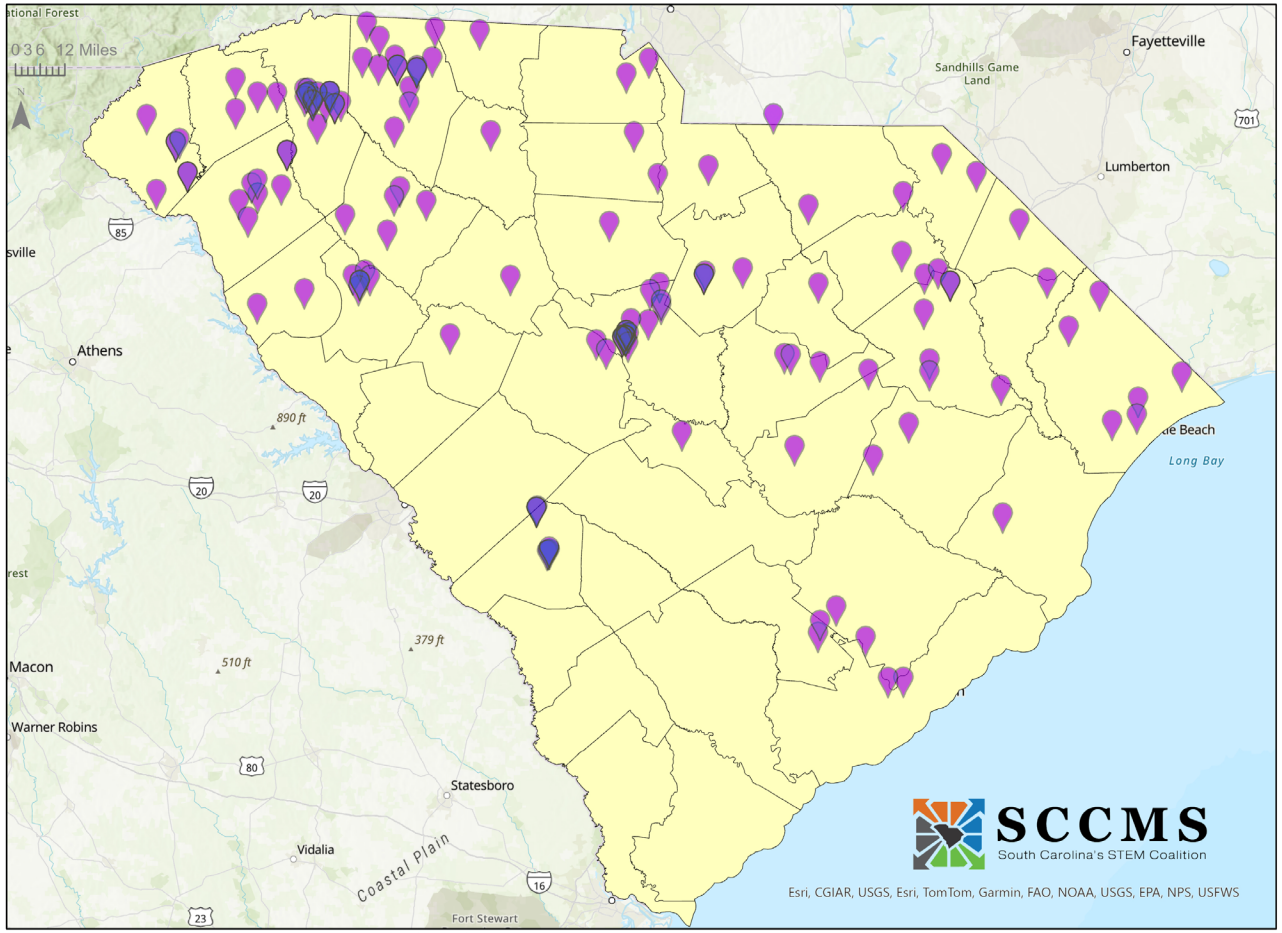
Participant and Client Satisfaction



Participants and clients rated their experience highly

Align, Collaborate, & Inform Activities

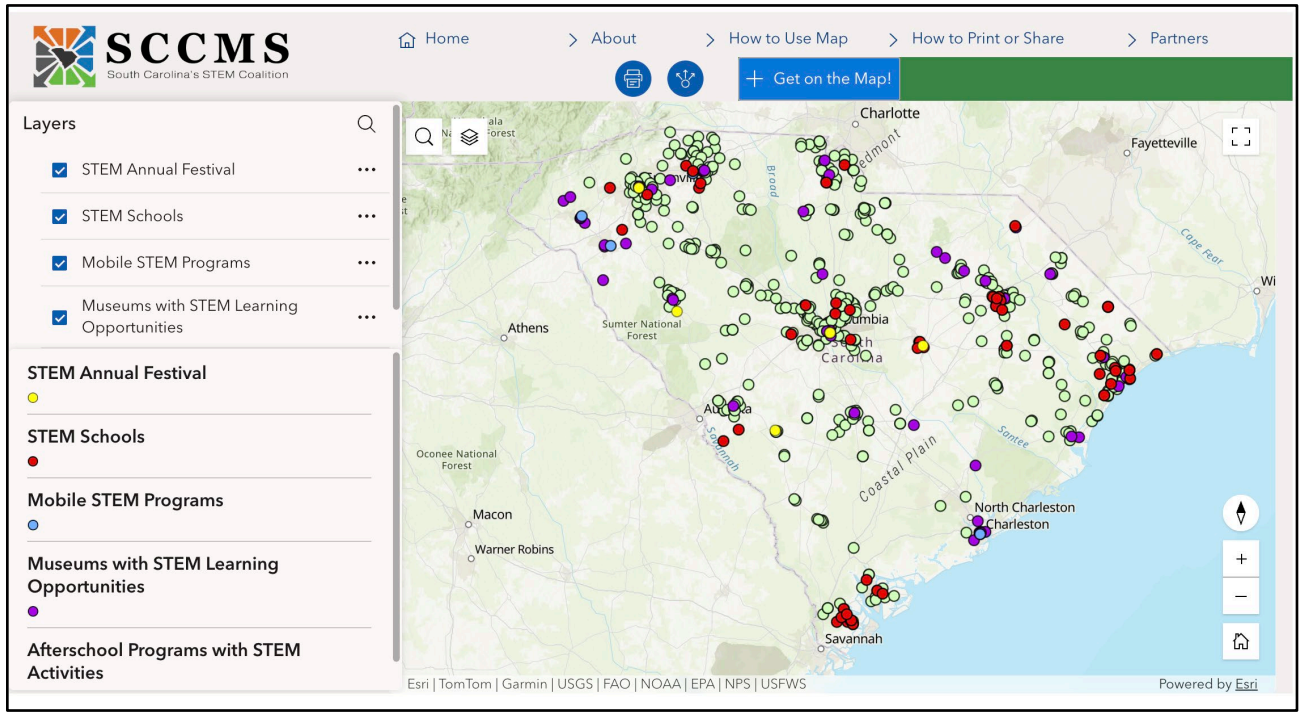
- **Align Deliverables:**
  - 22,300+ individuals
- **Collaborate Deliverables:**
  - 29,910+ hours of STEM learning for 210+ students
  - 40+ hours of collaboration to 24 educators
  - 30 SC STEM/Workforce entities served
- **Inform Deliverables:**
  - 7,160+ adults (2,540 educators)
  - 7,750+ youth
  - 959,700+ virtually



South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics & Science
Align / Collaborate / Inform Activities 2025-2026

Create Activities

- 60+ hours in R&D
- MathForward:
  - High School Math PD
  - Math Institute: Growing Teacher Leaders for Grades 3-5
- Battelle Teacher Academy
  - Submarine Industrial Base (SIB) Program Office of the U.S. Navy
- Science PD for Grades 4 and 6
- GIS Asset Mapping



SC STEM Ecosystem Asset Map (available online)

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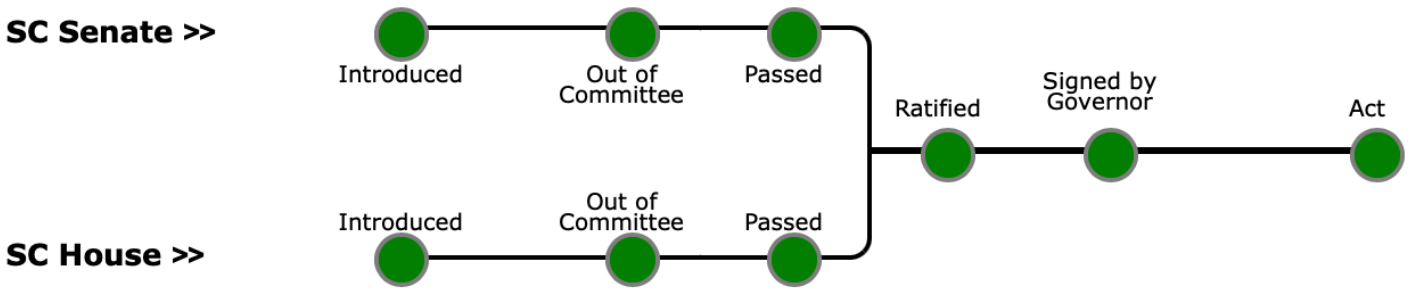

SC STEM Coalition Scope of Work

- Support high quality professional learning for educators
- Collaborate in R&D of tools & best practices in STEM education with other entities
- Facilitate participation in interscholastic, STEM-related competitions
- Promote STEM teaching as a career
- Seed funding for pilot, school-based STEM programs across the State (like Growing in STEM)
