

AGENDA

SC Education Oversight Full Committee Meeting

Monday, April 13, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Room 433, Blatt Building

- I. Welcome and IntroductionsApril Allen
- II. Approval of Full EOC Committee Minutes for February 9, 2026April Allen
- III. Presentation (Information Item):
State Funded Full-Day 4K Report for FY2024-25 & 2025-26Dr. Jenny May
Director,
Qualitative Research & Stakeholder Engagement
- IV. Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee.....Dr. Patty Tate,
ASA Chair
- Action Items:
Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) ReportDr. Jenny May
- Technical Review of SC READY Science, Grades 4 & 6Dr. Patty Tate
- Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students In South Carolina, 2026 ReportDr. Patty Tate
- Requests for New Industry Certifications (CCR)Dr. Patty Tate
- Nomination to Public Charter School District Board of TrusteesApril Allen
- V. Executive Director’s Update Dana Yow
- VI. Adjournment

April Allen
CHAIR
Brian Newsome
VICE CHAIR
Tammy Achziger
Terry Alexander
Melanie Barton
Russell Baxley
Neal Collins
Bill Hager
Barbara B. Hairfield
Sidney Locke
Laura McKinney
Melissa Pender
Patty J. Tate
C. Ross Turner, III
Ellen Weaver

Dana Yow
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Full Committee Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting

February 9, 2026

Members Present (in-person or remote): April Allen, Rep. Neal Collins, Dr. Brian Newsome, Barbara Hairfield, Melissa Pender, Dr. Patty Tate, Sen. Ross Turner, Melanie Barton, Tammy Achziger, Russell Baxley, Sidney Locke, and Dr. Abbey Duggins (for Superintendent Weaver).

Special Guests: Dr. Monica O. Carter, Principal and Dr. D'Leannette Rudolph from H.B. Rhame Elementary (Richland One) 2025 Elementary School Data Trailblazer Award recipient.

EOC Staff Present: Crystal Garcia, Gabrielle Fulton, Tenell Felder, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Rainey Knight, Dr. Matthew Lavery, Dr. Jenny May and Dana Yow.

April Allen opened the meeting, welcomed members, and called for approval of the December 8, 2025, Full Committee minutes. Senator Ross Turner moved to approve, seconded by Representative Neal Collins. The motion passed.

Dr. Patty Tate presented the Academic Standards & Assessments (ASA) Subcommittee action item: CTE Data Project Report.

The ASA Subcommittee met on January 12, 2026, where members considered two action items and received three items for information. The meeting lasted over two hours and included extensive discussion.

The first action item was the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Data Project, required under Section 59-18-920 of the South Carolina Code, which directs the EOC, in collaboration with the State Board of Education and the School-to-Work Advisory Council, to develop a report card for CTE schools.

Bunnie Ward (TransformSC) presented the findings with project partners Ivy Coburn (SREB) and Brooke Culclasure (Riley Institute). The project—supported by the EOC, TransformSC, the SC Council on Competitiveness, the Riley Institute, SREB, and the SC Department of Education—focuses on developing a CTE data dashboard. The initial phase targets CTE centers and multi-district centers, with future expansion to comprehensive high schools.

Over nine months, the team gathered feedback from 122 CTE leaders, 30 CTE directors, and business and industry representatives. The goal is to improve understanding of CTE, strengthen participation and outcomes, and enhance education-to-workforce alignment.

Key recommendations include:

- Launching the dashboard with a limited set of trusted data elements
- Testing visualizations with stakeholders before public release
- Using clear language to modernize perceptions of CTE
- Providing tiered professional learning on data use
- Expanding the system over time as data quality improves

The ASA Subcommittee unanimously approved the CTE Data Project Report.

April Allen opened the floor up for questions and Melanie Barton then recommended that expenditure data be included in the CTE dashboard. She noted that while funding streams were referenced, expenditures were not. With the General Assembly considering changes to CTE equipment line funding, she emphasized the importance of showing how funds are spent, not just funding inputs and outputs. Ms. Barton stated that if funding is intended to drive students toward high-demand careers, expenditure data must be part of the data visualization.

Ms. Allen then moved to approve the report. The motion was approved unanimously by the members.

Next, Ms. Allen introduced Dr. Monica Owens Carter, Principal, and Dr. D'Leannette Rudolph of H.B. Rhame Elementary (Richland One), the 2025 Elementary School Data Trailblazer Award Winner. They presented, "From Numbers to Impact: Making Growth Predictable through Data Storytelling."

Dr. Carter shared that with a 58% student mobility rate, instructional consistency is critical. H.B. Rhame uses data as a transparent, shared language to align students, staff, and families around clear growth goals. The school implements visible goal setting, student data notebooks, leadership data dives, and regular data reviews in all meetings. Weekly PLCs analyze common formative assessments, adjust instruction, and create flexible student groupings.

Dr. Rudolph highlighted the school's structured four-week instructional cycles, MTSS "Marvelous Mondays," and subgroup data dashboards to monitor progress and guide interventions and

acceleration. Parents and students are engaged through clear communication and real-time data tools.

As a result, the school has shown measurable growth, including significant reductions in students scoring “Does Not Meet” and increases in students scoring “Meets and Exceeds.” The presenters emphasized that consistent data use has strengthened instructional alignment, student ownership, and overall school improvement.

Board members congratulated Dr. Carter and Dr. Rudolph and commended their leadership and student-focused approach. Members noted that their work demonstrates how strong leadership and a clear focus on outcomes drive results. They praised the school’s intentional parent engagement, particularly one-on-one meetings to review student data and discuss how academics and behavior impact performance. Members acknowledged the importance of re-engaging highly mobile students in a positive way and creating a fresh start for them.

Board members also highlighted the value of involving students in goal setting and teaching them to understand and interpret their own data, calling it a powerful practice at all levels. Dr. Carter explained that town hall meetings are shaped by student voice, leadership, and character development. Student feedback is collected three times a year, with two informal surveys reviewed by the leadership team and shared with teachers and students. The results are discussed directly with students to identify improvements and reinforce shared ownership of the school. By the time students complete the EOC survey, they are familiar with the process and understand how their feedback drives change.

Ms. Barton, on behalf of Governor McMaster, presented a letter of congratulations, commending the school’s work in setting goals and measuring progress. She echoed the Governor’s sentiment that “you can’t manage what you don’t measure” and thanked them for their dedication, especially to the children they serve.

Dr. Tate presented the second ASA Subcommittee action item: Inclusion of the Seal of Biliteracy in the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Indicator.

The item was brought forward following a recommendation from the Accountability Advisory Committee as part of its cyclical review process. To earn the Seal of Biliteracy, a junior or senior must earn at least a 3.0 GPA in ELA graduation requirements (or, for multilingual learners, a minimum composite score of 4.4 on ACCESS 2.0) and demonstrate at least intermediate-mid proficiency on a state-approved, nationally recognized assessment in a language other than

English. Requests to include the Seal in the CCR indicator have been received since fall 2023. This proposal represents the first cyclical review recommendation presented to the EOC for action (Recommendation 8). The Seal aligns with the Profile of the Graduate by supporting world-class knowledge, communication skills, and global perspective. Staff recommended adding attainment of the South Carolina Seal of Biliteracy as an additional criterion for demonstrating college readiness within the CCR indicator. Members asked follow-up questions regarding the potential impact on report cards and ratings. The EOC is continuing to work with the South Carolina Department of Education to gather data to address those questions.

Ms. Barton expressed concern that no analysis had been provided regarding the potential impact on schools, including how many districts currently award the Seal of Biliteracy. She stated she was hesitant to adopt the measure without understanding its effect. Staff noted that similar follow-up questions were raised in the subcommittee and that the requested data is not yet available. Additional information has also been requested from the Education Commission of the States regarding national impacts on college-going rates, as well as data specific to South Carolina. Members were advised that this information would be provided prior to taking action. It was recommended that action be deferred until the requested data is available.

A motion to postpone action was made and approved unanimously by the committee.

Dr. Tate presented the ASA information item on the Multilingual Learners' Progress (MLP) Indicator, led by Dr. Matthew Lavery. Dr. Lavery explained that the current MLP indicator measures the percentage of multilingual learners on track to reach English proficiency within five years. However, a recent federal review of amendments to the state's consolidated plan required changes to the calculation. The MLP must now be calculated at the school level rather than the report card level and may include only students tested in the current accountability year. As a result, the student population included in the indicator changed significantly, making 2023 results not comparable to 2024. Proposed improvements include setting annual growth targets based on students' most recent proficiency level, grounding targets and cut scores in South Carolina data and research, and simplifying record-keeping to improve accuracy. Dr. Lavery shared that a revised model is under development in consultation with WIDA experts. The model would use annual targets based on the most recent assessment and maintain a five-year path to proficiency without requiring five years of data. Next steps include running impact simulations with historical data and recalibrating cut scores.

The report was received as information and will be brought before the ASA Subcommittee in March.

Dr. Tate presented the ASA information item on the Education Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF) Parental Satisfaction Survey, 2025–26, led by Dr. Jenny May. Dr. May reported that, pursuant to state law (Section 59-8-110), the EOC must annually report learning gains, graduation rates, academic performance, and parent satisfaction survey results to the General Assembly by December 31. The survey was administered on November 3, 2025, to parents of all 8,980 participating students and remained open for two weeks. A satisfactory response rate was achieved, and results were submitted to the General Assembly on December 27. Overall satisfaction with the ESTF program was very high. The program received a Net Promoter Score of 90, which is considered world-class. Parents cited financial relief from the \$7,500 scholarship, flexibility of allowable uses, improvements in student learning and well-being, and strong customer service as key strengths.

Survey feedback also generated several policy considerations, including:

- Ensuring private school participation practices align with legislative intent, particularly regarding tuition discounts for employees' children and required ESTF participation.
- Clarifying whether ESTF and ECEC funds may be braided or better coordinated to reduce administrative burden on families.
- Addressing confusion regarding the use of ESTF funds for homeschool curriculum, as direct home instruction is prohibited in statute.
- Reviewing vendor practices, including pricing concerns within the marketplace, and strengthening participation agreements if necessary.
- Considering whether 4K tuition should be an allowable use of funds or whether eligibility thresholds should be adjusted to better align with ESTF income criteria.

The report was received as information.

Representative Collins asked whether demographic information on voucher recipients was included in the survey results and requested more detailed data on how funds were used, including specific categories such as out-of-district public school fees rather than broad groupings like tuition or tutoring.

Dr. May explained that the survey was designed to meet the statutory requirement to measure parent satisfaction and was modeled after other states' surveys. She noted significant improvement from last year's Net Promoter Score of -20 to this year's 90, reflecting program improvements.

In response to concerns about tuition increases, fraud, and allowable uses, Dr. May stated that oversight mechanisms are in place through ClassWallet, though some parent comments suggested ambiguity—particularly regarding homeschooling and technology purchases. While most families reported using funds for tuition and direct student needs, some responses indicated potential confusion about allowable uses. She noted that clearer guidance and possible additional oversight may be warranted.

Meka Childs, Director of Education Choice and Family Engagement, addressed member questions. Ms. Childs explained that the department conducts annual program reviews and maintains demographic data which is included in the annual report. She emphasized that strong oversight measures are in place through ClassWallet, where all purchases must be approved within the system. If a student is found ineligible—such as through homeschooling enrollment verification—the student is removed from the program following a review process. Regarding homeschooling, Ms. Childs clarified that students formally registered as homeschoolers are not eligible to receive funds. Any confusion in survey responses may reflect differences in how parents use the term “homeschooling.” Safeguards are in place to prevent ineligible use of funds.

Representative Collins requested more detailed expenditure reporting, including a breakdown of spending categories (e.g., tuition, district transfer fees, textbooks, computers) and expressed that such detail should be included in the annual report, particularly given the scale of program funding. Ms. Childs indicated that more detailed transaction analyses could be conducted. Ms. Allen asked about evaluating academic outcomes for scholarship recipients compared to traditional public school students. Ms. Childs explained that disruptions following the Supreme Court ruling affected 2024–25 data collection, requiring direct collection from families. For 2025–26, the department will collect testing data directly from public schools through the student information system and from participating independent schools as required. Additional testing site options, including SC READY participation, have been expanded to ensure compliance with assessment requirements.

The discussion concluded with acknowledgment that reporting and data systems continue to be refined.

Dr. Tate presented the final ASA information item: Requests for New Industry Certifications (CCR), led by Ivy Coburn, Division Director, Education Workforce, SREB and Dr. Herb Bocchino from the SCDE Office of Career Readiness.

The presenters updated the EOC on the tiered certification application and approval process, highlighted newly developed resources, and outlined proposed changes to the approved tier certification list as part of the transition to the tiered framework.

The Office of Career Readiness reviewed 25 applications and is requesting EOC approval for 15 new certifications and four tier reassignments. The Subcommittee will consider these requests in March, with full EOC action anticipated in April.

Next, Tenell Felder presented the 2026 EOC Annual Report. She noted the report is organized into three sections: Reporting Facts, Measuring Change, and Promoting Progress, consistent with prior years. Members were encouraged to submit edits before the report is finalized and sent to the General Assembly. The report includes updates to the education data dashboards, summaries of required reports (with key findings, recommendations, and legislative directives), highlights from the School Report Card release, EIA budget recommendations, Data Trailblazer Awards, presentations to the General Assembly, and updates on the cyclical review of the accountability system and social studies standards.

The item was presented for information.

Ms. Felder then presented an update on the Be Present S.C. Campaign, a public awareness initiative developed in response to the committee's concern about chronic absenteeism. The campaign officially launched in July 2025 with 31 schools and has since expanded to 79 schools (49 elementary, 16 middle, and 14 high schools), primarily in Greenville, the Midlands, and Charleston areas.

The campaign aims to:

1. Increase awareness of the connection between attendance and academic achievement;
2. Provide resources to support schools and families; and
3. Build student buy-in.

Participating schools receive digital and print materials, including posters, attendance trackers, parent fact sheets, pledge certificates, and "Be Present" ambassador resources such as "We Missed You" notes. Schools have incorporated the materials into attendance conferences,

assemblies, and student pledge activities. Ms. Felder noted strong engagement from partner schools and positive feedback, with growing participation and student involvement in the campaign.

Gabrielle Fulton presented the Be Present S.C. Dashboard, launched in September alongside the campaign website and student pledge. The dashboard has received over 7,000 views, making it the EOC's highest-performing dashboard to date. With more than 6,700 student pledge responses, schools are actively monitoring participation and engaging in friendly competition. The dashboard includes resources, district-level chronic absenteeism data, myth-versus-fact information, and interactive tools that illustrate how absences impact academic performance. It also features a live map of participating schools and a leaderboard highlighting top pledge participation. Ms. Fulton noted strong engagement and continued growth in both school participation and student pledges.

Ms. Felder encouraged members to review and share the Be Present S.C. dashboard. She also announced a new partnership with local libraries, launched in January, to display campaign materials and distribute resources. Five additional libraries have recently joined, and some are offering incentives for students who sign the Be Present pledge. This partnership expands outreach to families and communities. Ms. Felder also highlighted recent media coverage of the campaign, including a positive editorial recognizing the state's efforts to address chronic absenteeism.

The item was presented for information.

Dana Yow commended Ms. Felder, Ms. Fulton, and staff for their leadership in launching and expanding the Be Present S.C. campaign. She noted strong interest from principals, including at SCASA, and emphasized that attendance continues to be a significant concern among school leaders. Ms. Yow highlighted the "Ambassador" card initiative as a simple yet impactful strategy, giving students a tangible reminder that they are missed and valued when absent. She praised staff for turning the committee's idea into meaningful action in schools.

Next, Ms. Yow provided the Executive Director's update. She reported that the EIA budget recommendations were presented to the House Ways and Means Public Education Subcommittee in mid-January and will be presented to the Senate on February 11. She also updated members on the Teacher Loan Program annual report. Following discussion by the EOC, she attended a January 23 meeting of the Teacher Loan Advisory Committee, which is actively addressing the recommendations. Efforts underway include moving the application process

online, establishing data-sharing agreements among the EOC, Student Loan Corporation, and CHE, and reorganizing the advisory committee to strengthen its authority and meeting frequency. The group is also exploring expanded marketing efforts, including outreach to career changers. Ms. Yow further noted that a September 2025 audit conducted at the request of the Office of the State Auditor had not previously been shared with the EOC due to a miscommunication. Copies have now been provided to members and to House and Senate finance committees.

After the update the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Date: April 13, 2026

INFORMATION ITEM:

State-Funded Full-Day 4K Annual Report 2024-25 & 2025-26

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Provisos 1.47 and 1A.26 of the 2025-26 General Appropriations Act

Of the funds appropriated, \$300,000 shall be allocated to the Education Oversight Committee to conduct an annual evaluation of the South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program and to issue findings in a report to the General Assembly by March first of each year. To aid in this evaluation, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the data necessary and both public and private providers are required to submit the necessary data as a condition of continued participation in and funding of the program. This data shall include developmentally appropriate measures of student progress....The Education Oversight Committee shall use this data and all other collected and maintained data necessary to conduct a research based review of programs implementation and assessment of student success in the early elementary grades along with information, recommendations, and a timeline for how the state can increase the number of students served in high-quality programs.

CRITICAL FACTS

The report seeks to answer research questions related to access, quality, and impact:

Access:

- How many four-year-old children live in SC and are in poverty?
- How many children are served by CERDEP? How many potentially eligible children are not served by CERDEP?

Quality:

- How do 4K programs in SC compare to the nation over time?
- What is the financial investment in CERDEP?

Impact:

- What is the impact of the 4K investment on kindergarten readiness and school success experienced by children participating?

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

The State-Funded Full-Day 4K Annual Report 2024-25 & 2025-26 was submitted to the General Assembly on February 27, 2026 for information and later submission to the EOC website.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

The EOC received \$300,000 from Proviso 1.47 in 2025-26 Appropriations Act.

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved
 Not Approved

Amended
 Action deferred (explain)



SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

State-Funded Full-Day 4K Annual Report 2024-25 & 2025-26

Prepared by
Dr. Jenny May, Amina Asghar, Dana Yow,
and Tenell Felder

March 2026

Introduction

& Enabling Legislation

The following is a report from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) pursuant to Provisos 1.47 and 1A.26 of the 2025-26 General Appropriations Act to report on the Child Early Reading and Development Education Program (CERDEP).

Pursuant to Proviso 1.47, 2025-26 General Appropriations Act

Of the funds appropriated, \$300,000 shall be allocated to the Education Oversight Committee to conduct an annual evaluation of the South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program and to issue findings in a report to the General Assembly by March first of each year. To aid in this evaluation, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine the data necessary and both public and private providers are required to submit the necessary data as a condition of the continued participation in and funding of the program. This data shall include developmentally appropriate measures of student progress... The Education Oversight Committee shall use this data and all other collected and maintained data necessary to conduct a research-based review of the program's implementation and assessment of student success in the early elementary grades along with information, recommendations, and a timeline for how the state can increase the number served in high-quality programs.



What to Know When Reading This Report:

The focus of this annual report is on state-funded, full-day four-year-old kindergarten (4K) utilization; however, there are a variety of other 4K options in South Carolina available for families. These alternative placement options for four-year-olds have a variety of different funding sources (e.g. state, federal, and private) which have been described in previous reports. Given the specific legislative charge given to the EOC, this report focuses on CERDEP which is the inclusive term to refer to those state-funded, full-day programs administered by SC Department of Education (SCDE) and the South Carolina Office of First Steps (SCFS). Public schools, non-profit independent schools and child care centers, many of which participate in licensing and the Continuous Quality Improvement Rating System (QRIS) operated by SC Department of Social Services (DSS), may all participate in CERDEP and serve eligible four-year-old children. CERDEP 4K is the term used to refer to full-day CERDEP programs in public schools that are state-funded and run by the local school district with the SCDE as the reporting agency. Historically, these programs may have been referred to as Public CERDEP. First Steps 4K is the term for state-funded CERDEP in non-public school settings with SCFS as the oversight and reporting agency. In previous EOC reports, these programs were referred to as Non-Public CERDEP. For a more complete landscape of four-year-old kindergarten options for families, characteristics of the programs, and funding streams, please see Appendix A.

Terms

CERDEP

This is the inclusive term for full-day programs for four-year-olds administered by the SC Department of Education (SCDE) and the Office of First Steps (SCFS) funded by the state of South Carolina. It includes public schools, non-profit independent schools, and child care centers that adhere to program and quality requirements for CERDEP funding and serve eligible four-year-olds.

CERDEP 4K

This is the term for CERDEP in public schools that are state funded and run by the local school district with the school district and SCDE as the reporting and oversight agency.

First Steps 4K

This is the term for the state-funded CERDEP programs run in non-public school settings with SC First Steps as the oversight and reporting agency.

Potentially Unserved

This refers to students eligible for, but not accessing CERDEP. Some of these students may be accessing district-funded or other programs, or it may not be known. If a student is a Pupil in Poverty (PIP) and their 4K experience is either Unknown, Other Public 4K (non CERDEP), or Private 4K, the students is considered Potentially Unserved by CERDEP. Head Start students are not counted as CERDEP or Potentially Unserved.

Summary of Key Findings

Key Findings

This report, and key findings and research questions are organized into three interrelated categories: access, quality, and impact.

Pupils in Poverty (PIP) defines students from a household that participates in one of the following federal programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Foster, Migrant, or Homeless. The Pupil in Poverty (PIP) indicator is derived from a combination of data, and in this report uses the designation provided by the SCDE.

Access:

- 54,037 students enrolled in kindergarten in the 2025-26 school year; of those students, 30,004 (56%) are pupils in poverty.
 - 17,910 four-year-olds were served by CERDEP programming in the 2024-25 school year and are enrolled in public kindergarten in the 2025-26 school year. Of these 17,910 children, 14,143 were in CERDEP 4K (79% of CERDEP participants) and 3,767 children were in First Steps 4K (21% of CERDEP participants).
 - In 2024-25, there were 2,890 (77%) students enrolled in First Steps 4K programming for at least 120 days of instruction or the length of time that is considered a “full dose” of 4K by the First Steps State Office. There were 90 (2%) students in First Steps 4K absent 10 days or more.
 - In 2024-25, 13,839 students in CERDEP 4K were absent less than 10 days in accordance with the CERDEP guiding practices attendance policy. There were 304 (2%) students in CERDEP 4K absent 10 days or more.
 - In the 2024-25 school year, there were 8,855 students potentially eligible for CERDEP programming who did not participate in CERDEP or Head Start.
 - Based on data received from the parent/caregiver kindergarten enrollment surveys for students enrolled in kindergarten during school year 2025-26, 1,312 four-year-olds in poverty were served in Head Start 4K during the previous school year 2024-25. In the 2025-26 school year 2,412 students are enrolled in Head Start 4K, based on the data from the enrollment survey given to parents and caregivers.
 - Of 52,433 kindergarten students who took the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) in school year 2025-26, 38% demonstrated readiness.
 - In the 2025-26 school year there were 30,004 kindergarten students identified as pupils in poverty who took the KRA, and 8,811 29% demonstrated readiness.
- **Of all 14,433 pupils in poverty served by CERDEP in 2024-25, 35% demonstrated readiness (36% CERDEP 4K, 28% First Steps 4K) on the KRA in 2025-26.**
 - **Of all 15,571 pupils in poverty who did not participate in CERDEP in 2024-25, 25% demonstrated readiness on the KRA in 2025-26.**
 - For all 8,811 pupils in poverty who demonstrated readiness on the KRA in 2025-26, 57% participated in CERDEP and 43% did not.
 - In the 2024-25 school year, \$73,629,158 state expenditures were spent to serve 14,143 CERDEP 4K students who enrolled in kindergarten in SC public schools in the 2025-26 school year. There were \$40,617,912 actual state expenditures used to fund 3,767 First Steps 4K students later enrolled in public school kindergarten during the same time period.

4K Experience Breakdown: School Year 2024-25



CERDEP 4K 2024-25

14,143 children

(26% of kindergartners,
SY 25-26)

Pupils in Poverty	non-PiP
11,890 (84%)	2,253 (16%)

Actual state expenditures
2024-25
\$73,629,158



Head Start 2024-25

1,312 children

(2% of kindergartners,
SY 25-26)

Pupils in Poverty	non-PiP
775 (59%)	537 (41%)



Private 4K 2024-25

8,537 children

(16% of kindergartners,
SY 25-26)

PiP	non-PiP
1,450 (17%)	7087 (83%)

State-Funded Full-day 4K



First Steps 4K 2024-25

3,767 children

(7% of kindergartners,
SY 25-26)

Pupils in Poverty	non-PiP
2,543 (68%)	1,224 (32%)

Actual state expenditures
2024-25
\$40,617,912



Other Public 4K 2024-25

8,216 children

(15% of kindergartners,
SY 25-26)

Pupils in Poverty	non-PiP
4,491 (55%)	3,725 (45%)

Pupils in Poverty (PIP) defines students from a household that participates in one of the following federal programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Foster, Migrant, or Homeless. The Pupil in Poverty (PIP) indicator is derived from a combination of data, and in this report uses the designation provided by the SCDE.

Children with Unknown 4K Experience 2024-25

18,062 children

Pupils in Poverty	non-PiP
8,855 (49%)	9,207 (51%)

Recruitment Focus →

848
Open Seats
First Steps 4K
2024-25

Readiness Levels on Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) School Year 2025-26

Pupils in Poverty
30,004
(56%)

54,037
total test takers

non-PiP
24,033
(44%)

KRA Performance of the 30,004
Kindergartners Identified as
Pupils in Poverty



Demonstrating
8,811 (29%)

Approaching
10,939 (36%)

Emerging
9,467 (32%)

Did Not Test 787 (3%)

KRA Performance of the 24,033
Kindergartners Identified as
Non-Pupils in Poverty



Demonstrating
11,353 (47%)

Approaching
7,247 (30%)

Emerging
4,616 (19%)

Did Not Test 817 (3%)

State-Funded Full-Day 4K Enrollment, SY 25-26

Child Early Reading and Development Program (CERDEP) 2025-26 Enrollment

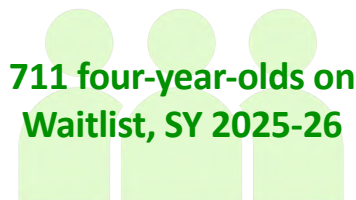


4-year olds enrolled:

16,034 on 45th day
43 average days enrolled
3.5 average days absent

72 Districts
960 Classrooms

\$91,455,273 State funding
allocated



711 four-year-olds on
Waitlist, SY 2025-26

Unknown Open Seats



4-year olds enrolled:

3,980 four-year-olds enrolled for
at least one day on 45th day
24 average days absent

309 Providers
368 Classrooms

\$52,526,803 State funding
allocated



1,739 First Steps 4K
Open Seats
2025-26

Unknown Waitlist

▶ State Investment:

South Carolina invested \$114,247,070 in fiscal year 2024-25, from the State’s General fund and Education Improvement Act (EIA) allocated funds. This amount is on par with the previous year’s amount, which was the largest amount invested in state-funded 4K to date.

▶ Quality:

South Carolina is assessed in the State of Preschool Yearbook, released by Rutgers University’s National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) each May. In the most recently available, [2024 State of Preschool Report](#), South Carolina ranked 15th nationally in access to 4K, 38th in state financial investment in early childhood education, which is down one in each category from the previous year. When other funds are considered in addition to state funds, South Carolina ranks 42nd, which is also down from the previous year. Like the past two years, South Carolina met 7 out of 10 benchmarks of quality (NIEER, 2025).

▶ Impact of Access to High Quality 4K:

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Results: As in years past, a considerable benefit to kindergarten readiness was found between pupils in poverty who did and did not access CERDEP programming through either CERDEP 4K or First Steps 4K. This school year (2025-26), 4,989 (35% of all CERDEP PIP) pupils in poverty who participated in CERDEP in the 2024-25 school year were demonstrating readiness on the KRA as compared to 3,822 (25% of all Non-CERDEP PIP) who did not participate in CERDEP and performed at the same level. Of all the pupils in poverty who demonstrated readiness, 8,811 or 57% did participate in CERDEP programming.

Changes to CERDEP Over Time:

CERDEP Changes to the 2024-25 Fiscal Year:	CERDEP Changes to the 2025-26 Fiscal Year	Proposed CERDEP Changes to the 2025-26 Fiscal Year:
Data collected by the EOC from SCDE and SCFS will include average daily attendance data so that consistent enrollment may be determined. The SCDE shall also issue a unique student identifier for each child receiving services from public or private provider including CERDEP, Head Start, SC Child Care Scholarships, EIA, Title I, district-funded, and all other federal, state and local public sources.	The required date for school districts to share students on a CERDEP 4K waitlist with First Steps 4K and SCDE changed from November 15 th to September 1 st .	A proposed proviso amendment would relieve school districts that participate in EOC waitlist pilot activities from submitting waitlist numbers annually using the SCDE Formstack survey. These numbers will be reported to SCDE and in the annual CERDEP report to the General Assembly by EOC staff.
1A.73.(SDE-EIA: Foundational Literacy Skill Training) Beginning with the current 2023-24 fiscal year, this proviso directs the Department of Education to provide training in foundational literacy skills to public school educators in kindergarten through grade three. The amendment expands the training to educators in state-funded four-year-old programs and allows the Department to carry forward funds as needed to provide the training.	At the request of EOC, a revised proviso was approved in the 2024-25 Appropriation Act that SCDE will provide a Sun ID number to all children receiving services from a public or private provider.	<p>CERDEP expansion for FY 2026-27 would allow for districts to expand CERDEP by: 1. Extend the number of days up to 220 or offer a summer program, 2. Add CERDEP classrooms or extend the length of CERDEP class from 6.5 to 8.5 hours, 3. Elect to participate in CERDEP for the 2026-27 school year for non-participating districts.</p> <p>The Governor’s proposed budget would allow for First Steps 4K to serve students at or below 300% of poverty, an expansion from the current threshold of 185% of poverty or Medicaid eligible.</p>

In order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the full landscape of 4K opportunities in SC, particularly with the Education Data Dashboard providing clearer data visualizations of these data, the EOC proposed amendments in 2024 to the budget provisos that provide for the delivery of CERDEP. The EOC proposed that the SCDE issue a unique student identifier for each child receiving services from a public or private provider, including those funded by CERDEP, Head Start, SC Child Care Scholarships, EIA, Title I, district-funded, and all other federal, state, or local public sources. The revised proviso was adopted as part of the 2024-25 Appropriation Act.

4K Experience	Definition and Data Source
CERDEP 4K	CERDEP in public schools: Data comes from SCDE using 5K data with CERDEP 4K designation.
First Steps 4K	CERDEP in non-public school settings: Data comes from First Steps enrollment for the current reporting year and is matched with 5K data from SCDE to ensure each student is counted once.
Head Start	Head Start programming: data comes from SCDE 5K data where Head Start was listed as the 4K experience at enrollment in kindergarten.
Other Public 4K (non-CERDEP)	4K classes offered by public schools that are not funded by CERDEP (e.g. EIA or district funded): Data comes from SCDE using 5K data with other 4K designation.
Private 4K	4K classes in non-public school settings that are not funded using state CERDEP dollars (e.g. SC Child Care Scholarships, private pay, etc.): Data in this category reported within comes from SCDE 5K data where private 4K was listed as the 4K experience at enrollment in kindergarten.

** Head Start, a federally-funded program that serves children from birth to age 5, provides the EOC Head Start Census Data that shows the number of children served in the program by county. These data from Head Start cannot be linked to specific academic outcomes, as additional identification is needed to do so; students served by Head Start currently do not receive a unique student identifier during their 4K year. Head Start students are not counted as CERDEP, nor are they counted as potentially unserved students as it would skew the representation and lead to incomplete conclusions. Students noted as served by Head Start in this report were noted as such in the parent enrollment survey, given to parents and caregivers before the 2025-26 kindergarten year. When percentages are given in this report, Head Start pupils in poverty are not counted as CERDEP students and are subtracted from the total number of pupils in poverty to avoid skewed percentages.*

Forthcoming Reports and Dashboards

In April 2025, the EOC issued a report about the number of children on a waitlist for a 4K placement. EOC staff developed a pilot communication program and implemented this pilot in partnership with SCDE and First Steps State Office in Aiken and Lexington 1 school districts. The pilot required the districts to send contact information for CERDEP-eligible students on the waitlist to First Steps Enrollment Specialists at the state office once per week from June first through September first. The legislative requirement is for districts to share this information via Formstack survey with SCDE who will then share with First Steps State office once per year. Traditionally, there are few, if any children enrolled from the waitlist in First Steps 4K classes statewide. Using this pilot process, 23 students in two districts were enrolled in First Steps 4K. EOC staff will expand this pilot process, called “Filling the Seats” by First Steps State Office, to include more districts and Head Start programming, and results will be reported for stakeholders.

Proviso 1.84 in the 2025-26 Appropriations Act, enables the EOC to “maintain an interactive Education Data Dashboard.” The dashboard can be located at dashboardsc.gov/prek; data included in this report will be updated on the dashboard in Spring 2026.



2026 Recommendations and Updates to 2025 Recommendations:

1) Pilot Efforts and Innovations to Ensure CERDEP Eligible Children Are Not Waiting for 4K:

As of September 1, 2025 there are 711 students on a CERDEP 4K waitlist and 1,462 open seats in First Steps 4K. Data describing where these open seats are is included later in this report. It is recommended that the communication process piloted in 2025 be expanded to additional districts and that Head Start programs be invited to participate as well. As the communication pilot continues, it is recommended that mechanisms to automate sharing of contact information for eligible families on a waitlist securely with consent be explored so that real time information can be shared between state-funded early childhood sectors without additional staff time.

2025 Update

Success was met in Lexington 1 and Aiken through piloting a more fluid communication process to share First Steps 4K options with families and connect First Steps Enrollment Specialists with families. Lessons learned from this pilot in year 1 will be used to improve success in year 2.

2) Increase CERDEP Infrastructure Using Data to Prioritize Focused Recruitment of Families and/or Providers:

A great deal of research has been completed to understand and capture students on a 4K waitlist, and how they might access this opportunity; however, less is known about open seats and existing capacity to serve children. First Steps 4K shares data on the open seats at the provider level, and similar data should be collected from CERDEP 4K at the school and district level and from Head Start grantees. This will support clarity on where gaps in state-funded 4K exist and drive focused recruitment of potentially eligible students or providers where needed.

3) Continue to Increase Quality by Meeting the NIEER Benchmarks Related to Screening and Teacher Qualifications:

Over the past three years, this report has used the NIEER benchmarks of quality to measure quality in CERDEP opportunities in South Carolina. There has not been a change in the number of benchmarks South Carolina has met and the same three remain in need of attention. Progress has been made; however, this work remains a recommendation. Nationally, South Carolina rankings on access to 4K have slipped, while investment in 4K has remained relatively stable.

A. Teacher and Assistant Teacher Qualifications:

Two of these benchmarks are related to teacher and assistant teacher qualifications, and South Carolina has begun researching career ladders, and mechanisms needed to phase in requirements that teachers of 4K have a bachelor's degree and assistant teachers have a Child Development Associate (CDA). A CDA is a nationally recognized credential that demonstrates ability to provide high quality care and educational opportunity to a young child. In 2025, a group of early childhood leaders at the state and local level were convened with the stated purpose to collaborate on this and other recommendations in this report. While a plan is not yet developed for implementation, knowledge has been shared around potential opportunities and leaders will meet again to complete a cross-sector plan to support meeting the benchmarks for teacher and teacher assistant qualifications.



B. Hearing, Vision and Developmental Screening and Referral When Appropriate:

EOC staff has successfully identified necessary stakeholders, learned about inhibitors to universal screening practices, and developed a draft plan that has been shared with experts for feedback. Stakeholders will reconvene to specifically discuss universal hearing, vision, and developmental screeners at agreed upon timelines and referral processes. When plans are approved by all stakeholders, piloting and data collection will begin. The next collaborative convening to meet this goal will occur in Spring 2026 and updates will be reported in the annual report on state funded 4K.

4) Recruit Families for Available Seats using Focused Marketing Strategies:

A number of recruitment strategies have been deployed to recruit First Steps 4K students to fill the available seats in existing First Steps 4K classrooms. Still, approximately 31% of all capacity remains to be filled by eligible students. It is recommended that additional family recruitment strategies be identified, and First Steps 4K centers engage in additional marketing programs to fill available seats, while continuing to participate in the “Filling the Seats” pilot program facilitated by the EOC. Some focused recruitment innovations suggested for consideration include: recruitment postcards in libraries and children’s museums or zoos where families check out, recruitment brochures in grocery stores, and advertisements on billboards or buses near locations with high numbers of open seats in First Steps 4K programs such as Richland 1, Florence 1, Charleston and/or Sumter.

5) Focus on Access, Quality and Support for Teachers and Administrators in CERDEP classes:

Evaluations of the impact of CERDEP programming on kindergarten readiness consistently show that pupils in poverty demonstrate readiness more than similarly situated students who do not. Still, statewide SCDE and First Steps state office share a goal that 75% of students will enter kindergarten demonstrating readiness to access the kindergarten standards and learning activities. Statewide, only 38% of students enter kindergarten demonstrating readiness across all previous 4K experiences, regardless of PIP status. CERDEP is the early childhood sector where quality and procedural outcomes can be most consistently monitored at the state level and where pilots and innovations can be considered within the confines of enabling legislation. It is the recommendation of staff that meeting NIEER benchmarks of quality by piloting innovations that promote quality in CERDEP classrooms be implemented to meet the stated goal of 75% kindergarten students demonstrating readiness.

Innovations must be developed from sound data on 4K and its effect of supporting children’s learning. CERDEP programs use 4K assessments but little is known about how these assessments are used, the reliability of findings, and if these practices benefit young learners in our state. In the Cyclical Review of the Accountability System, conducted in 2025, a recommendation was adopted to conduct a statewide assessment audit, to evaluate the scale and utility of existing assessments. It is recommended that 4K assessments be included in this audit and the findings be used to develop innovations to pilot in 4K as is appropriate.

SC Child Early Reading and Development Education Pilot Program (CERDEP) Report:

Annually, this report seeks to answer several research questions that fall into three interrelated categories: access, quality, and impact. Access to 4K is the first step in ensuring participation in programs that support kindergarten readiness. Quality of programming influences a family’s decision to participate in 4K and ensures that all participants enter kindergarten ready to learn. The impact of CERDEP on academic achievement is examined in this report by looking at CERDEP participants’ kindergarten readiness. For purposes of this report, kindergarten readiness is determined by the performance level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). Particular attention is focused on pupils in poverty, as that is the primary qualifying characteristic for CERDEP eligibility.

1) Access to state-funded, full-day 4K

- a. How many CERDEP programs are in South Carolina?
- b. How many four-year-old children in South Carolina are in poverty and eligible for CERDEP programming?
- c. How many children are served by CERDEP in South Carolina?
- d. What is the financial investment in 4K?

2) Quality of state-funded, full-day 4K programming

- a. On National benchmarks of quality how does South Carolina fare when considering quality preschool programming?
- b. How is quality measured in SC? What is the quality of CERDEP programming?

3) Impact of state-funded 4K on academic achievement

- a. Are students who participate in state-funded 4K ready for kindergarten?



Access to State-Funded, Full-Day 4K:

NIEER Access Ranking:

Each year the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) of Rutgers University, publishes a [State of Preschool Yearbook](#) and [rankings for access and resource allocation](#). In the 2022 Yearbook, South Carolina was ranked 11th nationally in access to 4K and in 2023 rankings, South Carolina fell to 14th. In the most recently available data in 2024 rankings, South Carolina slipped again and ranked 15th nationally for access to 4K. This report is an evaluation of 4K, however NIEER does rank access to 3K as well and most recently South Carolina ranked 35th in access to 3K.

Infrastructure to Offer CERDEP Opportunities:

In the 2024-25 school year, CERDEP 4K programming was available in all school districts except: Beaufort, Greenville, Horry, and York 2. In the 2025-26 school year, 72 school districts participate in CERDEP with 960 CERDEP 4K classrooms across all districts in the state. In the 2025-26 school year, there are 93 more 4K classes and three new districts (Beaufort, Horry, and York 2) than in 2024-25. This means that all school districts except Greenville participate in CERDEP 4K this year. School districts that do not participate in CERDEP do offer 4K classes funded through district, Education Improvement Act (EIA) or Title 1 funds. Throughout this report, students served in these programs are referred to as students in Other Public 4K (non-CERDEP) programs.

First Steps 4K is present in every county in the state except Abbeville, Allendale, Calhoun, Clarendon, Edgefield, Fairfield, and McCormick for the 2025-26 school year; these counties did not have a First Steps 4K Center during the 2024-25 school year either. The gap in counties translates to 16 school districts without a First Steps 4K Center in their zone in 2025-26, but families can participate in any First Steps 4K in the state regardless of what county they live in or what school district they are zoned for.



School Districts without a First Steps 4K Center in the District Service Area: 2025-26
Abbeville
Allendale
Anderson 1
Anderson 3
Anderson 4
Calhoun
Clarendon 6
Dorchester 4
Fairfield
Florence 2
Florence 3
Florence 5
Greenwood 52
Lexington 4
McCormick
York 2 (Clover)

2025-26

First Steps Center ABC Quality Rating	
A+	12
A	13
B+	42
B	119
C	75
Pending	6
Total	267

Each school district that does not participate in CERDEP 4K does have a First Steps 4K in the county of service, meaning there is a CERDEP option in every SC county.

In school year 2025-26, there are 309 Centers operating the 368 First Steps classrooms. Of these centers, 303 are licensed by DSS (five are SCISA and one is a federally licensed military center) with 267 (88%) participating in ABC Quality. Of the 368 First Steps 4K Classrooms in the 2025-26 school year, 249 (68%) offered an 8-hour instructional day, and 279 (76%) offered an extended year program that ran 220 days, which is an increase for both extended day and year round options. Of the 355 First Steps 4K classrooms serving children in the 2024-25 school year, 227 (64%) offered an 8-hour instructional day and 260 (73%) offered an extended year program that runs 220 days. See Table A for a more detailed comparison of First Steps 4K access over the past three years.

Table A: First Steps 4K Classroom School Year Comparison of Access:

2023-24 School Year		2024-25 School Year		2025-26 School Year	
Number of classrooms	327	Number of classrooms	355	Number of classrooms	368
Classrooms that offer 8-hour instructional day	214 (65%)	Classrooms that offer 8-hour instructional day	227 (64%)	Classrooms that offer 8-hour instructional day	249 (68%)
Classrooms that offer 6.5-hour instructional days	113 (35%)	Classrooms that offer 6.5-hour instructional days	128 (36%)	Classrooms that offer 6.5-hour instructional days	119 (32%)

2023-24 School Year		2024-25 School Year		2025-26 School Year	
Number of classrooms	327	Number of classrooms	355	Number of classrooms	368
220 instructional days	258 (79%)	220 instructional days	260 (73%)	220 instructional days	279 (76%)
180 instructional days	69 (21%)	180 instructional days	95 (27%)	180 instructional days	89 (24%)
Total Capacity	5,534	Total Capacity	5,948	Total Capacity	5,544

*Data from the Office of First Steps received November 2025

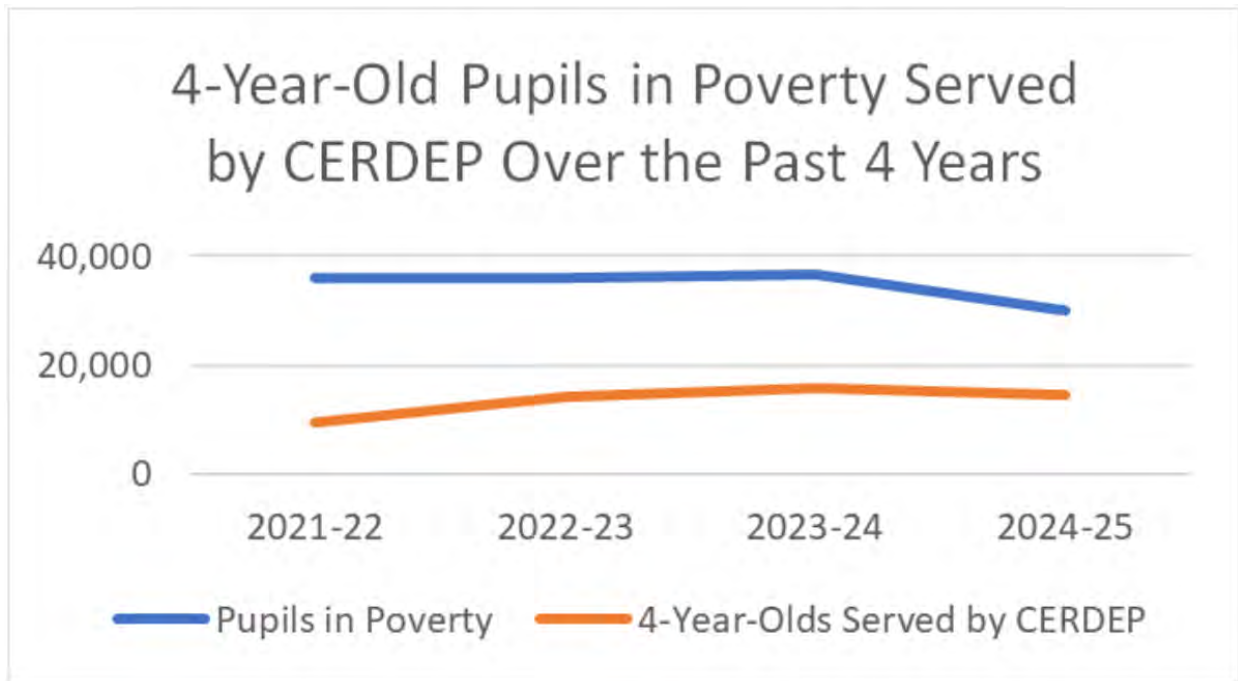


Table B: Students' 4K Experience (SY 2024-25) and PIP Status in 5K (SY 2025-26):

4 K Experience	Pupils in Poverty 5K (2025-26) Served in 4K Experience (2024-25)	Percent of all Pupils in Poverty Served in 4K Experience (2024-25)	Pupils NOT in Poverty 5K (2025-26) Served in 4K Experience (2024-25)	Percent of Pupils NOT in Poverty Served in 4K Experience (2024-25)	Total	Percent of Total Enrolled in 5K by 4K Experience in 2024-25
CERDEP 4K	11,890	84%	2,253	16%	14,143	26%
First Steps 4K	2,543	68%	1,224	32%	3,767	7%
HeadStart	775	59%	537	41%	1,312	2%
Other Public 4K	4,491	55%	3,725	45%	8,216	15%
Private 4K	1,450	17%	7,087	83%	8,537	16%
Unknown	8,855	49%	9,207	51%	18,062	33%
Total	30,004	56%	24,033	44%	54,037	100%

*Data received from the SCDE and SCFS November 2025.

**When PIP status data was missing, students were counted in total 4K experience only. In some cases totals may not match as a result.

Per Section 59-156-130 (C)(2) students who do not meet the poverty threshold may be enrolled and costs reimbursed for these students under two conditions: 1. If by October 1st of the school year at least 75% of eligible students in the county or district are served by CERDEP, Head Start, or ABC Quality through SC Child Care Scholarships, and 2. If students score at or below the 25th national percentile on two of the three DIAL subscales. This may account for students who do not meet the poverty threshold being served in CERDEP classes. At this time, there is limited information regarding how school districts are able to determine the total number of financially eligible four-year-olds, as opposed to those who express interest in being enrolled in the CERDEP 4K program.

Enrollment in First Steps 4K, Head Start, and accessing SC Child Care Scholarship are also unknown variables. To navigate the challenge of filling all available spots and serving only financially eligible children, a number of practices to honor Section 59-156-130 (C) (2) have been established in local districts. While local control is valuable to meet the needs of individual communities across the state, additional guidance from SCDE on how to determine when 75% of financially eligible children are served will increase consistency of a state-funded program and may increase consistency of access for eligible children across the state. Should Governor McMaster's budget request for the 2026-27 fiscal year be enacted to expand CERDEP eligibility to 300% of poverty, particular attention will be required to ensure that students originally eligible for CERDEP options under the law are still prioritized for enrollment in programs.



Students Not Served and Waiting for CERDEP:

In the 2024-25 school year, there were 18,062 children whose 4K experience was unknown. Of those children, 8,855 (49%) qualified as pupils in poverty and were potentially eligible for CERDEP programming. Some of these students may have been counted in the 402 students who were on a waitlist for CERDEP 4K. During the 2024-25 school year, there were 848 open First Steps 4K seats that could have been utilized by these students if there was a statewide system to match eligible 4K students with a state-funded or Head Start spot. In the 2025-26 school year, there were 711 students on a waitlist for CERDEP 4K, and First Steps 4K has 1,739 open spots.

Some success has been realized matching children on a CERDEP 4K waitlist with a First Steps 4K spot through a pilot effort that will be expanded this year. Existing data at the school district level is used to invite participants. Data on children enrolled and reasons families decline an open spot will be reported in future reports. Table C shows waitlists and potential open First Steps 4K spots.

Table C: 2025-26 CERDEP 4K Waitlist Numbers with First Steps 4K Capacity and Open Seats by School District:

District	Number of Students on Waitlist	First Steps 4K Open seats
Abbeville	2	No FS 4K
Aiken*	17	76
Anderson 1	1	No FS 4K
Anderson 2	7	10
Anderson 3	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Anderson 4	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Anderson 5	11	38
Bamberg	1	4
Barnwell	11	25
Beaufort	no waitlist	23
Berkeley	66	31
Calhoun	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Charleston	27	89
Cherokee	15	0
Chester	8	21
Chesterfield	18	6

District	Number of Students on Waitlist	First Steps 4K Open seats
Clarendon 6	7	No FS 4K
Colleton	no waitlist	7
Darlington	4	29
Dillon 3	no waitlist	22
Dillon 4	11	22
Dorchester 2	15	22
Dorchester 4	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Edgefield	2	No FS 4K
Fairfield	9	No FS 4K
Florence 1	7	95
Florence 2	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Florence 3	2	No FS 4K
Florence 5	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Georgetown	no waitlist	44
Greenwood 50	no waitlist	42
Greenwood 51	2	No FS 4K

District	Number of Students on Waitlist	First Steps 4K Open seats
Greenwood 52	no waitlist	No FS 4K
Hampton	no waitlist	10
Horry County Schools	179	69
Jasper	24	9
Kershaw	37	6
Lancaster		25
Laurens 55	no waitlist	14
Laurens 56	no waitlist	17
Lee	no waitlist	3
Lexington 1*	35	55
Lexington 2	10	19
Lexington 3	4	1
Lexington 4	no waitlist	No FS 4k
Lexington/Richland and 5	no waitlist	16
Marion	11	25
Marlboro	6	8
McCormick	no waitlist	No FS 4k
Newberry	48	4
Oconee	no waitlist	7
Orangeburg	no waitlist	45
Pickens	9	32

District	Number of Students on Waitlist	First Steps 4K Open seats
Richland 1	no waitlist	122
Richland 2	18	37
Saluda	15	9
Spartanburg 1	no waitlist	6
Spartanburg 2	36	35
Spartanburg 3	no waitlist	2
Spartanburg 4	no waitlist	13
Spartanburg 5	9	8
Spartanburg 6	no waitlist	51
Spartanburg 7	no waitlist	48
Sumter	no waitlist	87
Union	9	1
Williamsburg	no waitlist	8
York 1	no waitlist	11
York 2 (Clover)	no waitlist	No FS 4k
York 3 (Rock Hill)	11	25
York 3 (Palmetto School)	5	
York 4	2	28
Total	711	1,739*

*Total includes open spots in charter districts. Aiken and Lexington 1 School Districts enrolled 10 and 13 students respectively off the waitlist in a First Steps 4K placement using an innovative communication piloted by the EOC with district and state level partners.

While there has been focused recruitment of districts and First Steps 4K providers and a focus on the population of students intended to be served, there remains approximately 30% of four-year-olds in poverty who could participate in CERDEP, but do not. This year approximately 8% (711) of those attempted to access a CERDEP class but are on a waitlist, while 30% (5,544) of First Steps 4K funded seats remain empty. Understanding the reason why is imperative as there are available seats across the state, children waiting for CERDEP opportunities, and participation in CERDEP programming consistently demonstrates improved kindergarten readiness.



Attendance:

Consistent attendance impacts the fidelity of CERDEP programming, quality of the 4K experience and students’ academic outcomes in a similar way that lack of access does. The impact of CERDEP relies on students participating in the program and First Steps 4K considers 120 days a “full dose”, or enough time for the program to be implemented with fidelity for the desired effects. There were 2,890 (77%) students in First Steps 4K who were present for 120 days or more in the 2024-25 school year. Students present for 120 days or more of First Steps 4K were more likely to demonstrate or approach readiness than those who did not receive a full dose of First Steps 4K.

Table D: KRA Results in First Steps 4K Comparing a Full Dose to Less than 120 Days of Attendance:

	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating	Not Tested	Total
Full Dose First Steps 4K	698 (24%)	1,237 (43%)	906 (31%)	49 (2%)	2,890 (77%)
Less than 120 days	355 (40%)	294 (34%)	189 (22%)	39 (4%)	877 (23%)
Total	1,053 (28%)	1,531 (41%)	1,095 (29%)	88 (2%)	3,767 (100%)

Currently SCDE requires attendance as described in the [CERDEP 4K guidelines for 2024-25](#). The state policy states that students who are absent more than 10 days are considered chronically absent, and administrators must “identify ways of resolving underlying factors that might be preventing consistent attendance.” The small number of children missing 10 days or more suggests that this policy is being implemented with fidelity; however, this does not provide information about days present which is more powerful in understanding the most effective dosage of CERDEP 4K.

Table E: KRA Results by CERDEP 4K Absence Policy Data:

	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating	Not Tested	Total
Absent More than 10 Days	127 (42%)	97 (32%)	60 (20%)	20 (7%)	304 (2%)
Absent 10 Days or Less	3,041 (22%)	5,255 (38%)	5,291 (38%)	252 (2%)	13,839 (98%)
Total	3,168 (22%)	5,352 (38%)	5,351 (38%)	272 (2%)	14,143 (100%)

Table F: KRA Results in First Steps 4K by 10 or More Days Absent:

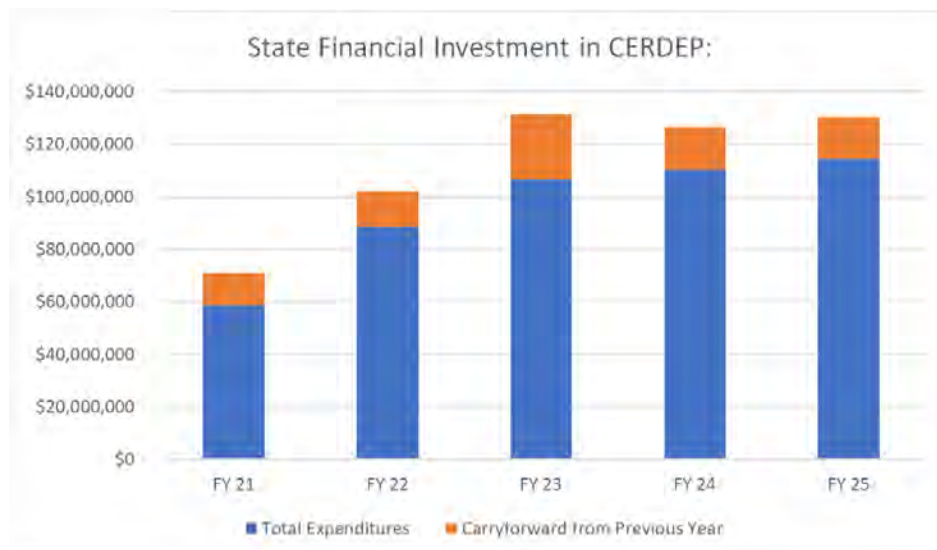
	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating	Not Tested	Total
Absent More than 10 Days	52 (58%)	22 (24%)	11 (12%)	5 (6%)	90 (7%)
Absent 10 Days or Less	326 (27%)	488 (41%)	350 (29%)	34 (3%)	1,198 (93%)
Total	378 (29%)	510 (40%)	361 (28%)	39 (3%)	1,288 (100%)

Data from both CERDEP 4K and First Steps 4K shows that attendance matters and it is important to [Be Present](#) for 4K as it impacts Kindergarten readiness and suggests a trajectory for better attendance in Kindergarten on testing days.

Financial Investment in 4K:

In fiscal year 2024-25, CERDEP 4K \$114,247,070 was invested from the General Fund and EIA recurring appropriations. The amount carried forward to FY 2024-25 from the previous fiscal year is \$4,766,223 for CERDEP 4K and \$11,207,120 for First Steps 4K for a total of \$15,973,343.

Table G: State Investment in CERDEP 4K Over Time:



Source: SCDE and SCFS Data Requests 2021 through 2025. Data received from SCFS November 2025, and from SCDE February 2025

Table H: Carryforward Over Time:

Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year 2020-21	Fiscal Year 2021-22	Fiscal Year 2022-23	Fiscal Year 2023-24	Fiscal Year 2024-25
Total	\$12,028,297	\$13,238,453	\$24,829,690	\$16,453,061	\$15,973,343

*Source SCDE and SCFS Data Requests 2021 through 2024. Data received from SCFS November 2024 and from SCDE February 2025

There is a slight decrease in carryforward from FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25. This decrease and the increasing number of students served demonstrate that funds are being used to serve children and support teachers. In the 2024-25 school year, \$73,629,158 state expenditures were spent to serve 14,143 CERDEP 4K students who enrolled in kindergarten in SC public school in the 2025-26 school year. There were \$40,617,912 actual state expenditures used to fund 3,767 First Steps 4K students later enrolled in public school kindergarten during the same time period.

Table I: CERDEP Investment Over Time by Program:



*Current Data received from SCDE and SCFS November 2025 respectively. Previous data reported by EOC from historic data requests.



Quality of State-Funded 4K Programming:

Quality of early childhood education is equally as important as access when considering the impact of state-funded 4K. South Carolina has placed a priority on high quality 4K as evidenced by the amount of coaching supports, and required curriculum and assessment for progress monitoring.

NIEER Benchmarks of Quality:

South Carolina has met seven of the ten benchmarks over the past three reporting years, and it remains a recommendation that EOC staff work with NIEER stakeholders to develop a strategy to meet the remaining three.