- SC STEM Education Month and SC STEM Education Day at the State Capitol
- SC STEM Educator of the Year and regional finalists
- Public awareness of STEM careers via festivals and other community engagement strategies
- Gap analysis & assessing business needs to guide professional development
- Promote business/industry involvement
- Develop and maintain statewide database of STEM assets
- Statewide, regional and national partnerships
- Coordinate STEM education programs and opportunities statewide
- Support STEM career pathways, leadership, and mentorship opportunities
- Foster inclusive and equitable STEM opportunities for all students
- Report outcomes and measure the impact of the Coalition





















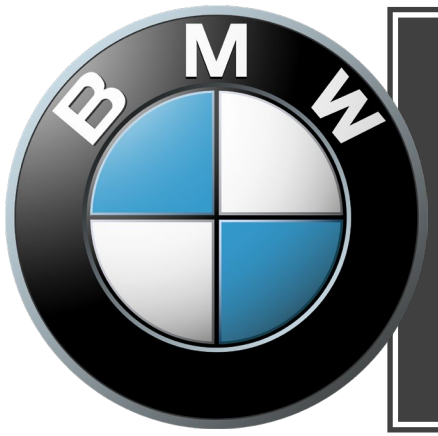

Some of Our Partners



SC STEM Coalition

S²TEM Centers SC

Katherine Mulholland
Executive Director
kmulholland@sccoalition.org

SC STEM Coalition

Lunch Break

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

EOC Staff Recommendations

Dr. Rainey Knight, *EOC Director of Strategic Innovation*

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EIA Considerations & Recommendations

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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Adjournment

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

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