Policy	Requirement	Benchmark	Meets Benchmark
Early Learning & Development Standards	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Comprehensive, aligned, supported, culturally sensitive	Yes
Curriculum Supports	Approval process and supports	Approval process and supports	Yes
Teacher Degree	BA (public), AA (non-public)	BA	Not Yet
Teacher Specialized Training	Early Childhood Education	Specializing in pre-K	Yes
Assistant Teacher Degree	High School Diploma	CDA or equivalent	Not Yet
Staff Professional Development (PD)	15 hours/year, PD plans and coaching	For teachers and assistants: at least 15 hours/year; individual PD plans; coaching	Yes
Maximum Class Size	20 (4-year-olds)	20 or lower	Yes
Staff to Child Ratio	1:10 (4-year-olds)	1:10 or better	Yes
Screening and Referral	Immunizations, developmental; vision, hearing, health and more	Vision, hearing, health screenings and referral	Not Yet
Continuous Quality Improvement System	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	Structured classroom observations; data used for program improvement	Yes

South Carolina has [Early Learning Standards \(ELS\)](#) that function similarly to the elementary, middle and high school standards, to guide learning activities in support of growth and professional development topics for teachers. The ELS have six domains of development: approaches to play and learning, emotional and social development, health and physical development, language development and communication, mathematical thinking and expression, and cognitive development.

To meet the benchmark of offering curriculum supports and approval, CERDEP 4K and First Steps 4K have a different process. CERDEP 4K has a curriculum review panel which determines approved curricula and makes a recommendation to the State Board of Education. Approved CERDEP 4K curricula include: Frog Street PreK, Pre-K on My Way, The Creative Curriculum for Preschool, Worlds of Wonders, High Scope, and InvestiGators. Frog Street Pre-K and PreK on My Way were newly added in school year 2022-23. Additionally in 2025, the curriculum review panel determined that Montessori education is approved. First Steps 4K engages in a process to approve curriculum and programs may choose from: High Scope, Creative Curriculum, or Montessori Method. First Steps 4K also uses the Conscious Discipline model to support children’s behavior.

South Carolina does have a policy that teachers serving as lead teachers have specialized training in early childhood, and all CERDEP programming offer professional development aligned with curricula, early learning standards, and strategies and programs being implemented by each CERDEP model. Appendix B shows the number of attendees, and the professional development opportunity provided by CERDEP 4K and First Steps 4K. South Carolina does not have a policy about teacher and assistant teacher degrees that satisfied the NIEER benchmark, but it is a current recommendation that stakeholders begin to study teacher qualifications and begin to work towards both requirements that meet the NIEER benchmark of quality and build a career ladder for 4K SC teachers who do not meet that benchmark. While work has begun to meet this benchmark, it will continue in 2026.

Teacher Qualifications in State-Funded 4K 2025-26:

For the 2025-26 School Year, First Steps 4K has 368 lead teachers that hold a variety of degrees.

First Steps 4K Teacher Qualifications		
Associates Degree	137	37%
Bachelors	176	48%
Masters	53	14%
EdD/PhD	2	1%
Total	368	100%

Data received by SCFS, November 2025

For the 2025-26 School Year, there were 1,143 certified CERDEP 4K lead teachers with 669 having certifications in multiple areas. The degrees held by CERDEP 4K Teachers can be found in the table below:

CERDEP 4K Teacher Degrees		
Bachelors	377	33%
Bachelors + 18	67	6%
Masters	524	46%
Masters + 30	160	14%
Doctorate	15	1%
Total	1,143	100%

Data received by SCDE, November 2025

Because more than half of the First Steps 4K lead teachers hold a Bachelors degree or higher, it is worth considering changing the requirement to align with NIEER benchmarks while allowing these teachers to continue in their position while they earn a Bachelor’s degree utilizing existing scholarship dollars. Additionally, a First Steps 4K teacher loan program could be created where loans are forgiven after specified number of years of service as a First Steps 4K teacher.

There are requirements that state staff-to-child ratios and maximum class sizes in both the CERDEP 4K and First Steps 4K program guidelines. Additionally, any First Steps 4K program that is licensed through DSS must adhere to this ratio. The ratio is also included in [ABC Quality](#).

South Carolina does not currently have a policy requiring screening for hearing, vision, and other health screenings in all state-funded 4K at this time; however, it was a recommendation in the previous report to investigate needed stakeholders and begin to develop a plan to ensure that all preschool students in state-funded 4K are screened for hearing, vision, and developmental health. A draft plan has been developed by EOC staff to complete screening for hearing, vision, and one other developmental screening in state funded sectors, appropriate referral criteria, and build needed infrastructure for evaluation and treatment when required. This plan has been shared with state leaders in the field when all feedback is shared, it will be adjusted as needed, reviewed by stakeholders and then initial implementation efforts will begin.

South Carolina has a Continuous Quality Improvement System (CQIS) called ABC Quality. First Steps 4K programs can elect to participate in ABC Quality but CERDEP 4K classes are governed by the school building and district quality standards and strategic plan. Because programs must be licensed unless they are exempt to participate in ABC Quality and CERDEP 4K programs are exempt from licensing requirements, it is rare to see a CERDEP 4K participate in ABC Quality ratings. It is for this reason that more detail on First Steps 4K is reported in this section of the report.

ABC Quality

ABC Quality is South Carolina’s statewide quality rating and improvement system (CQIS) for child care and early childhood education; private child care centers that are licensed or registered by DSS can voluntarily participate in the system. For First Steps 4K programs, there is a financial benefit for meeting standards of high quality. The ratings range from A+ to C based on 6 quality standards: Responsive and Sensitive Care, Language and Communication, Guidance, Program Structure, Early Learning and Environment. A rating of C meets quality standards beyond requirements for licensure. A rating of B+ and B score higher with A+ and A score the highest on the quality standards scale. NA means a quality score is not applicable, while P means the program is part of ABC Quality while awaiting a rating from DSS reviewers.

Table J: First Steps 4K Classrooms 3-Year Comparison of Quality:

2023-24 School Year		2024-25 School Year		2025-26 School Year	
A+ Quality Rating	14	A+ Quality Rating	16	A+ Quality Rating	12
A Quality Rating	14	A Quality Rating	15	A Quality Rating	13
B+ Quality Rating	41	B+ Quality Rating	43	B+ Quality Rating	42
B Quality Rating	111	B Quality Rating	121	B Quality Rating	119
C Quality Rating	56	C Quality Rating	103	C Quality Rating	75
Pending Quality Rating	27	Pending Quality Rating	2	Pending Quality Rating	6
No Quality Rating	64	No Quality Rating	55	No Quality Rating	42

After comparing the ABC Quality ratings over the past three school years, we can see that quality levels are comparable and there are fewer centers not participating in ABC Quality. There are more pending quality ratings than in years past meaning that more centers are seeking to participate in the ABC Quality program. In First Steps 4K, there is a quality rating increase in reimbursement that more centers are able to benefit from as a result of quality expectations and coaching supports.

Growth in 4K:

There are two 4K assessments given in CERDEP classrooms: [Teaching Strategies GOLD](#) and [My Individual Growth and Development Indicators](#) or My IGDIS by Renaissance. All First Steps 4K classes use the GOLD, while CERDEP 4K classes have a choice between GOLD and My IGDIS. Preliminary analysis of 4K assessment data offered insight into the need for a more complete understanding of the training and administration procedures and use of 4K assessment data as formative assessment. It is recommended that GOLD and MyIGDIS assessments be included in the full assessment audit that is to be completed in 2026. Questions of data quality, reliability and assessment use answered through this audit process will enable sound decisions and recommendations to be made about the impact of CERDEP programming.

CERDEP Impact on Kindergarten Readiness:

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Performance Levels

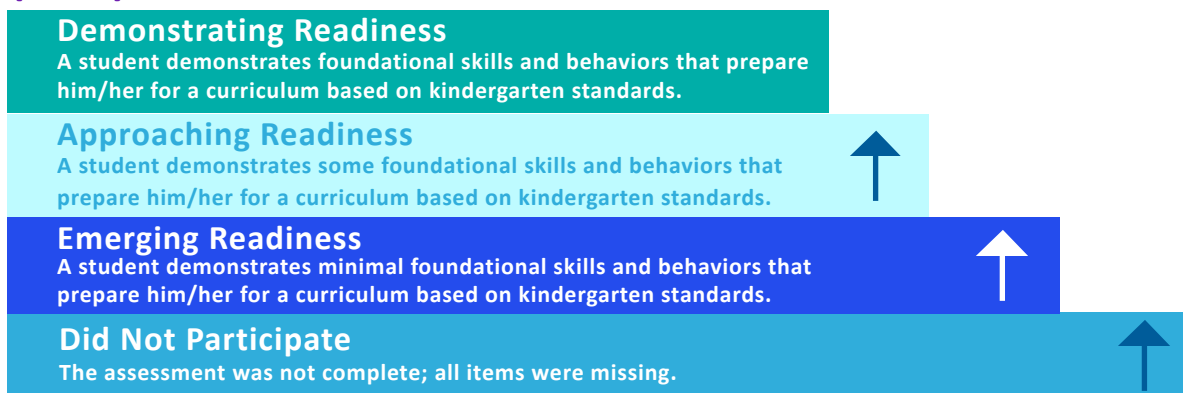


Table K: KRA Performance by Pupils in Poverty Status, SY 2025-26

KRA Performance Level	Emerging Readiness		Approaching Readiness		Demonstrating Readiness		Did Not Participate		Total
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
PIP	9,467	32%	10,939	36%	8,811	29%	787	3%	30,004
Non-PIP	4,616	19%	7,247	30%	11,353	47%	817	3%	24,033
Total	14,083	26%	18,186	34%	20,164	37%	1,604	3%	54,037



Pupils in poverty are almost twice as likely to score *Emerging Readiness* on the KRA as those not in poverty, while almost half of students not in poverty scored *Demonstrating Readiness*. When prior 4K experience is linked to KRA performance, it becomes clear that 35% of pupils in poverty who participated in CERDEP programming demonstrated kindergarten readiness. When 4K experience is unknown, only 21% of pupils in poverty demonstrated readiness. Consistently over time, CERDEP programming has contributed to Kindergarten Readiness in a meaningful way for Pupils in Poverty. Additional data for all students who took the KRA in fall 2025 and their 4K experience can be found in Appendix C.

Table L: Kindergarten Readiness 2025-26 by 4K Sector in 2024-25, Pupils in Poverty

KRA Performance Level	Emerging Readiness		Approaching Readiness		Demonstrating Readiness		Did Not Participate		Total
CERDEP 4K	2,776	23%	4,617	39%	4,281	36%	216	2%	11,890
First Steps 4K	738	29%	1,046	41%	708	28%	51	2%	2,543
Subtotal All CERDEP	3,514	24%	5,663	39%	4,989	35%	267	2%	14,433
Head Start	276	36%	305	39%	175	23%	19	2%	775
Other Public 4K	1,501	33%	1,570	35%	1,291	29%	129	3%	4,491
Private 4K	343	24%	548	38%	532	37%	27	2%	1,450
Unknown	3,833	43%	2,853	32%	1,824	21%	345	4%	8,855
Subtotal non-CERDEP	5,953	38%	5,276	34%	3,822	25%	520	3%	15,571
Total	9,467	32%	10,939	36%	8,811	29%	787	3%	30,004

*Data received from SCDE December, 2025.

Conclusion:

While more children have access to state-funded 4K with increased state investment, the number of four-year-olds on a waitlist to access a program has increased. With substantial state investment, it is imperative to consider different strategies that can ensure efficient enrollment and programmatic decisions that will allow more eligible children can access high quality 4K that has a demonstrated impact on kindergarten readiness. The recommendations made in this report will improve access to, quality, and impact of CERDEP 4K.

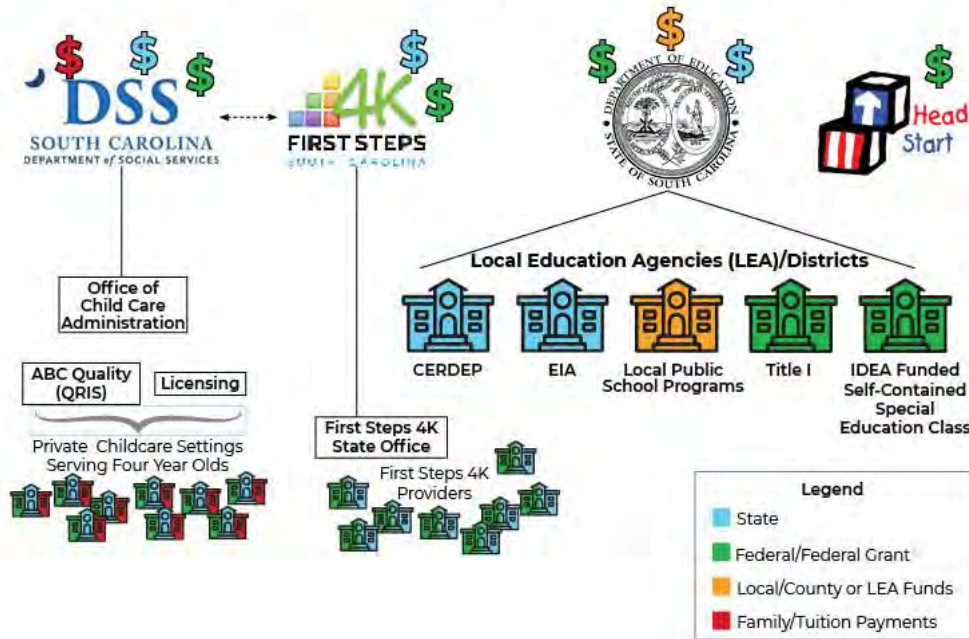
Future Directions & Next Steps:

This year marks the 20th year of CERDEP programming in South Carolina. Research this year will be completed to develop a longitudinal analysis of the impact of CERDEP programming on children as they grow into adults and become citizens of South Carolina. This research will be provided in the 2027 CERDEP Report.



Appendices

Funding Streams for 4K



Appendix B: Professional Development:

Offered by SCDE:

Title/Topic of PLO	Date(s)	Platform (Virtual/F2F)	Number of Participants
Pyramid Model Strategies	1/2/24	F2F	33
EC MTSS Session 1	1/5/24	F2F	25
Purposeful, Playful Math Regional	1/16/24	F2F	3
Elevating Purposeful Play-Based Learning	1/18/24	F2F	25
EC MTSS Session 1	1/23/2024	F2F	33
EC MTSS Session 1	1/25/2024	F2F	21
EC MTSS Session 1	1/30/2024	F2F	45
SCECA Session: Cultivating Purposeful Play Using Rhymes	2/2/2024	F2F	40
EC MTSS Session 3	2/16/2024	F2F	10
Developing Emergent Writing Skills Session 1	2/16/2024	F2F	20
Developing Emergent Writing Skills Session 1	2/22/2024	F2F	28
Palmetto State Literacy Teacher Association Conference Session: Mining the Hidden Gems of Emergent Literacy with Rhymes through Play	2/22- 23/2024	F2F	50
EC MTSS Session 2	3/5/2024	F2F	45
EC MTSS Session 2	3/7/2024	F2F	21
Assessment Regional PLO	3/19/2024	F2F	5
Developing Emergent Writing Skills Session 1	3/22/2024	F2F	28
EC MTSS Session 1	4/1/2024	F2F	35
EC MTSS Session 3 Midlands	4/2/2024	F2F	21
EC MTSS Session 3 Upstate	4/9/2024	F2F	45
Elevating Purposeful Play-Based Learning	5/28/2024	F2F	35
Pyramid Model with Assistant Principals & Behavior Interventionists	6/4/2024	F2F	32
Elevating Purposeful Play-Based Learning	6/6/2024	F2F	40
REL PLC Emergent Literacy Module 1: Print Knowledge	6/25/2024	F2F	15
REL PLC Emergent Literacy Module 2: Phonological Awareness	6/26/2024	F2F	15
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	7/17/2024	F2F	15
Joyful Center Based Learning in PreK: The What, Why, & How	7/18/2024	F2F	10
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	7/18/2024	F2F	12

I Am a Teacher Too!	7/22/2024	F2F	3
I Am a Teacher Too!	7/23/2024	F2F	3
I Am a Teacher Too!	7/23/2024	F2F	3
Promoting Emotional and Social Competence (Unpacking the Kit)	7/25/2024	F2F	10
EC MTSS Session 2	7/26/2024	F2F	35
SC Early Childhood MTSS (Session 2)	7/26/2024	F2F	27
EC MTSS Session 1	7/29/2024	F2F	23
Igniting the Power of Nursery Rhymes	8/5/2024	F2F	28
I Am a Teacher Too!	8/5/2024	F2F	18
I Am a Teacher Too!	8/7/2024	Virtual	199
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	8/11/2024	F2F	1
CERDEP High-Quality Environment Support	8/22/2024	F2F	21
I Am a Teacher Too!	9/3/2024	F2F	30
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	9/4/2024	F2F	5
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	9/6/2024	F2F	3
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK: The What, Why, & How	9/8/2024	F2F	1
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	9/11/2024	F2F	5
Joyful Center-Based Learning	9/23/2024	F2F	5
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	9/23/2024	F2F	29
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK: The What, Why, & How	9/23/2024	F2F	1
Purposeful Play	10/11/2024	F2F	25
Purposeful Playful Math	10/11/2024	F2F	2
I Am a Teacher Too!	10/11/2024	F2F	1
Developing Emergent Writing Session 2	10/14/2024	F2F	28
Inclusion Conference: CERDEP Presentation	10/17/2024	F2F	25
Challenging Behaviors (EC-MTSS)	10/29/2024	F2F	21
EC-MTSS Session 2	11/4/2024	F2F	23

MTSS – Teaching for Executive Functions	11/13/2024	F2F	60
Challenging Behaviors (EC-MTSS)	11/19/2024	F2F	35
Unpacking the Pyramid Model Kit (EC-MTSS)	1/3/2025	F2F	30
Joyful Center-Based Learning in PreK	1/3/2025	F2F	1
Challenging Behaviors (EC-MTSS)	1/23/2025	F2F	17
Challenging Behaviors (EC-MTSS)	1/29/2025	Virtual	62
SC Early Childhood MTSS Session Three	1/29/2025	Virtual	1
Addressing Challenging Behavior (Pyramid)	1/29/2025	Virtual	3

First Steps 4K Professional Development Offerings/Events, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026

Topic of PLO/Professional Development Opportunities	Platform/Date(s)	2024-25 participants	2025-26 participants	Notes
New Teacher Training	July 2024 (virtual) July 2025 Also offered in January 2026	125	198-July Expected 100-January	3 day training for teachers new to First Steps 4K, learning the basics of Conscious Discipline, Creative Curriculum, and setting up and maintaining classroom environment
Winter New Teacher Training	(virtual) January 2026	75	Expected 60	3 day training for teachers new to First Steps 4K, learning the basics of Conscious Discipline, Creative Curriculum, and setting up and maintaining classroom environment
New Leader Training	(virtual) July 2024 (2 sessions) July 2025	221	407	Leaders learn FS4K policies and procedures for important day to day tasks like managing attendance, submitting documents, etc.
All Leader Training	(virtual) July (2 sessions)	x	382	This special session was held to introduce to leaders the new attendance policy for FS4K.
Leadership Academy	October 2025 (in person)	250	288	This 2 day, in-person event had different sessions for leaders to learn more about the 4K program, CLASS implementation, and refine practices
Teacher Academy	October 2025 (in person)		522	2.5 days Adventures in 4K
Leadership Forums-Certified Trainings	(virtual) Sept. 2025-June 2026	Sept.- 50 Oct.-42 Nov.-124 Dec.- 22 Jan.-41 Feb.-40 March-65 April-20 May-50 June- 91	Sept. 18-62 Oct. 16-25 Nov. 20-68 Jan. 22- Feb. 19- March 19- April 16- May 21- June 18-	Each month, there is a different topic that leaders gather to learn about.

AIM4K National Directors Credential	(virtual) Oct-July, monthly training opportunities	21	18	Through National Louis University, a cohort of directors led by First Steps 4K to build knowledge, competency, and quality practices.
GOLD New Teacher Assessment Training	(virtual) August	246	110	
GOLD Checkpoint Trainings	(virtual) October 2025	X	57	
Gold Finch Training	(virtual) Sept. 2025	X	517	
Fall Palmetto Pre-K Jamboree	(virtual) July and September	572	997	15 sessions offered in July 2024, September had 2 keynotes and a town hall
Spring Palmetto Pre-K Jamboree	(virtual) March 2025 (virtual) March 2026	914	Estimate-1000	
Getting Started with ASQ Online	(virtual) August 2025	X	261	
Tips for Successful Family Conferences	(virtual) October 2025, February 2026	X	October- 7 February-TBD	
Teacher PD Day- Formula for Success	(in person) July 31	X	520	
Curriculum Planning Meetings	(virtual) July 2025- May 2026	September-Balls-312 October-Trees-146 November-Clothes-105 December-88 January-111 February-153 March-107 April-123 May-55	September 10, 11-155 October 9, 10- 400 November 5, 6-84 January 7, 8-TBD February 4, 5-TBD March 4, 5-TBD April 8, 16-TBD May 6, 7-TBD June10, 11-TBD	These monthly meetings support the Creative Curriculum as teachers meet to go through each study and plan and share ideas of what instruction throughout the study could look like
Conscious Discipline Lunch and Learn Series	(virtual) Self-regulation skills-offered monthly August-June	October-55 November-24 December-12 January-38 February-61 March-14 April-37 May-25 June-17	TBD	Monthly sessions held to dive deeper into Conscious Discipline
4K Family Orientation Review	(virtual) July	X	131	

Preparing for Ready Rosie Family Engagement Workshop	(virtual) October, March	X	October-33 March – TBD	
CLASS Training- Language Modeling	(virtual) January 2026	X	TBD	
CLASS Training- Concept Development	(virtual) February 2026	X	TBD	
CLASS Training- Quality of Feedback	(virtual) March 2026	X	TBD	
Spring Palmetto PreK Jamboree	(virtual) March 6 2026	X	TBD	
LETRS EC Enrollment	Hybrid December 2024-May 20025 December 2025- June 2026	90 lead teachers completed with mastery 3 FS4K coaches completed with mastery	30 lead teachers and 3 FS4K coaches enrolled to begin coursework	
Literacy Labs- Intermediate Teacher Meetings	(virtual)	October-29 November-25 December-28 January-23 February-25 March-28	X	
Literacy Labs- Veteran Group Meetings	(virtual)	September- 18 October- November-19 December-16 January-14 February-12 March-14	x	
Literacy Labs- New Teacher Meetings and Support	(virtual)	October-59 November- 50 November Office Hours-46 December meeting-49 January meeting-53 Jan. office hours- 23 Feb. meeting-47 Feb. office hours-33 March-44 April-68	x	
Fall Palmetto PreK Keep Jammin’	(virtual) October 2025	x	61	Laying the Literacy Foundation: Emergent Reading in 4K

WolfTrap Writing, SC Arts Commission	April	43	X	
CLASS observation training and certification	(in person) May, June	X	25 First Steps 4K staff certified	
Ready for Kindergarten LIVE	(virtual) April 2024	118	X	Beyond the ABCs: Preparing the Whole Child for Success
Spring Palmetto Pre-K Keep Jammin'	(virtual) May 2024 April 2026	168	Estimated: 150	
Teacher Training/Coaching Support	Twice/month-ongoing (in person)	17 FS4K coaches to approximately 330 classrooms	19 FS4K coaches for approximately 360 classrooms	In person coaching visits by First Steps coaches to each classroom, twice per month for 1.5-3 hours. Visits provided monitoring, technical assistance, and coaching to the funded 4K classrooms throughout the school year. Emails, calls, texts, and follow-up visits to document and build goals.
CLASS coaching pilot-	Hybrid		100 teachers/assistants	CLASS pilot

Parent/Family Offerings 2025-26

Event	Offering		# of participants
Preschool Power Hour for Parents (virtual)	July	This event gets parents ready for what to expect in our 4K classrooms and answers questions that family pay has	July 2024-356 July 2025-396
Open House for all classrooms	July/August	Each site holds an open house to explain 4K and go over First Steps 4K	Approximately 350 classrooms
Drop-in Day-Meet the Teacher	August	Each classroom holds a drop-in day to see the classroom and meet the teacher	Approximately 350 classrooms

Fall Parent-teacher conferences	November	Each teacher invites families in to discuss their child's progress and review report card	Approximately 350 classrooms
Fall Family Engagement Night-Literacy Focus	October/November	Each classroom holds a Family Engagement Night where families learn the importance of literacy and play	Approximately 350 classrooms
Winter Family Conferences	January	Each teacher invites families in to discuss their child's progress and review report card	Approximately 350 classrooms
Winter Family Engagement Night-Math Matters	February/March	Each classroom holds a Family Engagement Night where families learn the importance of math and play	Approximately 350 classrooms
Spring Family Conferences	May	Each teacher invites families in to discuss their child's progress and review report card	Approximately 350 classrooms
Ready Rosie	Ongoing throughout the year	A research-based early education program that uses video modeling to help parents and caregivers engage with young children	Approximately 350 classrooms

Appendix C: Kindergarten Readiness 2025-26 by 4K Sector in 2024-25 For All Students:

Kindergarten Readiness by 4K Experience									
KRA Performance Level	Emerging Readiness		Approaching Readiness		Demonstrating Readiness		Did Not Participate		Total
CERDEP 4K	3,168	22%	5,352	38%	5,351	38%	272	2%	14,143
First Steps 4K	1,053	28%	1,531	41%	1,095	29%	88	2%	3,767
Subtotal All CERDEP	4,221	24%	6,883	38%	6,446	36%	360	2%	17,910
Head Start	460	35%	521	40%	284	22%	47	4%	1,312
Other Public 4K	2,099	26%	2,666	32%	3,171	39%	280	3%	8,216
Private 4K	847	10%	2,508	29%	5,050	59%	132	2%	8,537
Unknown	6,456	36%	5,608	31%	5,213	29%	785	4%	18,062
Subtotal non-CERDEP	9,862	27%	11,303	31%	13,718	38%	1,244	3%	36,127
Total	14,083	26%	18,186	34%	20,164	37%	1,604	3%	54,037

**Appendix D: South Carolina Head Start Census
December 1, 2024**

Head Start Cluster Area	County Service Area	# of Centers	# of Children Enrolled as of December 1, 2024	# of 3 Year Olds	# of 4 Year Olds	Pregnant Women	Home Based	# of Classrooms by County	# of Homeless Children	# of Foster Children by County
Acelero-Aiken/Barnwell Head Start	Aiken	2	86	45	41	-	-	4	-	-
	Barnwell	2	28	14	15	-	-	2	-	-
Acelero-Aiken/Barnwell Early Head Start	Aiken	2	16	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
	Barnwell	1	16	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Beaufort-Jasper Head Start	Beaufort	4	211	124	85	-	-	12	8	1
	Jasper	2	68	36	34	-	-	4	4	1
Beaufort-Jasper Early Head Start	Beaufort	3	88	24	-	8	-	13	8	1
	Jasper	1	8	1	-	-	-	1	1	-
Berkeley School District Head Start	Berkeley	9	435	292	143	-	-	24	-	-
	Dorchester	2	34	29	5	-	-	2	18	3
Carolina CAA Head Start	Chester	2	91	36	46	-	-	6	-	-
	York	4	169	60	77	-	-	13	-	6
	Union	1	53	18	30	-	-	5	-	2
Carolina CAA Early Head Start	Chester	1	8	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	York	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
	Union	1	32	4	-	-	-	4	-	-
Charleston County School District	Charleston	11	459	459	-	-	-	32	3	1
Charleston County School District Early Head Start	Charleston	10	217	112	-	12	205	28	3	1
Chesterfield/Marlboro Head Start	Chesterfield	4	149	62	77	-	-	10	-	3
	Marlboro	2	112	50	49	-	-	6	-	1
Darlington County Head Start	Darlington	2	242	85	112	-	-	16	12	30
Darlington County Early Head Start	Darlington	1	15	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

South Carolina Head Start Census

December 1, 2024

Head Start Cluster Area	County Service Area	# of Centers	# of Children Enrolled as of December 1, 2024	# of 3 Year Olds	# of 4 Year Olds	Pregnant Women	Home Based	# of Classrooms by County	# of Homeless Children	# of Foster Children by County
East Coast Migrant Head Start (June 12, 2024 – November 2024) (Only # of Centers, Homeless and # of Classrooms are included in December 1, 2024 totals)	Clarendon	1	33	5	9	-	-	4	5	1
	Colleton	1	37	9	7	-	-	3	19	-
	Saluda	1	17	4	4	-	-	2	5	-
GLEAMNS Head Start	Abbeville	1	51	41	10	-	-	3	11	-
	Edgefield	1	35	31	4	-	-	2	5	-
	Greenwood	1	177	127	50	-	-	9	19	-
	Laurens	1	50	38	12	-	-	3	8	-
	Lexington	2	116	75	41	-	-	7	24	-
	McCormick	1	27	16	11	-	-	7	24	-
	Newberry	1	74	45	29	-	-	4	1	-
	Richland	2	181	126	55	-	-	10	20	2
	Saluda	1	40	27	13	-	-	2	9	-
GLEAMNS Early Head Start	Edgefield	1	8	-	-	-	-	1	2	-
	Greenwood	1	22	-	-	-	-	3	7	-
	Saluda	1	16	-	-	-	-	2	4	-
GLEAMNS Early Head Start Partnership	Abbeville	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Laurens	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Greenwood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ISWA Development Corp- Catawba Indian Nation	Catawba Indian Nation (York County)	1	53	21	24	-	-	4	2	2
ISWA Development Corp-Catawba Indian Nation Early Head Start	Catawba Indian Nation (York)	1	24	1	-	1	-	4	7	1
Lancaster Head Start	Lancaster	1	128	26	69	-	-	7	3	8
Lancaster Early Head Start	Lancaster	1	72	13	-	2	22	6	0	3

South Carolina Head Start Census

December 1, 2024

Head Start Cluster Area	County Service Area	# of Centers	# of Children Enrolled as of December 1, 2024	# of 3 Year Olds	# of 4 Year Olds	Pregnant Women	Home Based	# of Classrooms by County	# of Homeless Children	# of Foster Children by County
Lancaster County First Steps Early Head Start Partnership	Lancaster	3	69	6	-	-	-	9	14	6
	Lowcountry CAA Head Start									
	Colleton	4	173	116	54	-	-	7	6	3
	Hampton	2	74	55	16	-	-	7	8	1
Lowcountry Early Head Start	Colleton	2	48	3	-	4	-	6	8	2
	Hampton	1	40	6	-	4	4	5	2	-
OCAB CAA Head Start										
	Allendale	1	23	11	12	-	-	2	-	-
	Bamberg	2	47	34	13	-	-	4	-	-
	Calhoun	1	27	4	-	-	-	2	-	-
	Orangeburg	6	258	203	55	-	-	17	5	2
OCAB Early Head Start	Bamberg	1	40	-	-	-	13	4	-	-
Pee Dee CAA Head Start										
	Dillon	2	122	74	41	-	-	8	2	2
	Florence	8	267	210	148	-	-	16	2	12
	Marion	2	107	34	18	-	-	7	-	1
Pee Dee CAA Early Head Start	Dillon	2	16	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
	Florence	6	124	-	-	3	28	13	1	4
	Marion	2	16	-	-	-	-	2	-	1
Piedmont CAA Head Start										
	Cherokee	1	59	25	26	-	-	4	2	-
	Spartanburg	4	283	125	129	-	-	13	45	4
Piedmont CAA Early Head Start	Cherokee	1	16	4	-	-	12	2	4	-
	Spartanburg	3	48	16	-	3	52	6	4	-
Richland County First Steps Head Start										
	Richland County	2	105	-	-	1	35	9	6	-

South Carolina Head Start Census

December 1, 2024

Head Start Cluster Area	County Service Area	# of Centers	# of Children Enrolled as of December 1, 2024	# of 3 Year Olds	# of 4 Year Olds	Pregnant Women	Home Based	# of Classrooms by County	# of Homeless Children	# of Foster Children by County
SHARE Head Start	Anderson	5	177	64	87	-	-	12	1	1
	Greenville	8	303	84	154	-	-	21	3	-
	Oconee	1	30	8	20	-	-	3	1	-
	Pickens	4	117	37	58	-	-	8	9	2
SHARE Early Head Start	Anderson	3	81	23	-	-	-	11	1	1
	Greenville	9	180	64	-	7	-	24	-	-
	Oconee	1	29	6	-	-	-	4	-	2
	Pickens	1	23	14	-	-	-	3	-	-
South Carolina Association of Community Action Partnership- Early Head Start Child Care Partnership	Anderson	1	16	5	-	-	-	4	-	-
	Bamberg	1	32	4	-	-	-	4	-	-
	Berkeley	2	40	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
	Charleston County	2	19	-	-	-	-	6	-	-
	Georgetown	3	60	7	-	-	-	8	3	1
	Horry	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Laurens	1	48	16	-	-	-	6	1	2
	Orangeburg	2	46	7	-	-	-	6	-	-
	Newberry	1	34	2	-	-	-	5	-	-
	Richland	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
Spartanburg County First Steps Early Head Start	Spartanburg	9	116	-	-	5	45	9	16	1
Waccamaw EOC Head Start	Horry	3	174	77	69	-	-	14	2	4
	Georgetown	3	145	79	61	-	-	11	-	-
	Williamsburg	2	121	56	48	-	-	10	-	4
Waccamaw EOC Early Head Start	Williamsburg	1	45	8	-	3	-	6	-	2

South Carolina Head Start Census

December 1, 2024

Head Start Cluster Area	County Service Area	# of Centers	# of Children Enrolled as of December 1, 2024	# of 3 Year Olds	# of 4 Year Olds	Pregnant Women	Home Based	# of Classrooms by County	# Homeless Children	# of Foster Children by County	
Wateree CAA Head Start	Clarendon	2	133	52	63	-	-	9	-	4	
	Kershaw	1	88	46	28	-	-	4	3	2	
	Lee	1	56	21	25	-	-	4	4	-	
	Sumter	5	343	136	175	-	-	20	5	1	
Wateree CAA Early Head Start	Clarendon	1	40	9	-	-	16	5	-	-	
	Kershaw	1	32	-	-	-	16	4	-	-	
	Lee	1	16	-	-	-	8	2	1	-	
	Sumter	3	80	6	-	3	8	3	-	-	
	Vital Connections of the Midlands Early Head Start	East Richland (Arthurtown)	1	21	3	-	3	-	3	4	2
	Columbia (Children's Garden)	1	14	3	-	2	-	2	2	2	
	Lower Richland (Tender Years)	1	36	7	-	4	-	5	5	2	
Totals as of December 1, 2024		231	7,409	3,808	2,332	65	464	666	402	138	

South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) - Serving 4-year olds

Piedmont

- Spartanburg - 20

Prepared by:
South Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office
in response to US Department of Health and Human Services/ACF agreement with SC Education Oversight Committee
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Columbia, South Carolina 29202
(803) 898-2550/FAX: (803) 898-4458

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The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is an independent, nonpartisan group of 18 educators, business people, and elected officials appointed by the legislature and governor. The EOC enacts the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998, which sets standards for improving the state's K-12 educational system. The EOC reviews the state's education improvement process, assesses how schools are doing, and evaluates the standards schools must meet to build the education system needed to compete in this century.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Date: April 13, 2026

ACTION ITEM:

Report on the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program FY2023-24

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Act 247 of 2018

Annually, the Education Oversight Committee shall 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.

CRITICAL FACTS

The report addresses the following:

- Information on the approval process, participation, and compliance for ECENC schools;
- Information about the process for collecting assessment results used to document the impact of the ECENC program on student achievement; and
- Recommendations to the Committee.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

The Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program Report will be submitted to the SC General Assembly following EOC approval.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

There is no economic impact to the EOC producing this report.

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN

Approved
 Not Approved

Amended
 Action deferred (explain)

Report on the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

FY 2024-25

Prepared by
Dr. Jenny May

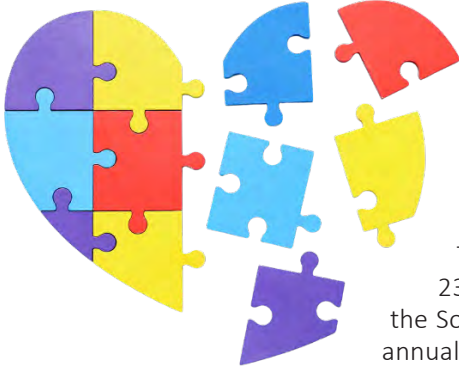


**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.



INTRODUCTION



This report is the seventh annual report on the impact of the Educational Credit for the Exceptional Needs Children program as required by Act 247 as amended on May 17th, 2021. The ECENC program provides grants and parental tax credits to students with exceptional needs attending private schools that meet specific eligibility requirements for approval by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). Exceptional SC is a 501 (c) (3) that raises and accepts funds and reviews student grant applications for an ECENC funding. This evaluation was prepared using information and data from the state fiscal year 2022-23. Information utilized to complete this required evaluation was prepared and shared by the South Carolina Department of Revenue (SCDOR) and Exceptional SC. The law specifies that annually the EOC shall:

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 51% 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 30 participating students who have scores for tests administered. If the Education oversight committee determines that the 30 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 10 participating students. (Section 12-6-3790 (E) (6) of the SC Code of Laws).

This report seeks to provide the following about the ECENC program:

1. Information about the approval process, participation, and compliance for ECENC schools;
2. Information about the process for collecting assessment results used to document the impact of the ECENC program on student success; and,
3. Updates to previous recommendations from the EOC report;



Term	Definition per Act 247
<p>➤ Qualifying Student</p>	<p>A student who is an exceptional needs child is a South Carolina resident, and is eligible to be enrolled in a South Carolina secondary or elementary public school at the Kindergarten or later grade for the applicable school year.</p>
<p>➤ Exceptional Needs Child</p>	<p>A child who has been evaluated in accordance with the state’s evaluation criteria as set forth in S.C. Code Ann. Regs 43-243.1, and determined eligible as a child with a disability who needs special education and related services, in accordance with the requirements of the Section 300.8 of the federal individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Or a child who has been diagnosed within the last three years by a licensed speech-language pathologist, psychiatrist, or medical, mental health, psychoeducational or other comparable licensed health care provider as having a neurodevelopmental disorder, a substantial sensory or physical impairment such as deaf, blind, or orthopedic disability, or some other disability or acute or chronic condition that significantly impeded the student’s ability to learn and succeed in school without specialized instructional and associated supports and services tailored to the child’s unique needs.</p>

ECENC Process, Participation and Compliance

Process

The law defines qualifying students and eligible schools. Grants may be awarded to students in an amount not exceeding \$11,000 or the annual cost of tuition, whichever is less, to a qualifying student at an eligible school. A qualifying student receiving a grant may not be charged tuition by an eligible school in an amount greater than the student would be charged if the student was not a qualifying student.

The EOC approves and posts a list of eligible schools on its website. The [eligible schools](#) approved in school year 2024-25 can be found in Appendix A. These eligible schools must apply with documentation that they meet the following criteria:

- Independent school, including those religious in nature, other than public schools, that offer a general education to primary or secondary school students;
- Does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
- Is located in South Carolina;
- Has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state’s diploma requirements, graduation certificate requirements for special needs children, and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both at progressive grade levels to determine student progress;
- Has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- Is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent School Association, or Palmetto Association of Independent Schools; and
- Provides a specially designed program or learning resource center to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students or is a school specifically existing to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.

An application form to apply to be an ECENC approved school for the 2026-27 school year and the current ECENC Manual can be found in Appendices B and C respectively.

ECENC School Approval Timeline

The following process and timeline were used by the EOC to determine school eligibility in the ECENC program for fiscal year 2024-25. Each school, new or recurring, was required to comply with the same program standards and reporting requirements.

January 2, 2025

1. Notification sent by email to schools currently in good standing with the ECENC program in the 2023-24 school year that the application process is open. The Application to Participate in the ECENC program was made available on the EOC's website with direct links to the ECENC manual that was designed to guide applicants through the process. All documents must be completed, signed, attached and returned to EOC staff.
2. The completed application of schools meeting the standards and reporting requirements for SY 2023-24 were also published on the EOC website.

February 28, 2025

1. The Application to Participate and Document A – Statement of Services was required to be submitted to EOC staff by February 28, 2025 to be approved for participation in the program for the FY 2024-25.
EOC staff called programs that have previously participated to remind them of the legislative due date so that they may submit required documents and continue to be eligible in the program and the students they serve approved by Exceptional SC can access this grant. This step in the process is not legislatively required, however does support students and families should there be an oversight by the participating schools that miss the annual email notification these requirements are due.
2. The EOC publishes a list of schools meeting the standards and reporting requirements for approval to participate in the program for the FY 25.

June 30, 2025

1. Document B which describes grants received must be completed, signed, and returned to EOC staff by June 30, 2025. This document must contain information on the number of students (K-12) who were enrolled in the school in the 2024-25 school year and information on the number and amount of grants received in 2024-25. No personally identifiable information of students may be submitted.

September 1, 2025

1. Document C – School level assessment results must be provided directly to the EOC with the name of each national achievement test administered and the scale scores/percentile rankings/stanines/grade level equivalents for ELA (Reading) and Mathematics. This information must be reported by grade level for classes with 10 or more students of all grades tested and attached by September 1, 2025. No personally identifiable information of students or teachers may be reported in this submission.
2. Document C – Information on staff responsible for the submission of school level assessment results must be provided to the EOC staff by September 1, 2025. Document C must be signed and returned at this time.

November 15, 2025

1. A "copy compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm" must be received by the EOC no later than November 15, 2025. No personally identifiable information of students should be submitted.

Approved and Participating Schools:

Schools approved by the EOC to participate in the ECENC program in 2024-25 can be found in each of the five Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA) regions of South Carolina.

The **Upstate**, Region 1, has 34 approved schools and serves the most student recipients with 619 students receiving a total of \$2,968,728 in grants, for an average grant amount of \$4,796 per student.

The **Savannah River Basin**, Region 2, has five approved schools and 61 student recipients receiving a total of \$218,800. The average student grant in Region 2 is \$3,587.

The **Midlands** make up CERRA Region 3, where 21 approved schools serve 236 grant funded students receiving a total of \$1,174,360. The average grant for a student in the Midlands is \$4,976.

Sixteen approved schools are located in CERRA Region 4, the **Pee Dee**, and serve 48 grant funded students receiving a total of \$124,400, or an average of \$2,592 per student.

The **Lowcountry** makes up CERRA region 5 and has 40 approved schools. Approved schools in the Lowcountry serve 370 grant funded students with an average grant of \$3,671, for a total of \$1,358,637. There were 26 approved ECENC schools across all five CERRA regions that did not receive any grants from the program. In total, \$5,844,924 in ECENC funds were dispersed to 1,334 recipients across 90 schools in South Carolina.

The total amount of grants spent in ECENC approved schools in 2024-25 decreased for the 2025-26 funding year by \$2,587,447. Between 2024-25 and 2025-26 the number of grants awarded has increased by 95. During the same time, the number of approved schools statewide has remained constant, thereby the average amount per student has decreased by \$2,108. Each student accepted was awarded 13% of their tuition which varies by school. Most recently available data shows that 1,425 students used a total of \$3,246,278 across 96 approved schools, the average scholarship amount being \$2,278.

Upstate

30 approved schools
630 grants
\$1,577,641 ECENC funds total
\$2,504 average grant amount

Midlands

23 approved schools
311 grants
\$755,500 ECENC funds total
\$2,429 average grant amount

Savannah River

5 approved schools
59 grants
\$104,800 ECENC funds total
\$1,776 average grant amount

Pee Dee

15 approved schools
59 grants
\$74,000 ECENC funds total
\$1,254 average grant amount

Lowcountry

43 approved schools
366 grants
\$734,337 ECENC funds total
\$2,006 average grant amount

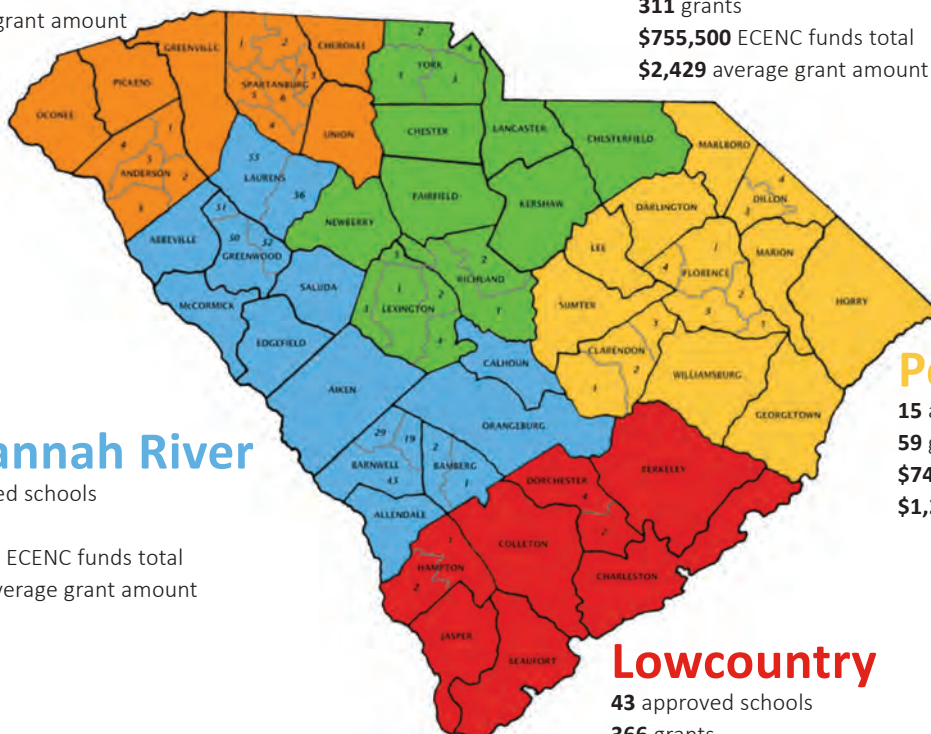


Table 1: ECENC Funding and Grants 2024-25 through 2025-26:

Region	Approved Schools		Grants		Total Amount Funded		Average Amount per Student	
	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26
Region 1 Upstate	34	30	643	630	\$3,024,928	\$1,577,641	\$4,704	\$2,504
Region 2 Savannah River Basin	9	5	69	59	\$240,300	\$104,800	\$3,482	\$1,776
Region 3 Midlands	19	23	233	311	\$1,163,760	\$755,500	\$4,995	\$2,429
Region 4 Pee Dee	15	15	52	59	\$131,600	\$74,000	\$2,531	\$1,254
Region 5 Lowcountry	39	43	333	366	\$1,273,137	\$734,337	\$3,823	\$2,006
State Total	116	116	1,330	1,425	\$5,833,725	\$3,246,278	\$4,386	\$2,278

Accrediting Associations:

Each ECENC approved school is accredited by at least one of the following independent accrediting associations for private schools and remained in good standing during the time of approval. The independent accrediting associations accepted by the ECENC program include:

- South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) accredits 66 ECENC approved schools.
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredits 63 ECENC approved schools.
- South Carolina Association of Christian Schools (SCACS) accredits 18 ECENC approved schools.
- Palmetto Association of Independent School Accreditation (PAIS) accredits 16 ECENC approved schools.

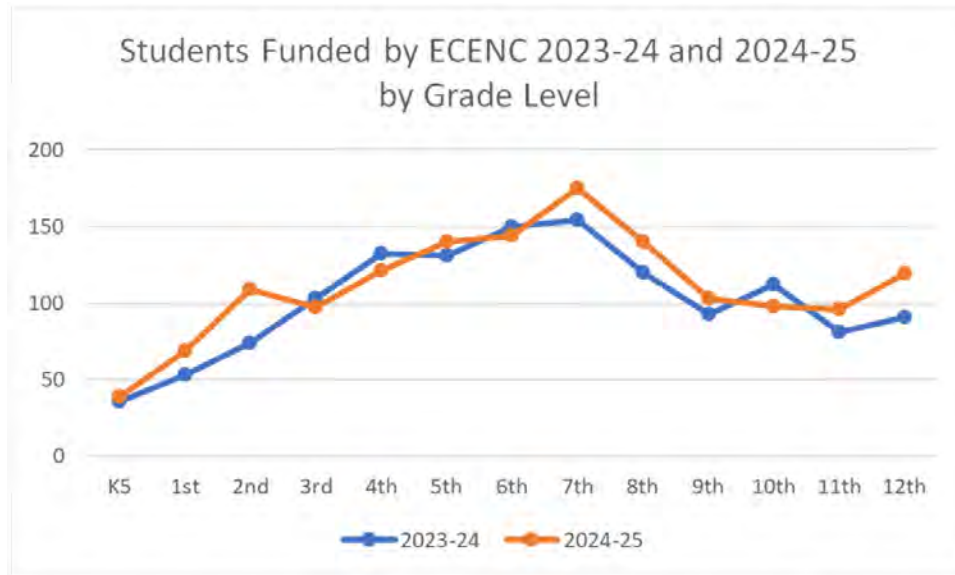
Table 2: Accrediting Associations by CERRA Region, Fiscal Year 2024-25

CERRA Region	SCISA	SACS	SCACS	PAIS
Region 1 Upstate	15	16	6	3
Region 2 Savannah River Basin	3	3	0	0
Region 3 Midlands	9	10	8	4
Region 4 Pee Dee	11	3	3	1
Region 5 Lowcountry	28	31	1	8
Total	66	63	18	16

*Data from approved ECENC school applications for FY 2023-24

Student Participation:

According to Exceptional SC total of 1,450 students participated in the ECENC program in 2024-25. Data from SC Department of Revenue shows that approximately 64% of the scholarship recipients are from households earning more than \$100,000 annually. Approximately 36% of ECENC recipients are from households earning less than \$100,000 annually. These percentages remain consistent over time. Of families participating in ECENC earning less than \$100,000 per year, 12% earn less than \$50,000, and 24% are earning \$50,000 through \$100,000. This data has been collected from the Department of Revenue and the full report published January.



Data provided by Exceptional SC over the past two years.

Exceptional SC provided data on students rising Kindergarten through grade 12 who applied for and those who received an ECENC grant during the 2024-25 school year. Table 3 shows this data and indicates if that number is more or less than the previous school year. In the 2024-25 school year 98% of students applying received grants, and those who did not we found ineligible to receive them. During the 2023-24 school year, students were funded at 27%, and during the 2024-25 school year this amount was 13% of tuition and on average about \$2,000 less than in the previous year. Exceptional SC reports that this fluctuation is the result of variance of donations across school years.

Table 3: Percentage of Students Funded 2024-25 by Grade Level

Grade	Funded	Applied	% Funded
K5	39	42	93%
1st	69	69	100%
2nd	109	123	89%
3rd	97	97	100%
4th	121	121	100%
5th	140	145	97%
6th	144	144	100%
7th	175	175	100%
8th	140	143	98%
9th	103	105	98%
10th	98	98	100%
11th	96	96	100%
12th	119	119	100%
Total	1,450	1,477	98%

Student Grants and Funding:

Act 247 states that student grants may not exceed eleven thousand dollars or the amount of tuition, whichever is less. The Exceptional SC Board for the 2023-24 year funded all incumbent students who applied for the grant up to 27% of the total tuition which was \$9000. This grant was given at the funding percentage of 27% in a one-time payment made in the spring. Families who applied for the parental tax credit but not a grant could receive up to \$11,000. A family who did apply for the grant and a parental tax credit, the maximum amount the family could receive was \$11,000 total so the grant had to be deducted from the tax credit. While \$11,000 is the maximum a family could receive, the amount given is typically less and determined by the Exceptional SC Board. In the 2024-25 school year students were funded at 13% the tuition rate, which is lower than the previous year. Applications in Table 3 reflect both applications and grants for the who applied for parental tax credits whether a grant application was also submitted.

Compliance: Assessments and the Impact on Student Success:

In evaluating the impact of the ECENC program on student achievement and academic growth, there are challenges due to a lack of student level data and comparable assessments administered. ECENC schools are not required to provide individual student test scores for students who received an ECENC grant; compliance is monitored by receipt of aggregate scores from approved schools and information about what assessments are given to all students in the school. All approved schools administered assessments and maintained compliance; however, there is a lack of student level data to make comparisons or determine whether students have experienced measurable improvements as a result of the ECENC program.

Approved schools do offer standardized or criterion referenced assessments as a condition of participation and these can be found in Appendix E. Private and independent schools that administer national assessments typically select an

assessment or assessments that measure English and Language Arts (ELA) and Math competencies at a minimum. Examples of these assessments include Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The most used nationally normed assessments that ECENC approved schools administered in the 2023-24 school year include PSAT, SAT, ACT, MAP and ITBS which is similar to previous years.

Act 247 requires an evaluation of the ECENC program's impact on student achievement where a majority (51% or more) of students enrolled in a school received a grant from Exceptional SC. There are nine of these schools this year, as there were the past two reporting years. These schools (referred to in Table 3) are in the Upstate and the Midlands. Each of the schools with 51% or more of the total enrollment accessing ECENC dollars is identified as serving students with diagnosed disabilities or academic struggles. Appendix F contains more detailed data, including assessment information for schools with 51% or more of the total enrollment participating in the ECENC program. In accordance with Act 247, assessment information for fewer than 10 students is not shared to protect student privacy.

School	Accrediting Body	CERRA Region	Percentage of Students Funded through ECENC	Total Amount	Assessment
Camperdown Academy	SCISA	1	78%	\$496,000.00	GMADE
Glenforest School	SCISA	3	59%	\$99,400.00	Fast Bridge, PSAT, ACT, SAT, SRA Mastery
Hidden Treasure Christian School	SCACS	1	74%	\$125,240.85	Woodcock-Johnson IV
Hope Christian Academy	SCACS	3	73%	\$16,800.00	Woodcock-Johnson IV
Sandhills School	SCISA/PAIS	3	83%	\$332,200.00	Woodcock-Johnson IV, PACT
The Chandler School	SCISA	1	78%	\$132,100.00	Stanford 10, OLSAT,
Trailhead Community Farm School	SACS	1	62%	\$20,800.00	MAP
Trident Academy	SCISA/SACS/PAIS	5	70%	\$357,800.00	Gates MacGinitie, WRAT

*WRAT is the Wide Range Achievement Test. OLSAT is the Otis-Lennon School Ability Test. SRA is the Scholastic Reading Assessment. GMADE is the Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation.

Recommendations:

While some recommendations remain consistent from previous reports, several updates and new recommendations are relevant to the evaluation of the ECENC program.

Convene the Advisory Committee of the ECENC:

Last year's report recommended that EOC staff convene the advisory committee of the ECENC in accordance with Act 247 to:

1. Consult with the EOC concerning requests for exemptions from the curriculum requirements
2. Provide recommendations on matters requested by the EOC

The Advisory Committee met last year and staff drafted processes for how the committee will work together. It remains the recommendation of staff that the advisory committee continue to work together in accordance with Act 247, with the stated goals of:

1. Confirming processes for communication and collaboration on ECENC work
2. Advise EOC staff on a process to consider school approval when there is a special circumstance or a discrepancy about services offered
3. Consider a process for complaints by parents and if or how these complaints might impact school approval.

This advisory committee, Department of Education, EOC and/or the Department of Revenue may not regulate educational programs of an independent school that accepts students receiving scholarship grants pursuant to Act 247. EOC staff does approve schools using reported information, and should reports conflict with the application material staff needs a process to follow so that all eligible schools are approved and the process maintains integrity for families utilizing the program. It is recommended that the advisory committee advise on a process.

The advisory board is comprised of leaders in the disability community, participating private school leadership, accrediting organizations, and parents.

Member	Organization
Robbie Bracisewski	SCISA
Kimberly Tissot	Able SC
Amy Holbert	Family Connections SC
Patricia Parrish	SACSCOC
Ramsay Bokinsky	Sandhills School
Edward Earwood	SCACS
Matt Palyok	Parent

Offer Summative State Assessments to ECENC Students in Public Schools:

South Carolina students in private schools are not currently offered the opportunity to participate in South Carolina State Assessments. Examples of these assessments include SC-READY, and End of Course (EOC) examinations. In previous reports this has been noted, and a survey collected showed some schools would be interested in the opportunity to offer South Carolina State Assessments. It is recommended that an additional data regarding schools interested in specific assessments be collected and collaboration determine if ECENC participating schools can be included in future training for assessment administration.

Consider Clarity for Parents Between ESTF and ECENC Participation:

The Educational Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF) is entering its third year of implementation and similar to the previous years of implementation, the ECENC funds cannot be used in conjunction with ESTF funds. It is recommended that either safeguards to separate and ensure parents cannot be granted both funds occur at the state level, or that funding from these two programs be allowed to be braided. It is the continued recommendation of the EOC to: 1. Remain informed about the implementation of the ESTF, and 2. Monitor the need for focused communication about each of these separate programs. If additional communication is needed, develop this in collaboration with SCDE and other partners.

Next Steps:

The next steps for continued evaluation of the ECENC program include: convene the advisory committee for the purposes of clarifying work process and recommended steps for incongruent application information. Questions can be directed to EOC staff. The phone number is 803-734-6148 and additional resources can be found at www.eoc.sc.gov

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.

Appendices

Appendix A: Approved Schools FY 2025:

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Addlestone Hebrew Academy	1639 Wallenberg Boulevard Charleston, SC 29407	843.571.1105	http://addlestone.org/
All Saints' Episcopal Day School	1425 Cherokee Road Florence, SC 29501	843.662.8134	https://www.aseds.com/
Amen Always Community Academy	21 Roseborough Road Lugoff, SC 29078	803.871.3418	https://amenalwaysca.org/
Anderson Christian School	3902 Liberty Highway Anderson, SC 29621	864.224.7309	http://www.andersonchristian.com/
Ashley Hall	172 Rutledge Avenue Charleston, SC 29403	843.722.4088	http://www.ashleyhall.org/
Beaufort Academy	240 Sams Point Road Beaufort, SC 29907	843-524-3393	http://www.beaufortacademy.org/
Ben Lippen School	7401 Monticello Road Columbia, SC 29203	803.786.7200	http://www.benlippen.com/
BEST Skills Academy	28 Bolt Street Greenville, SC 29605	864.977.1285	https://best-skills.org/
Bishop England High School	363 Seven Farms Drive Charleston, SC 29492	843.849.9599	http://www.behs.com/
Blessed Sacrament School	7 Saint Teresa Drive Charleston, SC 29407-7243	843.766.2128	https://www.scbss.org/
Bob Jones Academy	1700 Wade Hampton Boulevard Greenville, SC 29614	864.770.1395	www.bobjonesacademy.net
Calhoun Academy	81 Academy Road St. Matthews, SC 29135	803.874.2734	https://www.calhounacademy.org/
Calvary Christian School-Greer	101 Calvary Street Greer, SC 29650	864.877.5555	http://www.calvarychristiangreer.org/
Calvary Christian School-Myrtle Beach	4511 Dick Pond Road Myrtle Beach, SC 29588	843.650.2829	http://ccsmb.com/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Camden Military Academy	520 Highway 1 North Camden, SC 29020	800.948.6291	http://camdenmilitary.com
Camperdown Academy	65 Verdae Commons Drive Greenville, SC 29607	864.244.8899	http://camperdown.org
Cardinal Newman School	2945 Alpine Road Columbia SC 29223	803.782.2814	www.cnhs.org
Carolina Christian Academy	1850 Kershaw Camden Hwy Lancaster, SC 29720	803.285.5565	https://carolinachristian.org/
Charleston Collegiate School	2024 Academy Road John's Island, SC 29455	843.559.5506	http://www.charlestoncollegiate.org/index.html
Charleston Day School	15 Archdale Street Charleston, SC 29401	843.377.0315	http://www.charlestdayschool.org
Cherokee Creek Boys School, Inc.	198 Cooper Road Westminster, SC 29693	864.647.1885	http://cherokeecreek.net/
Christ Church Episcopal School	245 Cavalier Drive Greenville, SC 29607	864.331.4225	http://www.cces.org
Christ Our King-Stella Maris Catholic School	1183 Russell Drive Mount Pleasant, SC 29464	843.884.4721	http://www.coksm.org/
Christian Academy of Myrtle Beach	291 Ronald McNair Blvd Myrtle Beach, SC 29579	843.236.6222	https://www.christianacademysaints.org/
Clarendon Hall School	1140 South Duke Street P.O. Box 609 Summerton, SC 29148	803.485.3550	https://clarendonhall.org/
Coastal Christian Preparatory School	681 McCants Drive Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464	843.884.3663	https://coastalchristian.org/
Colleton Preparatory Academy	165 Academy Road P.O. Box 1426 Walterboro, SC 29488	843.538.8989	http://www.colletonprep.org/index.html
Cross Schools, Inc.	495 Buckwalter Parkway Bluffton, SC 29910	843.706.2000	https://www.crossschools.org/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Crown Leadership Academy	1455 Wakendaw Road Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464	843.425.2414	https://www.crownleadershipacademy.org/
Cutler Jewish Day School	5827 A North Trenholm Road Columbia, SC 29206	803.782.1831	www.cjdssc.com
Divine Redeemer Catholic School	1104 Fort Drive Hanahan, SC 29406	843 553 1521	www.divineredeemerschool.com
Dorchester Academy	234 Academy Road St. George, SC 29477	843.563.9511	https://www.dorchesteracademy.org/
First Presbyterian Academy, Inc.	829 Garlington Road Greenville, SC 29615	864.678.5107	http://www.shannonforest.com/
Five Oaks Academy	1101 Jonesville Road Simpsonville, SC 29681	864-228-1881	http://www.fiveoaksacademy.com/
Glenforest School	1041 Harbor Drive West Columbia, SC 29169	803.796.7622	www.Glenforest.org
Grace Christian School	416 Denham Ave. West Columbia, SC 29169	803.794.8996	https://www.gracelions.com/
Grace Community Academy of Columbia	577 W. Killilian Road Columbia, SC 29203	803.679.6423	https://www.gcacademysc.org/
Greenville Classical Academy	2519 Woodruff Road Simpsonville, SC 29681	864.329.9884	https://greenvilleclassical.com/
Hammond School	854 Galway Lane Columbia, SC 29209	803.776.0295	http://www.hammondschool.org/Home
Hampton Park Christian School	875 State Park Road Greenville, SC 29609	864.233.0556	http://www.hpcsonline.org/hpcs
Harvest Community School	PO Box 21 (10 South Dukes Street) Summerton, SC 29148	803.574.1004	http://www.harvestcommunityschool.org/
Hawthorne Christian Academy	PO Box 801 790 Hawthorne Road Chester, SC 29706	803.377.8235	https://www.enrollathca.org/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Heathwood Hall Episcopal School	3000 South Beltline Blvd Columbia, SC 29201	803-765-2309	www.heathwood.org
Hidden Treasure Christian School	500 West Lee Road Taylors, SC 29687	864.235.6848	www.hiddentreasure.org
Hilton Head Christian Academy	55 Gardner Drive Hilton Head Island, SC 29926	843.681.2878	http://www.hhca.org/
Hilton Head Preparatory School	8 Fox Grape Road Hilton Head Island, SC 29928	843.671.2286	https://www.hhprep.org/
Holy Trinity Catholic School	1760 Living Stones Lane Longs, SC 29568-7486	843.390.4108	http://www.htcatholicsschoolmyrtlebeach.com
HOPE Academy	PMB 358, Suite 2100 2131 Woodruff Road Greenville, SC 29607	864.676.0028	http://www.projecthopesc.org/
Hope Christian Academy	545 Alexander Circle Columbia, SC 29206	803.790.4028	https://www.hcatoday.org/
James Island Christian School	15 Crosscreek Drive Charleston, SC 29412	843.795.1762	http://www.jics.org/
John Paul II Catholic School	4211 N. Okatie Highway Ridgeland, SC 29936	843.645.3838	www.johnpaul2school.org
Lee Academy	630 Cousar Street Bishopville, SC 29505	803.484.5532	https://www.myleeacademy.org/
Lowcountry Preparatory School	300 Blue Stem Drive Pawleys Island, SC 29585	843.237.4147	https://lowcountryprep.org/
Mason Preparatory School	56 Halsey Boulevard Charleston, SC 29401	843.723.0664	https://www.masonprep.org/
Mead Hall Episcopal School	619 Barnwell Avenue. NW Aiken, SC 29801	803.648.3223	http://www.meadhallschool.org
Midway Christian Academy	12984 Hwy 55 W York, SC 29745	803.222.2929	https://www.midwaychristianacademy.org/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Miracle Academy Preparatory School	1019 Bethel Road Russellville, SC 29476	843.567.4644	http://www.miracleacademy.org/home.html
Mitchell Road Christian Academy	207 Mitchell Road Greenville, SC 29615	864.268.2210	http://www.mitchellroadchristian.org
Montessori School of Anderson	280 Sam McGee Road Anderson, SC 29621	864.226.5344	http://msasc.org/
Montessori School of Florence	510 W. Palmetto Street Florence, SC 29501	843.629.2920	https://florencemontessori.org/
Nativity Catholic School	1125 Pittsford Circle Charleston, SC 29412	843.795.3975	http://www.nativity-school.com/
Newberry Academy	2055 Smith Road Newberry, SC 29108	803.276.2760	https://newberryacademy.com/
Northside Christian Academy	4347 Sunset Boulevard Lexington, SC 29072	803.520.5656	http://northsidechristianacademy.org/
Oakbrook Preparatory School	190 Lincoln School Road Spartanburg, SC 29301	864.587.2060	http://www.oakbrookprep.org/
Oconee Christian Academy	150 His Way Circle Seneca, SC 29672	864-882-6925	http://www.oconeechristian.org/
Orangeburg Preparatory Schools, Inc.	2651 North Road, NW Orangeburg, SC 29118	803.534.7970	http://orangeburgprep.com/index.html
Our Lady of Peace Catholic School	856 Old Edgefield Road N Augusta, SC 29841	803.279.8396	http://www.olpschool.us/
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School	2 James Drive Greenville, SC 29605-2209	864.277.5350	www.olrschool.net
Palmetto Christian Academy-Mt. Pleasant	361 Egypt Road Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464	843-881-9967	www.palmettochristianacademy.org
Patrick Henry Academy	8766 Savannah Hwy. Estill, SC 29918	803.625.2440	http://www.patrickhenryacademy.org/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Pee Dee Academy	2903 E. Highway 76 E P.O. Box 449 Mullins, SC 29574	843.423.1771	http://www.peedeeacademy.org/
Porter-Gaud School	300 Albemarle Road Charleston, SC 29407	843.556.3620	https://www.portergaud.edu/
Prince of Peace Catholic School	1209 Brushy Creek Road Taylors, SC 29687	864.331.2145	www.popcatholicsschool.org
Providence Classical School of Rock Hill	318 N Jones Avenue Rock Hill, SC 29730-3800	803.900.9582	https://www.providenceclassicalrockhill.com/
Sandhills School	1500 Hallbrook Drive Columbia, SC 29209	803.695.1400	http://www.sandhillsschool.org
Southside Christian School	2211 Woodruff Road Simpsonville, SC 29681	864.234.7575	http://www.southsidechristian.org
Spartanburg Christian Academy	8740 Asheville Highway Spartanburg, SC 29316	864-578-4238	www.scawarriors.org
Spartanburg Day School	1701 Skylyn Drive Spartanburg, SC 29307	864.582.7539	http://www.spartanburgdayschool.org/
St. Andrew Catholic School	3601 N Kings Highway Myrtle Beach, SC 29577-2933	843.448.6062	www.standrewschoolmb.com
St. Anne Catholic School-Rock Hill	1698 Bird Street Rock Hill, SC 29730-3800	803.324.4814	http://www.stanneschool.com/wp/
St. Anthony Catholic School-Florence	2536 W. Hoffmeyer Road Florence, SC 29501	843.662.1910	www.saintanthonycatholic.com
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School	311 Gower Street Greenville, SC 29611	864.271.0167	www.stanthonygreenvillesc.org
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic High School	1300 Carolina Forest Blvd Myrtle Beach, SC 29579	843.903.1400	http://www.setonhighschoolsc.org/
St. Francis by the Sea Catholic School	45 Beach City Road Hilton Head Island, SC 29926	843.681.6501	www.sfcshhi.com

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
St. Gregory the Great Catholic School	323 Fording Island Road Bluffton, SC 29909-6134	843.815.9988	www.sgg.cc
St. John Catholic School-Charleston	3921 St. John Ave N. Charleston, SC 29405	843.744.3901	http://saintjohncatholicsc.org/schoolsite/index.php
St. John Neumann Catholic School	721 Polo Road Columbia, SC 29223	803.788.1367	http://www.sjncatholic.com
St. John's Christian Academy	204 W. Main Street Moncks Corner, SC 29461	843.761.8539	http://www.sjacavaliers.com/
St. Joseph Catholic School-Anderson	1200 Cornelia Road Anderson, SC 29621-3349	864.760.1619	http://www.stjosephofanderson.com/
St. Joseph Catholic School-Columbia	3700 Devine Street Columbia, SC 29205-1908	803.254.6736	http://www.stjosdevine.com/
St. Joseph's Catholic School-Greenville	100 St Joseph's Drive Greenville, SC 29607	864.234.9009	www.sj catholic school.org
St. Martin de Porres Catholic School	2225 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29204	803.254.5477	http://www.saintmartindepores.net/index.html
St. Mary Help of Christians Catholic School	118 York Street, SE Aiken, SC 29801	803.649.2071	www.stmaryschoolaiken.com
St. Michael Catholic School	542 Cypress Avenue Murrells Inlet, SC 29576-8739	843.651.6795	http://www.saintmichaelsc.com
St. Paul the Apostle Catholic School	152 Alabama Street Spartanburg, SC 29302	864.582.6645	https://www.stpaulschoolsc.com/
St. Peter's Catholic School-Beaufort	70 Lady's Island Drive Beaufort, SC 29907	843.522.2163	http://saintpeterscatholicsschoolbeaufortsc.org/index.jsp
St. Peter's Catholic School-Columbia	1035 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29201	803.252.8285	http://stpeterscatholicsschool.org/
Step of Faith Christian Academy	P.O. Box 1449 9009 Tarboro Rd. Ridgeland, SC 29936	843.726.6100	http://www.sfcaweb.org/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Summerville Catholic School	226 Black Oak Blvd Summerville, SC 29485-5800	843.873.9310	www.summervillecatholic.org
Sumter Christian School	420 S. Pike West Sumter, SC 29150	803.773.1902	http://www.sumterchristian.org/
Temple Christian High School	120 Pinewood Road Sumter, SC 29150	803.775.8139	https://www.tchstians.org/
The Chandler School	2900 Augusta Street Greenville, SC 29605	864.991.8443	www.thehandlerschool.org
The Charleston Catholic School	888-A King St Charleston, SC 29403-4181	843.577.4495	www.charlestoncatholic.com
The Complete Student	2204 Southside Blvd Port Royal, SC 29935	843.379.0193	https://www.thecompletestudent.com/
The Cooper School	13 Oakdale Place Charleston, SC 29407	843.573.1033	http://thecooperschool.org/
The King's Academy	1015 S Ebenezer Road Florence, SC 29501	843.661.7464	www.tkaflorence.com
The Timmerman School	2219 Atascadero Drive Columbia, SC 29206	803.782.2748	https://www.timmermanschool.org/
Thomas Hart Academy	852 Flinns Road Hartsville, SC 29550	843.332.4991	https://www.thomashart.org/
Thomas Heyward Academy	1727 Malphrus Road Ridgeland, SC 29936	843.726.3673	http://www.thomasheyward.org/
Thomas Sumter Academy	5625 Camden Highway Rembert, SC 29128	803.499.3378	www.thomassumter.org
Trailhead Community Farm School	The Charles E Shipman Ctr 975 Foot Hills Road Greenville, SC 29617	864.710.1752	https://www.trailheadcfs.org/
Trident Academy	1455 Wakendaw Road Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464	843.884.7046	http://www.tridentacademy.com/

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund (ECENC) - Act 247

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

SCHOOL	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE ADDRESS
Trinity Christian Educational School	524 Martha Drive Anderson, SC 29654	864.381.5248	https://iaminthisimage.org/tces.html
Valorous Academy	701 Main Street N. Myrtle Beach, SC 29582	843.548.8474	https://valorousacademy.com/
Westgate Christian School	1990 Old Reidville Rd. Spartanburg, SC 29301	864.576.4953	https://www.westgatechristianschool.com/
Westminster Catawba Christian School	2650 India Hook Road Rock Hill, SC 29732	803.366.4119	http://wccs.org

Each school has completed an Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program for school year 2025-26. Each school meets the program standards of Act 247 of 2018. Each school must comply with the Reporting Requirements of Act 247 of 2018 during school year 2025-26, and failure to submit the required reporting information will result in the school's removal from the ECENC program.

As of Monday, December 29, 2025

Appendix B: Application to Participate in the Educational Credit for
Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

[ECENC Application to Participate Form, 2026-27.docx](#)

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC)

Annual Standards Assurance Form

School Year: 2026-27

Application to Participate in Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

Please complete the information requested below concerning your independent school. This information will be listed on the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee's website, <https://eoc.sc.gov/>.

Independent School Name:	
Independent School Contact Person:	
Independent School Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Independent School Telephone Number:	() -
Independent School Fax Number:	() -
Independent School E-mail Address:	
Independent School Website Address:	

Please review the standards below that are based on Act 247 of 2018. An “eligible school” is defined as “an independent school including those religious in nature, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met.” Please indicate whether your school has met or intends to meet each standard to ensure the following academic and reporting requirements are met. The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee reserves the right to **request additional documentation** to show the school is in compliance with state law. Failure to meet these standards or reporting requirements will result in your school being denied or removed from participation in the program.

STANDARDS	YES	NO
1. Offers a general education to primary or secondary school students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is located in this State.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state's diploma requirements, graduation certificate requirements for special needs children and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent Schools Association, or the Palmetto Association of Independent Schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Provides a specially designed program or learning resource center to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students or provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students or is a school specifically existing to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	YES	NO
<p>1. <u>At the time of your application to participate in the program</u>, your school must submit <u>Document A</u> to the EOC <u>and a statement of services</u> that documents your school by February 28, 2026:</p> <p>(a) provides a specially designed program or learning resource to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students; or</p> <p>(b) provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students; or</p> <p>(c) exists specifically to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. Your school will submit <u>Document B</u> to the EOC by June 30, 2026 which documents <u>the number and total dollar amount of grants</u> received in the 2025-26 school year from Exceptional SC.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. Your school will submit directly to the EOC by September 1, 2026 the <u>school-level</u> assessment results for <u>all grades in the school</u> and for each grade with at least (10) students tested. Results should be provided for English language arts (reading) and mathematics achievement of students in each grade tested in school year 2025-26 on <u>Document C</u>.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. If your school received grants from Exceptional SC in school year 2025-26, the school would submit to the EOC a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm by November 15, 2026.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I assure that all documents submitted to the SC Education Oversight Committee for the purpose of applying as an eligible school, as defined by state law, is true, accurate, and complete under penalty of perjury in accordance with Section 16-9-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. Failure to report to the EOC the required data will result in the school being removed from the list of approved schools.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name of Signature Above: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Return this form to the Education Oversight Committee

- Phone: 803.734.6148 • E-mail: hjones@eoc.sc.gov • Mail: P.O. Box 11867, Columbia, S.C. 29211
- Fax: 803.734.6167
- Physical Location: Edgar A. Brown Building, Suite 502, 1205 Pendleton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Appendix C: Manual for Schools Applying to Participate in the
Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program
School Year 2025-26:

[ECENC Manual for SY2025-26 - Copy.pdf](#)

**Application Process for School Eligibility
Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children
Program
School Year 2025-26**



Table of Contents

Application Process

Program Standards	4
Reporting Requirements.....	5
Definitions.....	5
Timeline.....	5

Documentation of Reporting Requirements

Application to Participate in ECENC Program	8
Document A – Statement of Services.....	11
Document B – Grants Received	13
Request to Review	15
Document C – Assessment Data.....	17
Audit Clarification Letter	19
Completion of the Application Process to Participate	19

Appendix

Act 247 of 2018 as amended May 17, 2021	21
Contact Information	28

Application Process

Annually by March 1, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is required to publish on its website a list of schools that desire to participate in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program and that meet the statutory requirements for participation.

Act 247 of 2018, as amended May 17, 2021, articulates the eligibility and reporting requirements that schools must follow in order to participate in the ECENC program. Act 247 of 2018 is included in the Appendix. Schools that participated in the ECENC program in the prior year as well as schools desiring to participate in the ECENC program for the first time must meet the same **program standards** and comply with the same **reporting requirements**.

Program Standards

The law defines an eligible school as “an independent school including those religious in nature, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met, that:

- (a) offers a general education to primary or secondary school students;
- (b) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
- (c) is located in this State;
- (d) has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state’s diploma requirements, graduation certificate requirements for special needs children, and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress;
- (e) has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws;
- (f) is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent Schools Association, or Palmetto Association of Independent Schools; and
- (g) provides a specially designed program or learning resource center to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students or provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students, or is a school specifically existing to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.” (*Section 12-6-3790(A)(1)*)

Reporting Requirements

By law, schools that participate in the ECENC must report the following information to the EOC. This information will be posted online at the EOC's website at www.eoc.sc.gov:

- “(a) the number and total amount of grants received in the preceding school year;
- (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;
- (c) a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm; and
- (d) a certification by the independent school that it meets the definition of an eligible school as that term is defined in subsection (A)(1) and that the report is true, accurate, and complete under penalty of perjury in accordance with Section 16-9-10.”

Definitions

The EOC uses the state fiscal year, July 1 through June 30 as the definition of a school year. For example, schools applying to participate in the ECENC program for the 2025-26 school year are schools that will participate in the program between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026. In such case, the previous school year is defined as school year 2024-25, which began on July 1, 2024 and concluded June 30, 2025.

Timeline

Following is the timeline by which schools desiring to participate in the ECENC program must submit an application and appropriate reporting requirements. It is the responsibility of the schools to meet the reporting requirements. While the EOC will make every effort to communicate with schools, changes in administration and personnel at the school level occur. **It is the responsibility of schools participating in the ECENC program to notify the EOC either in writing or by email of changes in the names or contact information for persons responsible for submitting all required documentation to the EOC.**

<p>On or before February 1</p>	<p>Applications for participation in the ECENC program for the subsequent school year begin.</p> <p>The EOC will notify by email each school currently participating in the ECENC program that the application process is open. All current school contacts on file at the EOC are notified. The EOC will provide a document that each school must complete and submit to the EOC that guarantees that the school meets the standards and that the school will comply with all reporting requirements.</p> <p>The application must include a statement of services (Document A) at the time of application to be considered for participation in the ECENC program by February 28, 2025.</p> <p>For schools that are operated and governed under one organization, like the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, the EOC will accept one application for all schools as long as the governing body provides a list of the school names, addresses, telephone numbers, and, if available, website address of each school.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Application to Participate in ECENC Program Document A</p>
<p>On or before March 1</p>	<p>The EOC will publish on its website a list of schools meeting the standards and reporting requirements for participation in the ECENC program. The list will include: the school's name, addresses, telephone numbers, and, if available, website address.</p>
<p>On or before June 30</p>	<p>A school approved to participate in the program must submit to the EOC information on grants received from Exceptional SC in the prior school year:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Document B – Grants Received</p> <p>Failure of a school to provide Document B and the corresponding information will result in the school's removal from the program. The EOC will notify the school by email of the removal. Schools wishing to remain in the program will be required to complete a "Request for Review Form" prior to submission of required material. The EOC will also notify Exceptional SC and the South Carolina Department of Revenue of the Reinstatement of a school.</p>

<p>On or before September 1</p>	<p>A school approved to participate in the program must submit directly to the EOC by September 1, school-level assessment results from the prior school year for <u>all grades in the school</u> and for each grade with at least (10) students tested. Results should be provided for English language arts (reading) and mathematics achievement of students in each grade tested in school year 2024-25:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Document C – School-Level Assessment Data</u></p> <p>Failure of a school to provide Document C and the corresponding information will result in the school’s removal from the program. The EOC will notify the school by email of the removal. Schools wishing to remain in the program will be required to complete a “<u>Request for Review Form</u>” prior to submission of required material. The EOC will also notify Exceptional SC and the Department of Revenue of the Reinstatement of a school.</p>
<p>On or before November 15</p>	<p>A school that is approved to participate in the program in the current school year, that participated in the program in the prior school year, and that received grants from Exceptional SC in the prior school year must submit to <u>the EOC</u> a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization’s financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Audit Clarification Letter</u></p> <p>Failure of a school to provide a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit, conducted by a certified public accounting firm will result in the school’s removal from the program. The EOC will notify the school by email of the removal. Schools wishing to remain in the program will be required to complete a “<u>Request for Review Form</u>” prior to submission of required material. The EOC will also notify Exceptional SC and the Department of Revenue of the Reinstatement of a school.</p>

NOTE: For schools that are operated and governed under one organization, like the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, the EOC will accept one application for all schools as long as the governing body provides a list of the school names, addresses, telephone numbers, and, if available, website address of each school. In addition, the EOC will accept all information required by Documents A, B and C and the compilation, review or compliance audit for schools that are operated and governed under one organization, like the Catholic Diocese of Charleston, in one document to facilitate reporting.

Documentation of Reporting Requirements

The following is additional information concerning the documents that must be submitted by schools participating in the ECENC program. The information is organized by the actual document.

Failure to provide to comply with the reporting requirements will result in the school being removed from the list of eligible schools. Schools wishing to remain in the program will be required to complete a [“Request for Review Form”](#) prior to submission of required material. The school, Exceptional SC, and the South Carolina Department of Revenue will be notified of the school’s participation in and removal from the program. Exceptional SC is the entity that awards grants for eligible students attending approved schools. The South Carolina Department of Revenue is the entity responsible for administering the Parental Refundable Tax Credit for an eligible exceptional needs child who attends an approved school.

Application to Participate in ECENC Program

The application to participate in the ECENC Program is the initial document that a school choosing to participate in the ECENC program must complete. By March 1, the EOC will publish on its website a list of schools that successfully complete this document. This document requires schools to indicate whether the school meets each program standard and whether the school intends to submit the appropriate documents for reporting requirements. The EOC reserves the right to request additional documentation to show the school is in compliance with state law.

Participation in the ECENC program does not guarantee that eligible students attending eligible schools will receive grants from Exceptional SC. Decisions on grants are made by Exceptional SC and will likely be impacted by the date when a school completes its initial application to participate in the ECENC Program. Schools are highly encouraged to meet all published deadlines.

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC)

Annual Standards Assurance Form

School Year: 2025-26

Application to Participate in Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

Please complete the information requested below concerning your independent school. This information will be listed on the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee’s website, <https://eoc.sc.gov/>.

Independent School Name:	
Independent School Contact Person:	
Independent School Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Independent School Telephone Number:	() -
Independent School Fax Number:	() -
Independent School E-mail Address:	
Independent School Website Address:	

Please review the standards below that are based on Act 247 of 2018. An “eligible school” is defined as “an independent school including those religious in nature, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met.” Please indicate whether your school has met or intends to meet each standard to ensure the following academic and reporting requirements are met. The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee reserves the right to **request additional documentation** to show the school is in compliance with state law. Failure to meet these standards or reporting requirements will result in your school being denied or removed from participation in the program.

STANDARDS	YES	NO
1. Offers a general education to primary or secondary school students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Is located in this State.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state’s diploma requirements, graduation certificate requirements for special needs children and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent Schools Association, or the Palmetto Association of Independent Schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Provides a specially designed program or learning resource center to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students or provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students or is a school specifically existing to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS	YES	NO
1. <u>At the time of your application to participate in the program</u> , your school must submit <u>Document A</u> to the EOC <u>and a statement of services</u> that documents your school by February 28, 2025 : (a) provides a specially designed program or learning resource to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students; or (b) provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students; or (c) exists specifically to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Your school will submit <u>Document B</u> to the EOC by June 30, 2025 which documents the <u>number and total dollar amount of grants</u> received in the 2024-25 school year from Exceptional SC.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Your school will submit directly to the EOC by September 1, 2025 the <u>school-level</u> assessment results for <u>all grades in the school</u> and for each grade with at least (10) students tested. Results should be provided for English language arts (reading) and mathematics achievement of students in each grade tested in school year 2024-25 on <u>Document C</u> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If your school received grants from Exceptional SC in school year 2024-25, the school would submit to the EOC a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm by November 15, 2025 .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I assure that all documents submitted to the SC Education Oversight Committee for the purpose of applying as an eligible school, as defined by state law, is true, accurate, and complete under penalty of perjury in accordance with Section 16-9-10 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. Failure to report to the EOC the required data will result in the school being removed from the list of approved schools.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name of Signature Above: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Return this form to the Education Oversight Committee

- Phone: 803.734.6148 • E-mail: hjones@eoc.sc.gov • Mail: P.O. Box 11867, Columbia, S.C. 29211
- Fax: 803.734.6167
- Physical Location: Edgar A. Brown Building, 1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 502, Columbia, SC 29201

Document A – Statement of Services

Each school must provide a statement of services that documents how the school:

- (a) provides a specially designed program or learning resource to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students; **or**
- (b) provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students; **or**
- (c) exists specifically to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.

The statement of services must accompany the application to be considered for participation in the ECENC program.

Schools can review applications from prior years on the EOC website (www.eoc.sc.gov) to see examples of what services are provided. The purpose of this document is to substantiate that the school does serve the needs of exceptional needs children/students.

Please do not provide any Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 plans, or any student-level information to the EOC. It is a violation of federal and state laws, and such information will be properly disposed of to maintain the privacy of students.

The Statement of Services submitted with Document A must include information on the specific accommodations, supports, therapies and/or interventions provided to the student with unique learning styles as well as the diagnoses (such as ADHD, ADD, Autism, Dyslexia, Down Syndrome, Processing Disorders, Speech Delays, Oppositional Defiance Disorder, Bi-Polar, etc.) that those specific services are geared towards.

**Document A
Statement of Services**

**Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program
2025-26**

Independent School Name: _____

An independent school participating in the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children is required to submit a Statement of Services that documents that the school **at the time of your application to participate in the program:**

- (a) provides a specially designed program or learning resource to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students; or
- (b) provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students; or
- (c) exists specifically to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.

Please sign below and attach a statement of services.

The Statement of Services submitted with Document A must include information on the specific accommodations, supports, therapies and/or interventions provided to the student with unique learning styles as well as the diagnoses (such as ADHD, ADD, Autism, Dyslexia, Down Syndrome, Processing Disorders, Speech Delays, Oppositional Defiance Disorder, Bi-Polar, etc.) that those specific services are geared towards.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name of Signature Above: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Document B – Grants Received

The first question asks how many students in kindergarten through grade 12 were enrolled in your school in the prior school year. This information is used to compare the school's enrollment with the number of students who received grants from Exceptional SC. The EOC needs this information to determine which schools have at least 51 percent of the total enrolled students participating in the ECENC program. *(Section 12-6-3790(E)(6))*

Each school must also report the number and total dollar amount of grants received by the school in the prior school year from Exceptional SC. The total number of grants is defined as the number of individual children/students who received a grant from Exceptional SC in the prior school year even if the school received more than one grant or check for a specific child/student.

If no grants for any student were received by the school in the prior year from Exceptional SC, please indicate "0" grants received and "\$0" in total amount of grants received. All schools, including schools that did not participate in the program in the prior school year, must complete this document.

Neither the EOC or its staff can answer any questions about the number and amount of grants received or questions about the status of grant applications. All questions regarding the grant process should be directed to Exceptional SC.

Please do not send any information to the EOC that lists the names of students who received grants. Submission of such personally identifiable information violates state and federal privacy laws.

**Document B
Grants Received**

**Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program
2025-26**

Independent School Name: _____

An independent school participating in the ECENC Program is required to submit the following information by **June 30**:

How many students in kindergarten through grade 12 were enrolled in your school in the prior school year? _____

What is the total number of grants and total amount of grants received in the prior school year from Exceptional SC? Please complete the following chart and sign below.

If no grants for any qualifying student were received from Exceptional SC in the prior school year, please indicate with "0" grants received and "\$0" in total amount of grants received from Exceptional SC.

Total Number of Grants Received	Total Amount of Grants Received
#	\$

Total number of grants is the number of individual children/students who received a grant even if the school received more than one grant for a specific child/student.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name of Signature Above: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

If your school has failed to make the Educational Credits for Exceptional Children (ECENC) Program Standards as stated or Reporting Requirements by stated deadlines and has been removed or terminated from participation, please fill out this form and include corrections, attachments and/or letters to become eligible for reinstatement.

Request for Review

To be completed by a school administrator or program manager. Use black ink if completing by hand.

General Information		
1. Person making request:	2. School name:	
3. School address:	4. School phone number:	
Change reason		
<input type="checkbox"/> School clerical error or delay*	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>See attached letter of justification/explanations</i>	
Change requested:	Requested effective date:	
<p>If School error, explain in detail:</p>		
Certification		
<p>*Clerical errors made by the school administrator or program manager and delays in making stated deadlines of such documents shall not invalidate the statutory responsibility of the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to remove or terminate the school from the ECENC Program. Upon notification of any such error or delay, the school has 10 working days to make the adjustment and/or submit required documents. Terminations or removals are processed immediately, and all related entities will be notified.</p> <p>If this request is denied, the school administrator or project manager must notify the EOC by copy of the form of your right to ask for a review by writing to the EOC within 30 days of notice of this decision.</p>		
Signature of person completing form:	Position & Email:	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Document attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting documentation attached	
For EOC use only		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	Effective date:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	Reason for denial:	

Mail completed form to: SC Education Oversight Committee | ATTN: ECENC Program | Edgar A. Brown Building, Suite 502 | 1205 Pendleton Street | Columbia, SC 29201 | Fax: 803.734.6167 | Email: hjones@eoc.sc.gov | Questions: 803.734.2714

Document C – Assessment Data

All schools must provide **school-level assessment data by September 1** that will be reported and documented online.

Schools are asked to report which national assessments are administered at each grade level in English language arts (ELA)/reading and mathematics. If a school chooses to add other content areas, they may. At a minimum, the EOC needs to know which ELA/reading and mathematics assessments are administered.

To maintain student privacy, the EOC is requesting schools report overall student results for all grades tested in the school and for each grade with **at least 10 students tested.** If each grade tested in the school had less than 10 students in the 2024-25 school year, a statement of that fact should be put on school letterhead and signed by a program/school administrator.

Information should be provided for English language arts (reading) and mathematics achievement of students in the grade. Examples of national achievement tests include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, etc.* For grades 9-12, the school may provide average PSAT, SAT, ACT, or other scores as appropriate. For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, the EOC will work with the schools to provide information (including formative assessments, portfolios, etc.) that document the students' academic and social development.

Document C also asks for the **name of at least one individual or employee of the school** who will provide the **School-Level Assessment Results** administered on national achievement tests during the prior school year.

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: _____

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the NAME of each national achievement test that was administered and the grade in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. In reporting the achievement level, the school can use mean/median scale scores, national percentile rankings, stanines, grade equivalents, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name of Signature Above: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Audit Clarification Letter

State law requires that an independent school's application to the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program include "a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm." The term compliance audit refers to a determination of whether the school in the prior fiscal year complied with the requirements of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program.

Annually, the EOC produces an audit clarification letter that a certified public accounting firm can use to determine a school's compliance with the ECENC program by **November 15, 2025**.

Completion of the Application Process for SY2025-26

In an agreement with the SC Department of Revenue (DOR), the EOC will supply the names of schools in good standing with the ECENC Program to identify parents/taxpayers qualified for the Parental Refundable Tax Credit for Tax Year 2025. No school will be added/reinstated for the 2025-26 school year after the EOC's submission to DOR. This completion of the Application Process allows the EOC to compile the annual report that is required by Act 247 to be issued to the General Assembly. The ECENC Program Application Process for SY2026-27 will begin in January 2026.

January 16, 2025:

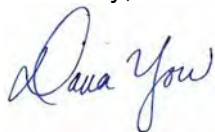
To Whom It May Concern:

State law requires that an independent school's application to the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program include "a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm."

The term compliance audit refers to a determination of whether the school in the prior fiscal year complied with the requirements of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program. The certified public accounting firm confirms in writing by **November 15, 2025** that:

- the independent school can document and verify that all grants received under the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program in 2024-25 were for eligible children enrolled in the school;
- the independent school can document the total amount of each grant per child from Exceptional SC;
- the independent school can document that no grant exceeded \$11,000 during school year 2024-25;
- the independent school returned a prorated amount of the grant to Exceptional SC if any student withdrew during the school year; and
- the total amount of each grant was used for tuition which is defined as "the total amount of money charged for the cost of a qualifying student to attend an independent school including, but not limited to, fees for attending the school and school-related transportation."

Sincerely,



Dana Yow
Executive Director

Appendix

Act 247 of 2018 as Amended May 17, 2021

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund

SECTION 1. Article 25, Chapter 6, Title 12 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 12-6-3790. (A) As used in this section:

(1) "Eligible school" means an independent school including those religious in nature, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met, that:

(a) offers a general education to primary or secondary school students;

(b) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(c) is located in this State;

(d) has an educational curriculum that includes courses set forth in the state's diploma requirements, graduation certificate requirements for special needs children, and where the students attending are administered national achievement or state standardized tests, or both, at progressive grade levels to determine student progress;

(e) has school facilities that are subject to applicable federal, state, and local laws;

(f) is a member in good standing of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent Schools Association, or Palmetto Association of Independent Schools; and

(g) provides a specially designed program or learning resource center to provide needed accommodations based on the needs of exceptional needs students or provides onsite educational services or supports to meet the needs of exceptional needs students, or is a school specifically existing to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities.

(2) "Exceptional needs child" means a child:

(a) who has been evaluated in accordance with this state's evaluation criteria, as set forth in S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-243.1, and determined eligible as a child with a disability who needs special education and related services, in accordance with the requirements of Section 300.8 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; or

(b) who has been diagnosed within the last three years by a licensed speech-language pathologist, psychiatrist, or medical, mental health, psychoeducational, or other comparable licensed health care provider as having a neurodevelopmental disorder, a substantial sensory or physical impairment such as deaf, blind, or orthopedic disability, or some other disability or acute or chronic condition that significantly impedes the student's ability to learn and succeed in school without specialized instructional and associated supports and services tailored to the child's unique needs.

(3) "Independent school" means a school, other than a public school, at which the compulsory attendance requirements of Section 59-65-10 may be met and that does not discriminate based on the grounds of race, color, religion, or national origin.

(4) "Parent" means the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of a child.

(5) "Qualifying student" means a student who is an exceptional needs child, a South Carolina resident, and who is eligible to be enrolled in a South Carolina secondary or elementary public school at the kindergarten or later year level for the applicable school year.

(6) "Resident public school district" means the public school district in which a student resides, or in the case of dependents of active military personnel, the public school district which the student may attend.

(7) "Transportation" means transportation to and from school only.

(8) "Tuition" means the total amount of money charged for the cost of a qualifying student to attend an independent school including, but not limited to, fees for attending the school, textbook fees, and school-related transportation.

(B)(1) There is created the "Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund" that is separate and distinct from the state general fund. The fund must be organized as a public charity as defined by the Internal Revenue Code under Section 509(a)(1) through (4) and consist only of contributions made to the fund. The fund may not receive an appropriation of public funds. The fund must receive and hold all contributions intended for it as well as all earnings until disbursed as provided in this section. Monies received in the fund must be used to provide scholarships to exceptional needs children attending eligible schools.

(2) The amounts on deposit in the fund do not constitute public funds and are not the property of the State. Amounts on deposit in the fund may not be commingled with public funds, and the State does not have a claim to or interest in the amounts on deposit. Agreements or contracts entered into by or on behalf of the fund do not constitute a debt or obligation of the State.

(3) The public charity disbursing contributions made to the fund is governed by five directors, two appointed by the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, two appointed by the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and one appointed by the Governor. The directors of the public charity shall designate an executive director of the public charity.

(4) The public charity directors shall administer the public charity including, but not limited to, the keeping of records, the management of accounts, and disbursement of the grants awarded pursuant to this section. The public charity may expend up to five percent of the fund for administration and related costs. The public charity may not expend public funds to administer the program. Information contained in or produced from a tax return, document, or magnetically or electronically stored data utilized by the Department of Revenue or the public charity in the exercise of its duties as provided in this section must remain confidential and is exempt from disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. Personally identifiable information, as described in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and individual health records, or the medical or wellness needs of children applying for or receiving grants must remain confidential and is not subject to disclosure pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

(5) By January fifteenth of each year, the public charity shall report to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and the Governor:

(a) the number and total amount of grants issued to eligible schools in each year;

(b) the identity of the school and the amount of the grant for each grant issued to an eligible school in each year;

(c) an itemized and detailed explanation of fees or other revenues obtained from or on behalf of an eligible school;

(d) a copy of a compilation, review, or audit of the fund's financial statements, conducted by a certified public accounting firm; and

(e) the criteria and eligibility requirements for scholarship awards.

(C)(1) Grants may be awarded in an amount not exceeding eleven thousand dollars or the total annual cost of tuition, whichever is less, to a qualifying student at an eligible school. A qualifying student receiving a grant may not be charged tuition by an eligible school in an amount greater than the student would be charged if the student was not a qualifying student.

(2) Before awarding a grant, the public charity shall 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 public charity shall 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.

(3) If a 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 shall return a prorated amount of the grant to the public charity 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.

(4) The public charity may not award grants only for the benefit of one school.

(5) The department or the public charity may not release personally identifiable information pertaining to students or donors or use information collected about donors, students, or schools for financial gain.

(6) The public charity shall develop a process to prioritize the awarding of grants to eligible incumbent grant recipients at eligible schools.

(D)(1)(a) Tax credits authorized by subsection (H)(1) and subsection (I) annually may not exceed cumulatively a total of twelve million dollars for contributions to the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund, unless an increased limit is authorized in the annual general appropriations act. However, the fund may carry forward up to five million dollars of donations into the next year to provide credits in the next year. This carryforward amount does not in any way increase the cumulative tax credit amount set forth in this item for any one year.

(b) Tax credits authorized pursuant to subsection (H)(2) annually may not exceed cumulatively a total of two million dollars for tuition payments made on behalf of qualifying students, unless an

increased limit is authorized in the annual general appropriations act. However, if less than the maximum cumulative total of tax credits allowed pursuant to subitem (a) are authorized, then, the maximum cumulative total of tax credits allowed pursuant to this subitem may be increased by up to three million dollars, but the cumulative total of all tax credits authorized pursuant to this section may not be increased as a result.

(c) If the department determines that the total of the credits claimed by all taxpayers exceeds either limit amount as contained in subitems (a) or (b), it shall allow credits only up to those amounts on a first come, first-served basis.

(2)(a) The department shall establish an application process to determine the amount of credit available to be claimed. The receipt of the application by the department determines priority for the credit. The credit must be claimed on the return for the tax year that the contribution is made.

(b) A taxpayer may not claim more than seventy-five percent of his total tax liability for the year in contribution toward the tax credit authorized by subsection (H)(1) or subsection (I). This credit is nonrefundable. Any unused credit may be carried forward three tax years after the tax year in which the qualified contribution is first eligible to be claimed.

(c) If a taxpayer deducts the amount of the contribution on his federal return and claims the credit allowed by subsection (H)(1) or subsection (I), then he must add back the amount of the deduction for purposes of South Carolina income taxes.

(d) The department shall prescribe the form and manner of proof required to obtain the credit authorized by subsection (H)(1) or subsection (I). The department also shall develop a method of informing taxpayers if the credit limit is met any time during the tax year.

(e) A taxpayer only may claim a credit pursuant to subsection (H)(1) and subsection (I) for contributions made during the tax year.

(3) A corporation or entity entitled to a credit under subsection (H)(1) and subsection (I) may not convey, assign, or transfer the credit authorized by this section to another entity unless all of the assets of the entity are conveyed, assigned, or transferred in the same transaction.

(E)(1) By March first of each year, an independent school who participated in the program in the previous year and who desires to participate in the program in the current year shall reapply to the Education Oversight Committee. The independent school shall certify to the Education Oversight Committee that it continues to meet all program requirements and shall provide to the committee student test score data from the previous school year by June thirtieth. If student test score data is not submitted by June thirtieth, then the Education Oversight Committee shall remove the school from the program. An independent school desiring to participate in the program for the first time also shall apply by March first of each year. The Education Oversight Committee shall consult with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, the South Carolina Independent Schools Association, the Palmetto Association of Independent Schools, or the Diocese of Charleston to verify that the school is still a member in good standing and that the school continues to serve exceptional needs children. An independent school who did not participate in the program in the previous year but desires to participate in the program in the current year shall apply to the Education Oversight Committee. The Education Oversight Committee shall develop an application to be completed by the independent schools which must contain at least:

- (a) the number and total amount of grants received in the preceding school year;
 - (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;
 - (c) a copy of a compilation, review, or compliance audit of the organization's financial statements as relating to the grants received, conducted by a certified public accounting firm; and
 - (d) a certification by the independent school that it meets the definition of an eligible school as that term is defined in subsection (A)(1) and that the report is true, accurate, and complete under penalty of perjury in accordance with Section 16-9-10.
- (2)(a) The Education Oversight Committee may waive the March first deadline contained in subsection (E) upon good cause shown by an independent school.
- (b) The Education Oversight Committee may waive some or all of the curriculum requirements contained in subsection (A)(1)(d) following consultation with the advisory committee.
- (3)(a) By March first of each year the Education Oversight Committee shall publish on its website a comprehensive list of independent schools certified as eligible institutions. The list must include for each eligible institution:
- (i) the institution's name, addresses, telephone numbers, and, if available, website addresses; and
 - (ii) the score reports and compliance audits received by the committee pursuant to subsection (E)(1)(b) and (c).
- (b) The Education Oversight Committee shall summarize or redact the score reports identified in subitem (a)(ii) if necessary to prevent the disclosure of personally identifiable information.
- (4) An independent school that does not apply for certification pursuant to this subsection may not be included on the list of eligible schools and contributions to that school may not be allowed for purposes of the tax credits permitted by this section.
- (5) An independent school that is denied certification pursuant to this section may seek review by filing a request for a contested case hearing with the Administrative Law Court in accordance with the court's rules of procedure.
- (6) Annually, the Education Oversight Committee shall 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.

(F)(1) The Education Oversight Committee shall establish an advisory committee made up of not more than nine members, including parents, and representatives of independent schools and independent school associations.

(2) The advisory committee shall:

(a) consult with the Education Oversight Committee concerning requests for exemptions from curriculum requirements; and

(b) provide recommendations on other matters requested by the Education Oversight Committee.

(G) Except as otherwise provided, the Department of Education, the Education Oversight Committee, and the Department of Revenue, or any other state agency may not regulate the educational program of an independent school that accepts students receiving scholarship grants pursuant to this section.

(H)(1) A taxpayer is entitled to a tax credit against income taxes imposed pursuant to this chapter for the amount of cash and the monetary value of any publicly traded securities the taxpayer contributes to the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund up to the limits contained in subsection (D)(1)(a) if:

(a) the contribution is used to provide grants for tuition to exceptional needs children enrolled in eligible schools who qualify for these grants under the provisions of this section; and

(b) the taxpayer does not designate a specific child or school as the beneficiary of the contribution.

(2)(a) A taxpayer is entitled to a refundable tax credit against income taxes imposed pursuant to this chapter for the amount of cash and the monetary value of any publicly traded securities, not exceeding eleven thousand dollars for each child, for tuition payments to an eligible school for an exceptional needs child within his custody or care who would be eligible for a grant pursuant to this section up to the limits contained in subsection (D)(1)(b).

(b) If a child within the care and custody of a taxpayer claiming a tax credit pursuant to this item also receives a grant from the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund, then the taxpayer only may claim a credit equal to the difference of eleven thousand dollars or the cost of tuition, whichever is lower, and the amount of the grant.

(c) A child within the care and custody of a taxpayer claiming a tax credit pursuant to this item may not be charged tuition by an eligible school in an amount greater than the student would be charged if the student was not a qualifying student.

(I) A taxpayer is entitled to a tax credit against income taxes imposed pursuant to Chapter 11, Title 12 for the amount of cash and the monetary value of any publicly traded securities the taxpayer contributes to the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children's Fund up to the limits contained in subsection (D)(1)(a) if:

(1) the contribution is used to provide grants for tuition to exceptional needs children enrolled in eligible schools who qualify for these grants under the provisions of this section; and

(2) the taxpayer does not designate a specific child or school as the beneficiary of the contribution.

(J)(1) The department shall conduct a comprehensive study of the Exceptional Needs Tax Credit program. The study must examine the following:

(a) the allocation of scholarship funds and tax credits among students, including the effect of funding limitations on the addition of new participants; the demographic and socio-economic data of the participants and their families, including the distribution of scholarship funds by income ranges, to be determined by the department, of scholarship recipients, and their legal guardians, as applicable; and the geographical distribution of the participants. In reporting the information required by this subitem, the department shall protect and may not display any personally identifiable information of scholarship recipients, their families or legal guardians, or taxpayers;

(b) the distribution of scholarship funds among all eligible schools; and

(c) any other aspect of the program that the department determines would be relevant and useful in making future policy decisions in regard to the program and its continued existence or expansion.

(2) The department shall submit a report of its study to the General Assembly no later than January fifteenth of each year.

HISTORY: 2018 Act No. 247 (H.4077), Section 1, eff May 18, 2018; 2021 Act No. 79 (H.3899), Sections 1 to 4, eff May 17, 2021.

Code Commissioner's Note

At the direction of the Code Commissioner, the amendments to (D)(1) made by 2021 Act No. 79, Sections 2.A and 4, were read together.

Editor's Note

2018 Act No. 247, Section 2, provides as follows:

"SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval of the Governor and applies to income tax years beginning after 2017. All tax credits earned as a result of a contribution made to the Educational Credit for the Exceptional Needs Children's Fund in 2018 apply to the cumulative total of twelve million dollars regardless of when in 2018 the contribution is made. All tax credits earned as a result of a tuition payment made by a taxpayer to an eligible school for an exceptional needs child within his custody or care in 2018 apply to the cumulative total of two million dollars regardless of when in 2018 the payment is made. All necessary reports and forms must be submitted as soon as practicable upon the enactment of this act."

Effect of Amendment

2021 Act No. 79, Section 1, in (B), in (3), in the second sentence, deleted ", along with the director of the department," following "public charity", in (4), in the first sentence, substituted "The public charity directors shall administer" for "In concert with the public charity directors, the department shall administer", in the second sentence, substituted "five percent" for "two percent", and in the third sentence, substituted "The public charity" for "The department and the public charity", and in (5), substituted "public charity" for "department".

2021 Act No. 79, Section 2.A, in (D)(1)(a), added the second and third sentences.

2021 Act No. 79, Section 2.B, in (D)(2)(b), in the first sentence, substituted "seventy-five percent" for "sixty percent", and added the third sentence.

2021 Act No. 79, Section 3, in (E)(1)(b), deleted the second, third, and fourth sentences, which related to schools providing individual student test scores on national achievement or state standardized tests.

2021 Act No. 79, Section 4, in (D)(1)(b), added the second sentence.

Time effective

SECTION 5. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

Ratified the 13th day of May, 2021.

Approved the 17th day of May, 2021.

Contact Information

For questions about the application process by which schools apply to participate in the ECENC program, please contact the Education Oversight Committee.

Phone: 803.734.6148

Mail: P.O. Box 11867
Columbia, S.C. 29211

Fax: 803.734.6167

Physical Location:
Edgar A. Brown Building
1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 502
Columbia, SC 29201

Website: <https://eoc.sc.gov/>

For questions about grants awarded to schools on behalf of eligible students attending eligible schools, please contact Exceptional SC.

Appendix D: 2023-2024 Study of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program Completed by the SC Department of Revenue:



2023-2024 STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL CREDIT FOR EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS CHILDREN PROGRAM

South Carolina Department of Revenue

300A Outlet Pointe Blvd | Columbia, SC 29210 | dor.sc.gov

January 15, 2025

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS	3
DONOR TAX CREDIT	4
PARENTAL TAX CREDIT	5
STUDENTS	6
SCHOOLS	7
GRANTS BY SCHOOL	8
DATA BY COUNTY	12
CONTACTS	13

INTRODUCTION

This study was prepared in accordance with Act 247 of 2018, as amended in 2021, regarding the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) program. The data and information in this study are from tax year 2023 and fiscal year 2024 (FY24) 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. The program was codified under Act 247 in 2018 and amended in 2021.



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

The SCDOR oversees the tax credit for Exceptional SC donors as well as the process for eligible parents to apply and receive the Parental Refundable Tax Credit. The SCDOR conducts a study of the ECENC program as prescribed in Act 247 of 2018, amended in 2021.



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 as relating to the grants received to maintain eligibility.



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 several criteria.

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS



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, and attend an EOC approved school. Per statute, scholarships are awarded to incumbents (students who have previously participated in the program) first and then to students who are new to the program.

\$6,202,243

total tax year 2023
donations

1,322

total scholarship
recipients (491 new
and 831 incumbents)

\$4,500

average incumbent
scholarship grant

\$4,500

average new student
scholarship grant

\$5,839,300

total amount of
scholarships
disbursed FY24

FY24 BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Edward Earwood

Executive Director, South Carolina
Association of Christian Schools

Mrs. Betsy Fanning

Head of School, Trident Academy

Dr. Randy Page

Chief of Staff, Bob Jones University

DONOR TAX CREDIT

Individuals and corporations who pay South Carolina taxes are eligible to donate to Exceptional SC's scholarship fund. Donations to Exceptional SC are claimed as state tax credits.



South Carolina individuals and businesses donate 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).

For tax year 2023, donors were:

- 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 75% 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

\$6,202,243
credits approved

\$44,620
average gift per
donor

139
total donors

Data provided by the SCDOR.

PARENTAL TAX CREDIT

Parents or guardians of exceptional needs students attending eligible schools can apply for a refundable tax credit (referred to as Parental Tax Credit or Parental Refundable Credit) toward their South Carolina income tax bill. This credit can only be claimed for actual out-of-pocket spending on tuition, up to \$11,000. There is a statewide cap of \$2 million, with a possibility to be raised to \$5 million. Credits are reserved on a first come, first served basis. For tax year 2023, the credit cap was \$5 million.



Parents make tuition payments to an eligible school for their exceptional needs child.



Parents apply to request the credit. Parents should keep documentation of the child's eligibility for their own records.



The SCDOR confirms the "reservation" of the credit, so long as the statewide cap has not been met.



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

\$8,464,692

total tax year 2023 credits applied for

997

applicants

575

recipients

\$8,696

average credit
per recipient

\$5 million credits approved

Data provided by the SCDOR.

STUDENTS

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

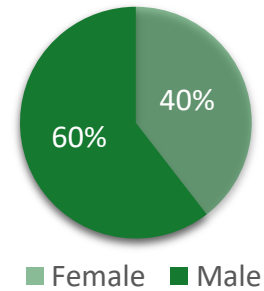
Applicants reported the information below.

PARENTAL TAX CREDIT RECIPIENTS

Data reported by applicants on credit application—not all applicants responded

Household Income Range	# of Recipients
\$0-50,000	16
\$50,001-100,000	78
\$100,001-150,000	117
\$150,001-200,000	107
\$200,001-250,000	79
\$250,001-300,000	37
\$300,001+	121

Age	# of Students
5-10	199
11-15	285
16+	91



\$6,979
average estimated additional expenses of caring for exceptional needs child

2
average number of children in the home

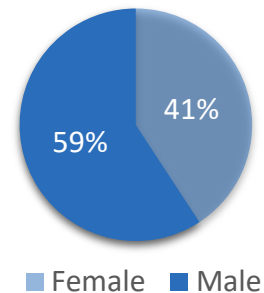
1
average number of exceptional needs children in the home

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

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

Household Income Range	# of Recipients
\$0-50,000	136
\$50,001-100,000	314
\$100,001-150,000	340
\$150,001-200,000	183
\$200,001-250,000	101
\$250,001-300,000	64
\$300,001+	183

Age	# of Students
5-10	368
11-15	634
16+	320



\$6,400
average estimated additional expenses of caring for exceptional needs child

2
average number of children in the home

1
average number of exceptional needs children in the home

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).

To receive an Exceptional SC scholarship grant for an exceptional needs student, the school must:

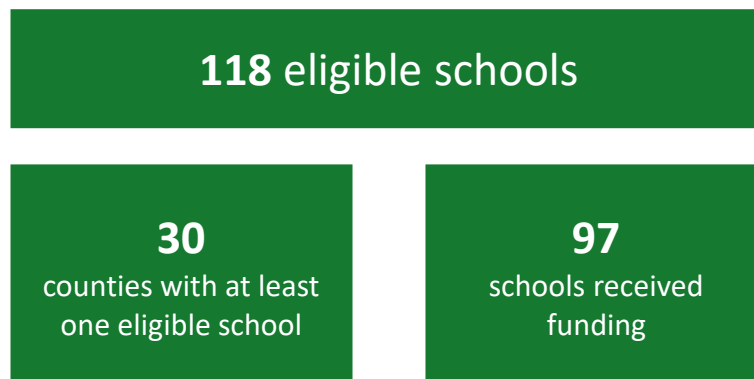
- Be a private primary or secondary school physically located within South Carolina;
- Not discriminate on basis of race, color, or national origin in their admission of students;
- Use a curriculum which includes courses listed in state diploma requirements;
- Use national or state standardized testing 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;
- 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:

- An Application to Participate which includes standards the school has met or intends to meet and reporting requirements in compliance with state law,
- Assessment score data from the previous school year,
- A Statement of Services with information on the services and/or resources exceptional needs students receive and what needs those services are geared toward,
- The number of grants and funding received in the previous school year,
- A copy of an audit of the organization's financial statements relating to the grants received.

School eligibility for participation occurs during the school year. The information provided by the EOC to the SCDOR is based on the fiscal year.



Data provided by the EOC and Exceptional SC.

GRANTS BY SCHOOL

The EOC approved 118 schools to participate in the FY24 ECENC program. The following 97 schools received funding from Exceptional SC grants issued for scholarship recipients.

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL	NUMBER OF GRANTS	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
All Saints Episcopal Day School	<10	\$14,500
Anderson Christian School	<10	\$16,500
Ashley Hall	<10	\$56,700
Beaufort Academy	<10	\$7,800
Ben Lippen School	19	\$79,500
Bishop England High School	33	\$145,200
Blessed Sacrament School	<10	\$15,300
Bob Jones Academy	31	\$62,000
Calhoun Academy	<10	\$6,500
Calvary Christian School—Greer	<10	\$8,600
Camden Military Academy	<10	\$38,000
Camperdown Academy	146	\$989,600
Cardinal Newman School	39	\$178,600
Carolina Christian Academy	<10	\$1,100
Chabad Jewish Academy	<10	\$6,600
Charleston Collegiate School	13	\$60,000
Charleston Day School	<10	\$14,800
Christ Church Episcopal School	72	\$391,400
Christ Our King-Stella Maris Catholic School	28	\$62,000
Christian Hope Academy	<10	\$2,600
Clarendon Hall School	<10	\$2,400
Coastal Christian Preparatory School	<10	\$7,300
Colleton Preparatory School	19	\$57,000
Cross Schools	<10	\$3,400
Crown Leadership Academy	12	\$28,100
Cutler Jewish Day School	<10	\$2,600

GRANTS BY SCHOOL

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL	NUMBER OF GRANTS	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
Divine Redeemer Catholic School	<10	\$8,200
Dorchester Academy	<10	\$16,800
Einstein Academy	<10	\$16,200
First Presbyterian Academy	22	\$73,444
Five Oaks Academy	<10	\$3,300
Glenforest School	44	\$217,800
Grace Christian School	<10	\$34,000
Hammond School	<10	\$50,300
Hampton Park Christian School	16	\$32,800
Heathwood Hall Episcopal School	25	\$142,600
Hidden Treasure Christian School	38	\$224,200
Hilton Head Christian Academy	11	\$53,300
Hilton Head Preparatory School	<10	\$3,200
HOPE Academy	42	\$134,400
Hope Christian Academy	<10	\$31,500
James Island Christian School	<10	\$7,900
John Paul II Catholic School	10	\$41,000
Mason Preparatory School	<10	\$35,400
Mead Hall Episcopal School	<10	\$6,900
Miracle Academy Preparatory School	<10	\$13,200
Mitchell Road Christian Academy	24	\$77,100
Nativity Catholic School	<10	\$8,300
Northside Christian Academy	12	\$23,300
Oakbrook Preparatory School	10	\$34,700
Oconee Christian School	<10	\$9,400
Orangeburg Preparatory School	<10	\$6,000
Our Lady of Peace Catholic School	17	\$30,600
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School	11	\$35,000

GRANTS BY SCHOOL

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL	NUMBER OF GRANTS	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
Palmetto Christian - Greenwood	<10	\$7,200
Palmetto Christian Academy Mt. Pleasant	23	\$75,900
Patrick Henry Academy	22	\$28,600
Pee Dee Academy	<10	\$34,000
Porter-Gaud School	<10	\$56,137
Prince of Peace Catholic School	<10	\$14,500
Providence Classical School of Rock Hill	<10	\$15,700
Sandhills School	72	\$498,800
Southside Christian School	60	\$232,228
Spartanburg Christian Academy	<10	\$2,000
Spartanburg Day School	19	\$126,400
St. Andrew Catholic School	<10	\$12,400
St. Anne Catholic School - Rock Hill	<10	\$9,800
St. Anthony Catholic School - Florence	<10	\$8,000
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School	<10	\$9,900
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic High	<10	\$5,000
St. Francis by the Sea Catholic School	<10	\$14,400
St. Gregory the Great Catholic School	<10	\$7,100
St. John's Christian Academy	10	\$15,987
St. John Catholic School - Charleston	14	\$42,000
St. John Neuman Catholic School	<10	\$19,800
St. Joseph Catholic School - Anderson	<10	\$6,500
St. Joseph Catholic School - Columbia	15	\$36,500
St. Joseph Catholic School - Greenville	20	\$89,350
St. Michael Catholic School	<10	\$5,400
St. Peter's Catholic School - Beaufort	<10	\$3,700
Step of Faith Christian Academy	<10	\$1,300
Sumter Christian School	<10	\$7,200

GRANTS BY SCHOOL

ELIGIBLE SCHOOL	NUMBER OF GRANTS	VALUE OF GRANTS ISSUED
Temple Christian High School	<10	\$3,600
The Chandler School	50	\$296,900
The Charleston Catholic School	<10	\$27,000
The Complete Student	16	\$29,600
The Cooper School	<10	\$20,100
The King's Academy	17	\$60,000
Thomas Hart Academy	<10	\$14,500
Thomas Heyward Academy	<10	\$15,300
Thomas Sumter Academy	<10	\$9,400
Timmerman School	<10	\$13,800
Trident Academy	44	\$357,800
Westgate Christian School	<10	\$1,400
Westminister Catawba Christian School	19	\$73,060

Data provided by Exceptional SC.

DATA BY COUNTY

The chart below provides the number of eligible schools, Exceptional SC scholarship recipients, and Parental Tax Credit recipients by county. For FY24, 16 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	0	0	0
Aiken	0	<10	3
Allendale	0	0	0
Anderson	26	<10	5
Bamberg	0	0	0
Barnwell	0	0	0
Beaufort	33	<10	8
Berkeley	61	<10	4
Calhoun	12	0	1
Charleston	359	20	18
Cherokee	0	0	0
Chester	<10	0	1
Chesterfield	0	0	0
Clarendon	<10	0	2
Colleton	28	<10	1
Darlington	<10	0	1
Dillon	0	0	0
Dorchester	10	<10	2
Edgefield	0	0	0
Fairfield	0	0	0
Florence	27	0	4
Georgetown	0	<10	1
Greenville	333	128	19

SC County	# of Grant Recipients	# of Credit Recipients	# of Eligible Schools
Greenwood	0	0	1
Hampton	21	0	1
Horry	20	0	7
Jasper	10	0	3
Kershaw	<10	<10	1
Lancaster	<10	0	2
Laurens	0	0	0
Lee	0	0	0
Lexington	11	10	3
Marion	<10	<10	1
Marlboro	0	0	0
McCormick	0	0	0
Newberry	<10	0	1
Oconee	<10	0	2
Orangeburg	<10	0	1
Pickens	<10	<10	1
Richland	199	39	13
Saluda	0	0	0
Spartanburg	72	12	5
Sumter	11	0	3
Union	0	0	0
Williamsburg	0	0	0
York	37	<10	3

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

CONTACTS

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EXCEPTIONAL SC

Edward Earwood

Chairman of the Board
843-513-5010
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Glenforest School	K-12	Fast Bridge	10-11	PSAT	11-12	ACT	11-12	SAT	K-8	SRA Mastery		
Greenville Classical Academy	3-9	Iowa Assessment	10-11	PSAT	10	Classical Learning Test	11-12	CLT				
Hammond School	3-8	ERB's CTP	9-11	PSAT	12	SAT						
Hampton Park Christian School	K5-12	Iowa Assessment										
Harvest Community School	3-11	Iowa Assessment										
Hawthorne Christian Academy	K-12	Iowa Assessment	9-11	PSAT	10-12	SAT						
Heathwood Hall Episcopal School	2-8	ERB's CTP	9-11	PSAT	11	SAT	11	ACT				
Hidden Treasure Christian School	K-12	Woodcock-Johnson IV										
Hilton Head Christian Academy	K-9	MAP	8-9	PSAT 8/9	8-11	PSAT/NMSQT	12	SAT		AP		

Miracle Academy Preparatory School	K5-7	Stanford 10										
Mitchell Road Christian Academy	K-8	MAP/Growth										
Montessori School of Anderson	2-9	MAP	4-8	Stanford 10	10-12	ACT	8-11	PSAT	12	SAT		
Montessori School of Florence	5K-1	MAP Growth	2-6	MAP (Language)								
Nativity Catholic School	K-8	MAP										
Newberry Academy	K5	CogAT	1-8	Iowa Assessment	8-10	PSAT	11-12	SAT				
Northside Christian Academy	K-12	Iowa	11-12	SAT								
Oakbrook Preparatory School	3-8	ERB CTP	8-11	PSAT	8-12	AP	8-12	SAT	8-12	ACT		
Oconee Christian Academy	K-11	Iowa Assessment	8-9	PSAT 8/9	8-9	PreACT 8/9						

Orangeburg Preparatory Schools, Inc.	3-9	MAP	10-11	PSAT								
Our Lady of Peace Catholic School	K-8	MAP										
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic School	K-11	MAP	7-11	PSAT	12	SAT	11-12	ACT				
Palmetto Christian Academy of Greenwood (PCAG)	K5-8	Iowa/CogAT	8-10	PSAT	11	PSAT/NMSQT	12	SAT				
Palmetto Christian Academy-Mt. Pleasant	K-7	MAP	8-9	PSAT	10-11	PSAT/NMSQT						
Patrick Henry Academy	2-7	ERB-CTP 5	8-11	PSAT	10-12	SAT	10-12	ACT				
Pee Dee Academy	1-11	MAP	11-12	SAT	8-11	PSAT						
Porter-Gaud School	3-8	ERB-CTP 5	9	PSAT 9	10	PreACT	11	PSAT/NMSQT	12	SAT/ACT		

Prince of Peace Catholic School	K-8	MAP										
Providence Classical School of Rock Hill	K-8	Iowa Assessment	7-11	PSAT 10	11-12	SAT						
Red Rose City Academy												
Ridge Christian Academy												
Riverpointe Christian Academy												
Sandhills School	1-8	Woodcock-Johnson IV	9-12	PACT								
Southside Christian School	K-8	MAP	9	PreACT	10-11	PSAT						
Spartanburg Christian Academy	K-8	Stanford 10	9	PreACT	10-11	PSAT 10/11						
Spartanburg Day School	1-4	MAP	3-7	ERB	8-9	PSAT 8/9	10-11	PSAT/NMSQT	12	SAT		

Temple Christian Academy												
Temple Christian High School	6-7, 9-10, 12	Iowa Assessment										
The Chandler School	K-8	Stanford 10	1, 3, 5, 7	OLSAT	3, 7, 8	Stanford 10						
The Charleston Catholic School	K-8	MAP										
The Complete Student	5-9	Wilson Reading Assessment	10-12	ACT								
The Cooper School	3-8	ERB's CTP5										
The King's Academy	2-8	Iowa Flex	9-11	PSAT	12	SAT	12	ACT				
The Timmerman School	1-8	Stanford 10										
Thomas Hart Academy	1-8	Iowa										
Thomas Heyward Academy	3-7	IOWA TBS	3, 5, 7	OLSAT	10	PSAT/NMSQT	11	SAT				

Thomas Sumter Academy, Inc.	1-8	Terra Nova	9-11	PSAT	11-12	SAT							
Trident Academy	3-12	Gates MacGinitie	3-12	WRAT									
Trinity Christian Educational School	K-12	Stanford 10											
Valorous Academy	K-12	Iowa Form E Core											
Victory Bible Christian School													
Westgate Christian School	K5-11	Iowa Assessment											
Westminster Catawba Christian School	3-8	Iowa	9	PSAT 8/9	10-11	PSAT/NMSQT	12	SAT					

Appendix F

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program
2025-26

Independent School Name: Camperdown Academy

School-level Assessment Results

Grade	English Language Arts (Reading)	Mathematics
1 st	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE*
2 nd	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
3 rd	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
4 th	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
5 th	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
6 th	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
7 ^{th**}	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE
8 th	Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests	GMADE


*Group Mathematics Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation (GMADE)

**Each grade level, except 7th grade, had more than 10 students.

Staff Person Responsible for Assessment Information

Name Suzanna Greer
Title Head of Orton-Gillingham Training and Instruction
Phone 864-244-8899
Email sgreer@camperdown.org

Individual Submitting School-level Assessment Information

Signature 
Date August 13, 2025
Printed Name Dan Blanch
Title Head of School
Email dblanch@camperdown.org

Camperdown Academy
Assessment Results for Spring 2025

Reading Scores
Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Scaled Score	Normal Curve Equivalent of Mean Scaled Score	Percentile Rank of Mean Scaled Score
1st	10	365	42	35
2nd	21*	406	36	26
3rd	27	451	41	33
4th	38	475	38	28
5th	32	495	38	28
6th	23	504	36	25
7th	Fewer than 10 students were enrolled			
8th	15	541	52	54

* One student was absent for this test and its make up dates.

Math Scores
GMADE

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Standard Score	Normal Curve Equivalent of Mean Standard Score	Percentile Rank of Mean Standard Score
1st	Fewer than 10 students took the GMADE			
2nd	22	97	46	42
3rd	27	105	57	63
4th	38	105	57	63
5th	32	96	44	39
6th	23	93	40	32
7th	Fewer than 10 students were enrolled			
8th	15	93	40	32

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: Glenforest School

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the **NAME** of each national achievement test that was administered and the **grade** in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
K-12	FastBridge	FastBridge	
10-11	PSAT	PSAT	
11-12	SAT, ACT	SAT, ACT	
K-8	SRA Mastery	SRA Mastery	
K-3	Brigance	Brigance	

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: Heather Miller

Date: 8/15/25

Print Name of Signature Above: Heather Miller

Title: Head of School

Email: hmiller@glenforest.org



August 15, 2025

To ExceptionalSC and the SC Education Oversight Committee,

Glenforest School had the enrollment of 64 students for the 2025-2026 school year. In our K-12 program, we had no grade level with more than 10 students. Glenforest School currently provides FastBridge Benchmark and Progress Monitoring for math, reading and social/emotional growth. Students in our GROW program who are non-verbal are given Norm-Referenced SRA Mastery Test along with documentation and other evaluations through our contractual Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and ABA Therapy treatment plans for academic, behavior, social, and language growth. This year we are also adding the BRIGANCE assessment tool for our K-3 grade students.

Sincerely,

Heather Miller
Head of School
Glenforest School
hmillerglenforest.org
803-796-7622

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: Hidden Treasure Christian School

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the NAME of each national achievement test that was administered and the grade in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
K-12	Woodcock-Johnson IV	Woodcock-Johnson IV	Woodcock-Johnson IV
	<i>(Achievement, Cognitive, and Oral Language)</i>	<i>(Achievement, Cognitive, and Oral Language)</i>	<i>(Achievement, Cognitive, and Oral Language)</i>

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: Curtis Tomlin

Date: 8/6/25

Print Name of Signature Above: Mr. Curtis Tomlin

Title: Administrator

Email: Ctomlin@hiddentreasure.org

HIDDEN TREASURE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, TAYLORS SC - RECIPIENTS OF EXCEPTIONALSC FOR 2024-25
2024-25 School Results for Woodcock/Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery IV
Results Taken From the Achievement Section of the WCJIV
Grade Equivalents Being Used

	GRADE (HTCS IS PERFORMANCE BASED--NOT GRADE PLACEMENT)	BASIC READING SKILLS GE	BROAD WRITTEN LANGUAGE GE	BROAD MATHEMATICS GE
1		>17.9	>17.9	>17.9
2		5.8	4	3.4
3		6.4	6.8	8.5
4		5.8	4.9	4.4
5		9.2	6.5	8.4
6		13	>17.9	9.5
7		6.6	8.5	5.4
8		3.6	3.2	4.2
9		3.4	2.1	5.4
10		1.5	2.8	2.1
11		2.4	4.3	5.8
12		6.2	6.8	8.5
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: Hope Christian Academy

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the **NAME** of each national achievement test that was administered and the **grade** in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
6 th	Woodcock Johnson IV	Woodcock J. IV	
7 th	"	"	
10 th	"	"	
11 th	"	"	
12 th	"	"	

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: Car Dodd

Date: 8-18-25

Print Name of Signature Above: Caroline Dodd

Title: Director

Email: carolinesdodd@hotmail.com

HCA

HOPE CHRISTIAN
ACADEMY

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Director

Mrs. Caroline Dodd

Educational Consultant

Ms. Jill Sinclair, M. Ed.

Phone:
803-318-6357
803-351-2168
803-790-4028

Mailing Address:
545 Alexander Cir.
Columbia, SC, 29206

Location:
Grace Christian School
416 Denham Ave.
West Columbia, SC 29169
Web: www.hcatoday.org

School-level Assessment Results Hope Christian Academy 2024-2025

Hope Christian Academy specifically exists to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities. We document students' academic and social development by administering the Woodcock-Johnson IV each year. For the 2024-2025 school year no grade tested had 10 or more students. We did not have 10 students in any given grade level. We only had 11 students total in our school.

Hope Christian Academy will not be providing the SC Education Oversight Committee with any information that may be personally identifiable as described in Act 247 of 2018 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Caroline Dodd
Director
Hope Christian Academy
carolinesdodd@hotmail.com

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: Sandhills School

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the NAME of each national achievement test that was administered and the grade in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
1-8	Woodcock Johnson	_____ 7	
9-12	PACT	_____ 7	

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: Desirae Holman
Date: 8/21/25
Print Name of Signature Above: Desirae Holman
Title: Executive Assistant
Email: desirae.holman@Sandhills.School

Sandhills School Assessment Data 2025		
Grade-Level	Test Administered	Data Attached (>10 students)
1	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	WCJ IV, Achievement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Pre-Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Pre-Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Pre-Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	ACT	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4th Grade
Woodcock Johnson IV, Achievement Results, 2025**

English A) Letter-Word Identification		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
2	74	4
3.4	91	27
4.1	96	40
4.3	98	44
6.1	109	72
4.3	98	44
3.2	89	23
4.6	100	49
1.9	72	3
6.6	110	75
1.9	72	3
2.6	82	12
4.1	96	40
2.1	76	5
3.7	90	32

English B) Spelling		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
2.4	79	9
2.9	85	16
2.7	83	13
2.5	81	11
4.0	94	35
2.0	75	5
2.5	81	11
4.2	96	40
1.8	73	3
3.5	90	25
2.7	83	13
2.9	85	16
3.5	91	27

1.2	62	1
2.8	83	16

English C) Passage Comprehension		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
3.3	91	28
4.5	99	47
4.0	96	41
6.3	108	70
7.8	114	83
3.3	91	28
2.9	89	23
5.7	105	63
2.4	81	10
3.6	93	33
2.4	81	10
2.9	89	23
2.7	86	18
3.3	91	28
3.9	94	36

English D) Writing Samples		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
4.2	98	45
6.4	107	67
5.8	104	61
7.1	109	72
7.9	111	78
3.5	94	35
3.2	92	31
4.7	100	50
5.8	104	61
7.9	111	7
6.4	107	67

5.8	104	61
6.4	107	67
3.2	92	31
5.6	103	52

English E) Word Attack		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
3.2	93	31
4.1	98	44
4.9	101	52
4.9	101	52
3.6	95	37
6.7	107	69
4.9	101	52
14	123	94
3.6	95	37
14	123	93
4.1	98	44
5.7	104	61
6.7	107	69
3.6	95	37
6.0	103	55

Math A) Applied Problems		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
6.0	108	70
3.3	88	21
2.6	79	8
10.0	120	91
10.0	120	91
3.9	94	34
4.2	97	41
2.8	82	11
2.3	75	5

6.0	107	69
4.6	99	48
5.0	102	56
2.0	72	3
3.1	85	16
4.7	95	40

Math B) Calculation		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
5.0	102	56
5.3	106	64
5.0	102	56
8.4	124	95
6.6	115	84
4.6	99	49
5.7	109	72
5.7	109	72
4.3	97	42
5.7	108	70
6.2	112	78
6.2	112	78
4.3	97	42
5.0	102	56
5.6	107	65

**5th Grade
Woodcock Johnson IV, Achievement Results, 2025**

English A) Letter-Word Identification		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
7.1	107	67
3.4	84	15
2.2	69	2
3.2	82	12
6.1	102	56
1.5	56	0.2
8.3	111	78
3.2	83	13
8.9	114	83
3.2	83	13
2.6	76	5
7.1	1047	67
4.7	168	34

English B) Spelling		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
4.6	93	32
2.7	76	5
2.9	78	7
2.9	78	7
3.5	84	14
2.5	74	4
4.6	93	32
4.0	88	21
5.1	97	42
1.7	63	1
2.7	77	6
4.2	89	23
3.5	83	16

English C) Passage Comprehension		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
5.7	100	49
2.7	79	8
5.1	97	41
3.6	88	21
5.7	100	49
2.9	82	12
11.3	119	89
4.0	91	28
12.9	122	93
2.5	77	6
4.0	91	28
5.1	97	41
5.5	95	39

English D) Writing Samples		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
7.9	107	69
3.8	92	30
4.7	96	40
3.8	92	30
6.4	103	57
3.8	92	30
8.8	110	75
7.1	105	64
5.2	99	46
3.2	88	22
5.8	101	52
7.9	107	69
5.7	99	49

English E) Word Attack

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
6.7	104	59
2.3	81	10
2.3	81	10
2.5	84	14
6.7	104	59
2.1	78	8
4.1	95	36
10.2	111	77
10.2	111	77
3.2	88	22
5.7	101	51
10.2	111	77
5.5	96	42

Math A) Applied Problems

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
8.7	111	76
3.3	82	12
10.0	114	82
5.5	99	47
3.9	88	21
2.6	73	3
6.0	102	56
>17.9	127	96
2.8	76	6
2.8	76	6
8.7	111	77
11.4	117	87
6.0	98	47

Math B) Calculation

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
6.6	107	67

5.7	100	51
7.1	110	74
5.0	95	36
7.1	110	74
5.0	95	36
8.4	117	87
6.6	107	69
6.2	104	61
6.2	104	61
6.6	107	69
8.4	116	86
6.6	106	64

**6th Grade
Woodcock Johnson IV, Achievement Results, 2025**

English A) Letter-Word Identification		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
3.2	77	6
5.7	96	38
6.6	100	50
3.8	82	12
7.1	102	56
5.3	93	32
4.9	96	41
5.3	93	32
8.9	108	71
6.1	97	43
13	117	88
7.7	104	60
6.6	99	49
12.2	115	84
7.7	104	60
5.3	93	32
6.8	99	47

English B) Spelling		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
2.7	71	3
3.5	79	8
4.4	86	18
4.9	89	24
4.0	82	12
4.0	82	11
5.7	101	52
4.4	86	17
4.6	88	20
3.7	80	9
12.8	115	84
5.1	91	28

5.4	93	33
4.9	89	24
5.7	95	37
4.4	86	17
5.0	88	25

English C) Passage Comprehension

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
6.3	99	46
8.8	108	70
6.3	99	46
4.5	89	23
7.0	102	55
12.9	117	87
7.0	106	67
10.0	111	76
11.3	114	82
7.8	104	62
12.9	117	87
8.8	108	69
7.0	101	54
11.3	114	82
12.9	117	87
10.0	111	76
9.1	107	67

English D) Writing Samples

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
8.8	107	68
7.9	104	61
8.8	107	68
10.6	110	74
5.8	97	42
8.8	107	67
10.6	114	82
7.9	104	60

7.9	104	60
3.8	88	22
6.4	99	47
6.4	99	47
5.2	95	36
7.9	104	60
6.4	99	47
4.7	92	31
7.4	102	55

English E) Word Attack		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
5.7	97	43
5.7	97	43
3.6	89	23
4.1	91	28
8.1	104	61
3.6	89	23
3.6	92	30
3.6	89	23
3.6	89	23
6.7	100	50
6.7	100	50
10.2	107	69
14	116	85
13	111	78
6.7	100	50
13	111	78
7.0	99	47

Math A) Applied Problems		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
4.2	87	19
11.4	112	79
2.8	72	3
2.8	72	3

6.7	100	51
3.6	81	10
5.5	99	48
7.6	103	57
6.7	100	50
6.0	97	43
10.0	109	72
6.0	97	43
13.0	118	88
10.0	109	72
7.6	103	57
11.4	112	78
7.2	98	48

Math B) Calculation		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
5.3	92	30
6.6	100	50
4.3	84	14
5.7	94	35
5.3	97	42
7.7	106	65
5.3	98	45
9.3	112	79
7.1	103	57
5.3	91	29
6.2	97	42
5.0	89	23
8.4	109	72
9.3	112	79
8.4	109	72
6.6	100	49
6.6	100	49

**8th Grade
Woodcock Johnson IV, Achievement Results, 2025**

English A) Letter-Word Identification

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
9.7	103	57
7.7	97	41
7.7	97	41
5.3	86	18
16.9	116	86
3.4	71	3
3.8	75	5
7.1	94	35
6.1	90	25
8.3	99	46
7.1	95	37
9.7	103	58
10.6	105	63
9.7	103	58
12.2	107	68
7.1	95	36
8.3	96	42

English B) Spelling

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
5.7	89	23
5.1	85	16
5.1	85	16
3.3	70	2
>17.9	117	87
3.5	72	3
3.7	73	4
4.9	83	13
7.5	97	41
6.5	93	31

9.3	102	54
7.8	98	44
8.5	100	49
5.9	91	28
7.8	97	43
7.2	95	38
7.8	97	43
7.8	97	43
>17.9	117	88
>17.9	112	79
13.0	108	69
13.0	106	64
10.6	104	59
10.6	104	59
9.4	102	55

English E) Word Attack		
Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
14.0	110	75
4.9	90	25
4.9	90	25
5.7	93	31
10.2	102	56
6.7	96	39
8.1	99	47
5.7	92	31
5.7	92	31
13.0	106	66
13.0	106	67
5.7	93	31
>17.9	121	92
>17.9	115	84
8.1	99	47
13.0	106	66

8.5	101	51

Math A) Applied Problems

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
<17.9	113	84
3.6	76	6
3.6	76	6
6.7	95	37
3.9	79	8
13.0	111	76
7.6	97	43
4.6	84	15
3.9	79	8
6.7	95	36
13.0	108	71
6.7	95	37
>17.9	116	86
13.0	108	71
6.0	92	31
8.7	100	51
7.2	95	42

Math B) Calculation

Grade-Equivalent	Scaled Score	Percentile
13.0	108	64
6.6	92	30
6.6	92	30
5.7	87	20
9.3	102	56
13.0	111	77
7.1	94	35
5.3	84	15
5.7	87	19

13.0	108	70
10.9	106	65
13.0	108	71
>14.8	120	90
8.4	99	48
4.6	80	9
7.7	97	42
8.7	98	46



August 19, 2025

For the 24-25 school year, the following standardized tests were administered:

- Stanford 10 – K-8
- OLSAT – 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th graders

*We are reporting the mean reading and math scores from the Stanford 10 for our 2nd grade because they are the only group with 10 or more students.

Stanford 10 Mean Results		
	Total Reading Mean National (NCE)	Total Math Mean National (NCE)
2nd grade	22.38	29.48

Please let us know if you have any questions regarding this information.

Sincerely,

Dana K. Blackhurst
Head of School

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: Trailhead Community Farm School

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

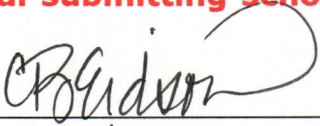
In the chart below, please list the NAME of each national achievement test that was administered and the grade in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development. MAP testing completed.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
5th	MAP	MAP	N/A
6th	MAP	MAP	↓
7th	MAP	MAP	
8th	MAP	MAP	
9th	MAP	MAP	

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: 

Date: 9/1/25

Print Name of Signature Above: Courtney Eidson

Title: Executive Director

Email: Courtney@trailheadcfs.org



September 2, 2025

Hope Johnson-Jones
Administrative Coordinator
SC Education Oversight Committee
hjones@eoc.sc.gov

Dear Ms. Johnson-Jones,

I will not be providing SC Education Oversight Committee with School-Level Assessment Data from MAP-tested students in grades 5th -9th in ELA/Reading and Mathematics because each grade assessed had less than 10 students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CB Eidson".

Courtney B. Eidson, Executive Director

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 801, Travelers Rest, SC 29690
Physical Address: 4003 Old Buncombe Rd. , Greenville, SC 29617
(864) 608-2796

Document C
Assessment Data

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program

2025-26

Independent School Name: **Trident Academy**

A school applying for participation in the ECENC Program must provide directly to the EOC by **September 1** the following:

School-level Assessment Results

In the chart below, please list the NAME of each national achievement test that was administered and the grade in which the test is administered for the prior school year. Examples include: *TerraNova, Stanford 10, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc.*

For schools that specifically exist to meet the needs of only exceptional needs students with documented disabilities, please document how the school documents students' academic and social development.

Grade	English language arts (Reading)	Mathematics	Other
4-12	Gates Magintie Reading		
3-12		WRAT	

For each national assessment listed above and for each grade with at least 10 students tested, please attach the results from the prior school year. The manual provides a template for schools to use in reporting mean scale scores, national percentile rankings, etc.

The individual submitting school-level assessment information must sign below.

Signature: 

Date: August 25, 2025

Print Name of Signature Above: Betsy A. Fanning

Title: Head of School

Email: bfanning@tridentacademy.com

Document C
Assessment Data
Trident Academy
2024-25 SY

Trident Academy will comply with the ECENC Reporting Requirement to the EOC for School Assessment Data for grade 5, our only grade with over 10 students. See page 2 with the summary scores for our 5th grade.

Trident Academy used several nationally normed assessments to monitor progress in ELA (Reading) and mathematics for SY 2024-25.

MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENTS:

During the 2024-2025 school year, our students' WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test) Math average test scores increased by 3% over the course of the year.

ELA ASSESSMENT:

During the 2024-2025 school year, our students' Gates-MacGinitie Vocabulary average test scores increased by 17% over the course of the year.

During the 2024-2025 school year, our students' Gates-MacGinitie Comprehension average test scores increased by 9% over the course of the year.

During the 2024-2025 school year, our students' Gates-MacGinitie Total average test scores increased by 13% over the course of the year.

Trident Academy
 Grade Level Testing Summary
 2024-2025 SY

FIFTH GRADE	MEAN STANINE	MEAN %ILE	MEAN GSV
NAME OF TEST	PRE/POST	PRE/POST	PRE/POST
Gates MacGinitie Vocabulary	3/2	22/11	
Gates MacGinitie Comprehension	3/3	20/19	
Gates MacGinitie Total	3/3	18/12	
Wide Range Achievement Math WRAT		22/29	491/498

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: April 13, 2026

ACTION ITEM:

Evaluation of SC READY Science, Grades 4 and 6

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

§SECTION 59-18-320 Review of field test; general administration of test; accommodations for students with disabilities; adoption of new standards.

(A) After the first statewide field test of the assessment program in each of the four academic areas, and after the field tests of the end of course assessments of high school credit courses, the Education Oversight Committee, established in Section 59-6-10, will review the state assessment program and the course assessments for alignment with the state standards, level of difficulty and validity, and for the ability to differentiate levels of achievement, and will make recommendations for needed changes, if any. The review will be provided to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee as soon as feasible after the field tests. The Department of Education will then report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than one month after receiving the reports on the changes made to the assessments to comply with the recommendations.

(B) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, and pursuant to Section 59-18-325, the standards-based assessment of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science will be administered for accountability purposes to all public school students in grades three through eight, to include those students as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. To reduce the number of days of testing, to the extent possible, field test items must be embedded with the annual assessments. To ensure that school districts maintain the high standard of accountability established in the Education Accountability Act, performance level results reported on school and district report cards must meet consistently high levels in all four core content areas. For students with documented disabilities, the assessments developed by the Department of Education shall include the appropriate modifications and accommodations with necessary supplemental devices as outlined in a student's Individualized Education Program and as stated in the Administrative Guidelines and Procedures for Testing Students with Documented Disabilities.

(C) After review and approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the end of course assessments of high school credit courses will be administered to all public school students as they complete each course.

(D) Any new standards and assessments required to be developed and adopted by the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education for use as an accountability measure, must be developed and adopted upon the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.

§SECTION 59-18-355. Content standards revisions; required approval.

(A)(1) A revision to a state content standard recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), as well as a new standard or a change in a current standard that the State Board of Education otherwise considers for approval as an accountability measure, may not be adopted and implemented without the:

(a) advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee; and

(b) approval by a Joint Resolution of the General Assembly.

(2) General Assembly approval required by item (1)(b) does not apply to a revision recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), other approval of a new standard, and other changes to an old standard if the revision, new standard, or changed standard is developed by the State Department of Education.

(B) A revision to an assessment recommended pursuant to Section 59-18-350(A), as well as a new assessment or a change in a current assessment that the State Board of Education otherwise considers for approval as an accountability measure, may not be adopted and implemented without the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.

CRITICAL FACTS

Changes in the 2021 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards from the 2014 science standards required revisions to the SC READY Science assessment. South Carolina was granted a waiver by the US Department of Education (USDE) for the requirement to include the SC READY Science test in accountability ratings for Elementary and Middle Schools in 2024. While students were tested in Science during SY 2023-24, results were not included in accountability results. School Report cards published in 2025 did include SC READY Science results from the 2024-25 SY.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

- **March 16, 2026** ASA subcommittee approval of UGA review of SC READY Science test
- **April 13, 2026:** anticipated EOC approval of UGA review of SC READY Science assessment; review to be provided to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: \$21,790.92 (includes review of multiple assessments by University of GA K-12 Assessment Solutions)

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN BY SUBCOMMITTEE

Approved
 Not Approved

Amended
 Action deferred (explain)



Mary Frances Early College of Education

K-12 Assessment Solutions

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) Program

Evaluation of Science Grades 4 and 6

Spring 2024-2025 Test Data

Gwinnett Campus:
2530 Sever Road
Suite 149
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

Contact Us:
Toll free: (888) 392-8977
Web: <https://coe.uga.edu/directory/k-12-assessment-solutions>



Table of Contents

Summary	3
1. South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments Program (SC READY) Overview ...	4
1.1 South Carolina Review Process	4
2. Test Blueprint Review	6
2.1 Coverage of Standards	6
2.2 Depth of Knowledge Distribution	7
3. Evaluation of Overall Validity	9
3.1 Coverage by Reporting Category	9
3.2 Alignment to Standards	10
3.3 Depth of Knowledge	11
3.3.1 Distribution of DOK Levels	11
3.3.2 Review Items for DOK Level	12
3.4 Internal Structure	14
3.4.1 CTT Item Statistics	14
3.4.2 Rasch Item Statistics	14
3.4.3 Dimensionality	15
3.4.4 Reliability	16
3.4.5 Measurement Invariance	16
4. Performance Level Classifications	17
References	19



Summary

This document reviews the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) for Science Grade 4 and Grade 6. Mandated after the initial statewide field test, the evaluation specifically assesses the test's alignment with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021), its validity, difficulty, and its ability to differentiate achievement levels, thereby ensuring it provides reliable data for evaluating student mastery and state accountability.

The content validity evaluation confirmed overall alignment with the state standards and test blueprints, though one Grade 4 operational item and one Grade 6 field test item were flagged for potential re-alignment. A more significant concern was highlighted regarding the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) distribution.

Furthermore, item-level reviews flagged DOK misclassifications. Reclassifying flagged items in Grade 6 could skew the DOK distribution downward, emphasizing the need for a holistic review to meet the cognitive demands mandated by the test blueprint. A review and revision of the operational forms is recommended to accurately reflect the cognitive demands of the standards.

The psychometric evaluation confirmed the SC READY Science Grades 4 and 6 assessments' overall technical soundness. Classical Test Theory (CTT) analysis indicated items are functioning properly, with a desirable mix of difficulty (mean 0.53-0.55) and adequate discriminatory power (mean item-total correlations 0.41-0.44). The Rasch model also fits the data adequately, with difficulty parameters spanning the ability scales, and Principal Components Analysis (PCA) confirmed the test structure's unidimensionality.

Overall test scores demonstrated high reliability, but caution is advised for lower subdomain reliability (ranging from 0.69 to 0.82), a common result of smaller item counts. Differential Item Functioning (DIF) analysis confirmed measurement invariance, with only a negligible number of items flagged for slight to moderate DIF (primarily paper-pencil vs. online). Future recommendations include incorporating CTT item discrimination and distractor analysis and conducting DIF analysis within the Rasch model framework.

However, concern exists with Performance Level Classifications. Due to large Conditional Standard Errors of Measurement (SEMs) near cut scores, psychometric data only reliably support classification into two broad performance levels, calling the use of four achievement levels for high-stakes decisions into question. It is strongly recommended to consider adding more items around the cut scores and to either support any decisions based on the four achievement levels with additional student data, or to explore the use of advanced psychometric models, such as cognitive diagnosis models, which are better suited for precise classification.

Overall, the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessments demonstrate generally sound design and alignment with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards. The primary concern relates to the reliability of the Performance Level Classifications. Large Conditional Standard Errors of Measurement (SEMs) near the cut scores suggest that the psychometric data only reliably supports two broad achievement levels, questioning the use of four to five levels for high-stakes decisions. Therefore, key refinements are recommended to strengthen the validity and utility of the assessments. These include improving balance in



standard coverage, ensuring closer alignment to the test blueprints (particularly with respect to Depth of Knowledge distribution), and addressing the reliability of all performance levels by adding more items around cut scores, supplementing classification decisions with additional student data, or exploring advanced psychometric models.

1. South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments Program (SC READY) Overview

The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) program is a statewide assessment in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies administered to students in grades 3–8 as required by the Education Accountability Act (EAA). The EAA was amended in 2018 to shorten testing by reducing the number of grade levels tested in social studies to grades 5 and 7 and for science to grades 4, 6, and 8. This review and report will only reflect assessments for science grades 4 and 6.

For the 2025-26 school year, Proviso 1.72 of the General Appropriations Bill suspended testing of grade 8 in science. As a result, students are assessed in grades 4 and 6 in science (<https://ed.sc.gov/tests/middle/sc-ready/>).

SC READY test items measure student performance on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. The Spring 2024-2025 Grades 4 and 6 Science Assessments assess the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021). Standards specify what schools are expected to teach and what students are expected to learn. Academic standards also include indicators that are statements of the specific cognitive processes and the content knowledge and skills that students must demonstrate to meet the grade-level standards. SC READY test items are written to assess the content knowledge and skills described in the academic standards and indicators.

The first administration of the Grades 4 and 6 Science Assessments under the new 2021 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards was in the 2024–2025 school year. After the initial statewide field tests of the assessment program, the Education Oversight Committee reviews the state assessment program for alignment with standards, difficulty, validity, and its ability to differentiate achievement levels. The committee makes recommendations for changes, if needed, and provides this review to various educational and governmental bodies.

1.1 South Carolina Review Process

As per the South Carolina Code of Laws-Title 59 (Title 59 – Education, § 59-18-320):

(A) After the first statewide field test of the assessment program in each of the four academic areas, and after the field tests of the end of course assessments of high school credit courses, the Education Oversight Committee, established in Section 59-6-10, will review the state assessment program and the course assessments for alignment with the state standards, level of difficulty and validity, and for the ability to differentiate levels of



achievement, and will make recommendations for needed changes, if any. The review will be provided to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, the Governor, the Senate Education Committee, and the House Education and Public Works Committee as soon as feasible after the field tests. The Department of Education will then report to the Education Oversight Committee no later than one month after receiving the reports on the changes made to the assessments to comply with the recommendations.

With the support of the Education Oversight Committee, experts from the University of Georgia evaluated the SC READY assessments in Science Grades 4 and 6 for reliability and validity in assessing student mastery, school/district performance, and state accountability, following best practices in educational measurement, as detailed by the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, NCME, 2014).

The following materials were provided by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the test contractor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), for evaluation:

- UGA Access Information SC READY and EOCEP Test Forms
- ESC593_Gr4 and 6 Science_Final Dots
- SC READY Science Grade 4 Test Blueprint for 2024-25
- SC READY Science Grade 6 Test Blueprint for 2024-25
- Spring2025_Addl_Stats_for_UGA_Review
- South Carolina SC READY Program 2024-2025 Operational Test Technical Report Preliminary Draft (Chapters 3 and 4)

Additionally, the following materials were publicly available, confirmed by SCDE, and utilized for the evaluation:

- [South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards \(2021\)](#)

The test map (Dots) included metadata about individual items, and SCDE provided follow-up documentation with psychometric indices for operational items. All parameters were calculated by the test contractor; no additional estimation of item or test parameters was conducted. The items reviewed for content validity were presented in the Spring 2025 administration, and the psychometric review is based on the draft chapter summaries from the 2024-2025 Technical Report, which reported on the Spring 2025 administrations.

This report was prepared by the University of Georgia and examines critical elements of the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Science Grade 6 test designs and summarizes findings and recommendations for each.



2. Test Blueprint Review

A test blueprint review is crucial for an assessment’s validity, fairness, and reliability. It ensures alignment with state standards, balanced content representation, and an appropriate mix of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels, providing valid data for instructional and accountability purposes.

The test blueprints review involved evaluating two key aspects.

- **Coverage of Standards.** Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and assessment designers assessed how well each state standard is represented on the test blueprint, ensuring balanced weighting across content domains (reporting categories).
- **DOK distribution.** SMEs reviewed the distribution of DOK levels, ensuring a mix of items requiring recall, application of knowledge, and critical thinking skills to prevent over- or under-emphasis of any one area and promote a comprehensive, fair assessment.

2.1 Coverage of Standards

The Spring 2024-2025 SC READY Science Grade 4 assessment consists of 45 operational test items and 7 additional embedded field test items. Table 1 summarizes the test blueprint for the SC READY Science Grade 4 assessment by reporting category, designed to measure the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021).

Table 1. SC READY Science Grade 4 Test Blueprint 2024-2025

Reporting Category	Performance Expectations (PEs)	Number of PEs	Number of Items per Reporting Category
Energy	4-PS3-1, 4-PS3-2, 4-PS3-3, 4-PS3-4	4	12 – 16
Waves	4-PS4-1, 4-PS4-2, 4-PS4-3	3	9 – 12
Organisms and the Environment	4-LS1-1, 4-LS1-2, 4-ESS1-1, 4-ESS3-1	4	12 – 16
Earth Process and Features	4-ESS2-1, 4-ESS2-2, 4-ESS3-2	3	9 – 12



The Spring 2024-2025 SC READY Science Grade 6 assessment consists of 48 operational test items and 7 additional embedded field test items. Table 2 summarizes the test blueprint for the SC READY Science Grade 6 assessment by reporting category, designed to measure the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021).

Table 2. SC READY Science Grade 6 Test Blueprint 2024-2025

Reporting Category	Performance Expectations (PEs)	Number of PEs	Number of Items per Reporting Category
Energy and Waves	6-PS1-4, 6-PS3-3, 6-PS3-4, 6-PS4-2	4	12 – 16
Life Science	6-LS1-1, 6-LS1-2, 6-LS1-3, 6-LS1-8	4	9 – 12
History of Earth	6-ESS1-4, 6-ESS2-2, 6-ESS2-3	3	9 – 12
Earth and the Atmosphere	6-ESS2-1, 6-ESS2-4, 6-ESS2-5, 6-ESS2-6, 6-ESS3-2	5	12 – 16

Evaluation: Based on the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021), both test blueprints align and inform stakeholders of the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessment content.

Recommendation: N/A

2.2 Depth of Knowledge Distribution

The Spring 2024-2025 SC READY Science assessments use the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) framework to categorize items based on the cognitive complexity required to answer the item. Items span a range of cognitive complexity levels and difficulty levels. The DOK framework categorizes items into one of four categories (Webb, 2002); as DOK levels increase, the cognitive demand on students also increases. Higher DOK levels require more than just recalling facts; they require deeper understanding, application, analysis, and synthesis.

- Level 1. Recall and Reproduction: This level requires students to recall basic facts, information, definitions, terms, or perform simple, routine procedures.
- Level 2. Skills and Concepts: This level requires engaging in mental processing beyond simple recall. Students need to apply concepts, use skills, and make decisions. It requires understanding and using knowledge.
- Level 3. Strategic Thinking: This level requires deep understanding, planning, using evidence, and more complex reasoning. Students must analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions. The cognitive demands are more abstract and require justification.
- Level 4. Extended Thinking: This is the most complex level. It requires students to make connections, relate ideas within or among content areas, and select or devise an approach to solve a problem. It often involves extended time and requires synthesis and in-depth analysis.



Standardized assessments like SC READY Science primarily include items at DOK Levels 1-3, as Level 4 is less common. They are designed to include a variety of questions across these three DOK levels, ranging from simple recall to more complex reasoning. Table 3 and Table 4 show the DOK distribution as specified on the SC READY Science Grade 4 and SC READY Science Grade 6 test blueprints.

Table 3. Percent Range of DOK Levels for SC READY Science Grade 4

DOK Level	Minimum %	Maximum %
1	0%	10%
2	65%	85%
3	10%	20%

Table 4. Percent Range of DOK Levels for SC READY Science Grade 6

DOK Level	Minimum %	Maximum %
1	0%	10%
2	65%	85%
3	10%	20%

Evaluation:

Grade 4: The test is primarily weighted toward DOK Level 2 (Skills and Concepts), with between 65% and 85% of the items at this complexity level. Level 2 is appropriate, emphasizing conceptual understanding and problem-solving. In addition, having 10-20% of items at DOK Level 3 is acceptable, ensuring the test focuses on higher-order thinking skills such as students' ability to analyze, justify, and reason scientifically. The SC READY Science Grade 4 assessment is of medium to medium-high level of complexity.

Grade 6: Similar to grade 4, the Grade 6 assessment is primarily weighted at DOK Level 2 (Skills and Concepts), with between 65% and 85% of the items at this complexity level. Level 2 is appropriate, emphasizing conceptual understanding and problem-solving. In addition, having 10-20% of items at DOK Level 3 is acceptable, ensuring the test focuses on higher-order thinking skills, such as students' ability to analyze, justify, and reason scientifically. The SC READY Science Grade 6 assessment is of medium to medium-hard complexity.

Recommendation: N/A



3. Evaluation of Overall Validity

Content validity is essential for ensuring an assessment accurately measures the intended knowledge and skills (Bandalos, 2018). It involves a thorough evaluation of the items and domains to ensure they represent the target domain. This review ensures that the information gathered from administering the assessment is relevant and minimizes construct-irrelevant variance. Furthermore, content specification and item review help to ensure that the full range of the construct(s) is measured, minimizing construct underrepresentation.

To verify content validity, subject matter experts (SMEs) compared the SC READY Science assessments with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards (2021). The assessment was reviewed for domain coverage (i.e., reporting category) and item alignment to standards and DOK. Two SMEs independently reviewed each item for standard alignment. A third SME resolved any discrepancies. The panel of SMEs then held a consensus meeting to finalize alignment recommendations. The internal structure of the assessment was reviewed by an educational measurement expert at the University of Georgia.

3.1 Coverage by Reporting Category

Operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessments were reviewed for alignment to each reporting category and evaluated against each Test Blueprint 2024-2025. First, the provided ‘Grade 4 and Grade 6 Science Final Dots’ were evaluated against each Test Blueprint 2024-2025. Then, all items were reviewed for alignment to each reporting category.

Table 5 and Table 6 summarize the number and percentage of operational items aligned with each reporting category as reflected in the provided ‘Grade 4 and Grade 6 Science Final Dots’.

Table 5. Coverage by Reporting Category for SC READY Science Grade 4 (Operational Items)

Reporting Category	Test Blueprint			Final Dots	
	Number of Performance Expectations	% of Category Coverage	Range of the Number of Items per Category	Number of OP Items per Category	% of Assessment
Energy	4	100%	12 – 16	13	29%
Waves	3	100%	9 – 12	10	22%
Organisms and the Environment	4	100%	12 – 16	13	29%
Earth Process and Features	3	100%	9 – 12	9	20%
Total Number of OP Items				45	100%



Table 6. Coverage by Reporting Category for SC READY Science Grade 6 (Operational Items)

Reporting Category	Test Blueprint			Final Dots	
	Number of Performance Expectations	% of Category Coverage	Range of the Number of Items per Category	Number of OP Items per Category	% of Assessment
Energy and Waves	4	100%	12 – 16	13	27%
Life Science	4	100%	9 – 12	11	23%
History of Earth	3	100%	9 – 12	10	21%
Earth and the Atmosphere	5	100%	12 – 16	14	29%
Total Number of OP Items				48	100%

Evaluation: Table 5 and Table 6 summarize alignment for 45 operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 assessment and 48 operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 6 assessment. For both Grade 4 and Grade 6, the operational items demonstrate alignment with the respective test blueprint reporting categories.

Recommendation: N/A

3.2 Alignment to Standards

All operational and field test items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessments were evaluated (n=52 and n=55, respectively) for standard alignment.

Evaluation: Table 7 and Table 8 highlight items flagged during review.

Table 7. Alignment to Standards for SC READY Science Grade 4

Item Sequence	Standard on Final Dots	Suggested Re-alignment	Notes
23	4-PS3-4	4-PS3-3	Item does not align well with PS3-4, which focuses on refining devices that convert energy from one form to another. This item's focus is on increasing energy, not conversion. Item partially aligns to PS3-3, which involves asking questions and predicting outcomes about changes in energy. However, the item does not specifically address energy changes resulting from object collisions, which is a focus of the standard.



Table 8. Alignment to Standards for SC READY Science Grade 6

Item Sequence	Standard on Final Dots	Suggested Re-alignment	Notes
37 (FT)	6-ESS2-6	6-ESS2-4	Item is aligned to ESS2-4, which focuses on the cycling of water through Earth’s systems driven by energy from the sun.

Recommendation: Overall, items are well aligned to the stated standards. Review alignment for one Grade 4 and one Grade 6 item, both flagged above.

3.3 Depth of Knowledge

Operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessments were reviewed for DOK distribution and evaluated against each Test Blueprint 2024-2025. First, the provided ‘Grade 4 and Grade 6 Science Final Dots’ were examined in relation to the corresponding Test Blueprint 2024-2025. Then, all items were independently reviewed for DOK level.

3.3.1 Distribution of DOK Levels

Table 9 and Table 10 summarize the number and percentage of operational items aligned with each DOK level as reflected on the provided ‘Grade 4 and Grade 6 Science Final Dots’.

Table 9. DOK Distribution for SC READY Science Grade 4 (Operational Items)

DOK	Test Blueprint		Final Dots	
	Min %	Max %	Number of OP Items	% of Assessment
1	0%	10%	0	0%
2	65%	85%	39	81%
3	10%	20%	6	19%
Total Number of OP Items			45	100%



Table 10. DOK Distribution for SC READY Science Grade 6 (Operational Items)

DOK	Test Blueprint		Final Dots	
	Min %	Max %	Number of OP Items	% of Assessment
1	0%	10%	3	3%
2	65%	85%	41	85%
3	10%	20%	4	12%
Total Number of OP Items			48	100%

Evaluation: Table 9 and Table 10 summarize the DOK distribution for 45 operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 assessment and 48 operational items on the SC READY Science Grade 6 assessment. For both Grade 4 and Grade 6, the operational items demonstrate alignment with the test blueprints stated DOK distribution.

Recommendation: N/A

3.3.2 Review Items for DOK Level

All operational and field test items on the SC READY Science Grade 4 and Grade 6 assessments were evaluated (n=52 and n=55, respectively) for DOK level.

Evaluation: Table 11 and Table 12 highlight items flagged during review.

Table 11. Alignment to DOK for SC READY Science Grade 4

Item Sequence	DOK on Final Dots	Suggested DOK	Notes
4	2	3	Item requires students to both describe the concept of how energy is converted <i>and</i> consider a possible solution to reduce the amount of energy converted. The second part requires a more advanced level of reasoning to determine a solution (e.g., suggesting a modification to the flashlight).
28	3	2	Item requires students to apply their understanding about transferring energy from place to place but does not require strategic or abstract reasoning.

Table 12. Alignment to DOK for SC READY Science Grade 6



Item Sequence	DOK on Final Dots	Suggested DOK	Notes
7	2	1	Item requires students to recall the process of sedimentation. Students do not need to interpret/reason with the stimulus.
9	1	2	Item requires students to go beyond recall and interpret the evidence from rock formations. Additionally, consider the reading load of the stimulus; items in this specific set are designed so learners do not need to use the stimulus content to answer the questions.
22	3	2	Item requires students to understand transfer of energy as measured by temperature but does not require strategic or abstract reasoning.
35 (FT)	3	2	Item requires students to understand the rock cycle but does not require strategic or abstract reasoning.
40	2	1	Item requires students to recall the definition of mitochondrion. Consider the reading load of the stimulus; learners do not need to use the stimulus content to answer the question.
48	3	2	Item requires students to understand the process of sedimentation but does not require strategic or abstract reasoning.

Recommendation:

Grade 4: Review the flagged items and update the associated metadata or revise the items to more accurately reflect the intended DOK classification.

Grade 6: Review the flagged items and evaluate their collective impact on the overall DOK distribution. The suggestions for modifying the DOK levels for the Grade 6 items, in particular, trend toward a lower DOK classification (e.g., from DOK 2 or 3 down to DOK 1 or 2). If these suggested changes are adopted, they may skew the current DOK distribution of the Grade 6 test, potentially creating an inconsistency with the Test Blueprint for 2024-2025.

This item-level DOK review should be directly integrated with the results and conclusions derived from the Final Dots to Test Blueprint review detailed in the previous section. A comprehensive, holistic review is necessary to determine whether the operational form will



adequately reflect the cognitive demands and distribution targets mandated by the test blueprint, especially considering the cumulative effect of these proposed DOK reclassifications.

3.4 Internal Structure

According to the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* (AERA, APA, NCME, 2014), validity evidence based on internal structure relates to how test items, individually and collectively, align with the construct(s) being measured. To that end, this evaluation included summaries of classical test theory and Rasch model item analyses, dimensionality, reliability, and measurement invariance. No additional analyses were conducted. Rather, materials provided by SCDE and DRC, including the 2025 Technical Report (DRC, 2025) and Grade 4 Science Testmap (DOT) and Grade 6 Science Testmap (DOT), are summarized and interpreted.

3.4.1 CTT Item Statistics

A classical test theory (CTT) item analysis is conducted as a baseline check for the appropriateness of items. To support psychometric analysis, items need to be sufficiently difficult for the population and function properly. CTT item difficulty is reported as the proportion of examinees who answered an item correctly. Lower values indicate harder items (e.g., 0.15 (15%) of the examinees answered the item correctly), and higher values indicate easier items (e.g., 0.85 (85%) of examinees answered the item correctly). For the Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science assessments, a wide range of difficulty values should be observed to indicate utility across the breadth of examinee ability levels. Additionally, values near 0.50 provide strong information (Bandalos, 2018). One measure of CTT item quality is the item-total correlation. The item-total correlation is a quantification of the degree to which individual items separate examinees with low and high scores. Values greater than 0.30 are considered satisfactory, while values less than 0.20 indicate low discrimination and suggest revision of the item (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Negative values indicate that higher scoring examinees tended to get the item incorrect more often than low scoring examinees, which is a red flag for immediate item review.

Evaluation: Results from CTT analysis of 45 SC READY Grade 4 Science items and 48 SC READY Grade 6 Science items indicated mean difficulty values of 0.55 and 0.53, with values ranging from 0.20 to 0.81 respectively, indicating a mix of easy, moderate, and hard items. The mean item-total correlations were 0.44 for Grade 4 and 0.41 for Grade 6, suggesting that items discriminate adequately. Together, the difficulty and item-total correlation statistics reported provide an initial indication that the items are functioning properly.

Recommendation: The CTT item discrimination index (i.e., the difference in difficulty for high and low groups) and distractor analysis could be included in the SCDE's evaluation to provide more detail.

3.4.2 Rasch Item Statistics

The Rasch item response theory model was used for calibration and scaling. While it makes strong assumptions about items, the Rasch model has preferable measurement properties



including sum-score sufficiency, invariant item ordering, and a common item-to-ability scale (Engelhard, 2013). These properties are useful for the interpretation of items, ability estimates, and performance level classifications. The Rasch model includes person ability estimates and item parameter estimates. The Rasch model assumes that each item discriminates equally and only estimates a difficulty parameter for each item. This difficulty parameter is a location parameter, indicating the point on the ability scale where an examinee has a 50% chance of answering the item correctly. For adequate scaling, difficulty parameters should span the ability distribution (e.g., -3 to 3) to reliably locate all examinees.

When applying the Rasch model, it is important to assess the degree to which the data fits the model. Rasch model fit statistics, including infit and outfit mean square statistics, quantify the differences between observed responses and model-predicted responses. Values less than 0.80 or greater than 1.2 can indicate poor fit (Wright, 1994).

Evaluation: Rasch difficulty parameters for SC READY Grade 4 Science had a mean of 0.00 and ranged from -1.01 to 1.62. For SC READY Grade 6 Science, the mean Rasch difficulty was -0.03 and ranged from -1.51 to 1.60. These difficulty values indicate sufficient coverage of the ability scales for the purposes of both assessments. Infit values for Grade 4 and Grade 6 both had means of 1.0 and ranged from 0.80 to 1.28 and 0.75 to 1.29, respectively. Outfit values had means of 1.98 and 1.00 and ranged from 0.69 to 1.43 and 0.66 to 1.54, respectively. Generally, these values indicate that the Rasch model fits the data adequately and supports the interpretation of estimates derived from the Rasch model. Items for which fit statistics approached or exceeded the thresholds were flagged and reviewed by the DRC psychometric staff.

Recommendation: N/A

3.4.3 Dimensionality

The item response theory models used to scale the Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science assessments have an underlying assumption of unidimensionality. That is, each test measures a single domain. If this is not the case, and more than one factor exists, then the validity and interpretation of scale scores are called into question. To assess dimensionality, common approaches are factor analysis and principal components analysis (PCA). Within the PCA framework, Reckase (1979) suggested that the first principal component should account for at least 20% of the total variance to support unidimensionality. Also, the first component should account for substantially more variance than the second (Zopluglu & Davenport, 2017).

Evaluation: Results from a PCA of Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science indicated that the first components were approximately 8-9 times as large as the second components, and that they explained between 22% – 25% of the variance. These results suggest that the unidimensionality assumptions were met for both Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science.

Recommendation: N/A



3.4.4 Reliability

Test score reliability is concerned with the consistency and precision of scores and is a function of the amount of measurement error (Wells & Wollack, 2003). Reliability is a necessary condition for validity because if scores are highly variable and error-ridden, they cannot be said to measure the construct(s) accurately. There are several ways to quantify reliability in the CTT framework, including Cronbach's alpha and the standard error of measurement. Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1 and quantifies the degree to which the items consistently measure the target domain. For high stakes settings, alpha should be approaching or above 0.90 (Wells & Wollack, 2003). The standard error of measurement (SEM) provides an interval estimate around raw scores.

Evaluation: For both Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science, Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates were reported for multiple content sub-domains including Energy, Waves, Organisms and Environment, and Earth Processes for Grade 4, and Energy and Waves, Life Science, Earth History, and Atmosphere for Grade 6. For Grade 4, reliability estimates ranged from 0.69 to 0.82, and for Grade 6, they ranged from 0.72 to 0.79. SEM values ranged from 1.33 to 1.67 across both grades and all content subdomains.

Recommendation: Reliability estimates for the overall Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science assessment scores appear to be highly reliable. However, reliability estimates for the content subdomains are lower and slightly below recommended values. This is expected due to the smaller item counts contributing to each subdomain area. Caution should be exercised when interpreting or making decisions based on subdomain area subscores.

3.4.5 Measurement Invariance

Test fairness is a fundamental aspect of conducting group comparisons and ensuring the validity of assessments, particularly when examining differences based on gender, ethnicity, culture, or treatment conditions. To achieve test fairness, it is essential to detect and prevent any form of unfairness throughout the entire testing process, including test design, development, administration, and scoring (Camilli, 2006). When a test is free of systematic bias, measurement invariance has been met.

Differential item functioning (DIF) analysis plays a crucial role in addressing test fairness by identifying potentially biased items in a test. DIF procedures assess whether examinees from different subgroups, who possess the same underlying ability or trait, have different probabilities of endorsing an item (Angoff, 1993). By identifying items that function differently across groups, DIF analysis helps to minimize the impact of factors unrelated to the construct being measured (Sireci & Rios, 2013). Biased items systemically advantage or disadvantage a specific subgroup because of factors irrelevant to the intended construct. By addressing DIF, the fairness and validity of the test can be enhanced, ensuring that an item is unbiased and measures the same construct across groups.

From a psychometric perspective, DIF is commonly analyzed using methods that compare item performance across groups. For Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science, subgroups of interest



were gender (male/female), racial/ethnic groups (Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, two or more races), disability status (no/yes), paper-pencil vs online, and multilingual status (no/yes). To measure DIF, the Mantel-Haenszel (MH) delta statistic quantifies the difference in item response distribution for two groups. Researchers at ETS developed thresholds to interpret MH delta values (Zwick, et al., 1999).

Evaluation: During the test development phase, item writers followed guidelines for fairness and sensitivity to minimize bias. In the analysis phase, DIF analysis indicated that for Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science, a total of 9 items were flagged as exhibiting slight to moderate DIF. There were no items that exhibited moderate or large DIF. Of the 9 DIF items, 8 were identified in the paper-pencil versus online mode comparison, and 1 was identified in the multilingual comparison. Overall, across both grades, 825/834 (99%) possible item comparisons displayed no or negligible DIF. Items that were flagged were reviewed by teachers, SCDE staff, and DRC test development experts. In summary, the Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science assessments satisfied measurement invariance assumptions.

Recommendation: Conduct DIF analysis in the Rasch model framework for additional evidence.

4. Performance Level Classifications

For summative assessments, in addition to scale scores, it is often useful to provide performance level classifications that are coupled with interpretable descriptors of skill and understanding development for each performance level. In an item response theory framework, cut scores for each performance level must be determined and applied to classify examinees. For the Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science assessments, cut scores were determined in a standard setting process and applied to classify examinees into one of four performance levels:

- **Does Not Meet Expectations:** the student does not meet the expectations of the course content standards.
- **Approaches Expectations:** the student is approaching the expectations of the course content standards.
- **Meets Expectations:** the student meets the expectations of the course content standards.
- **Exceeds Expectations:** the student exceeds the expectations of the course content standards.

This evaluation concerns the degree to which these classifications are valid and reliable. Data for this section comes from the technical report (DRC, 2025).

Evaluation: A thorough standard setting was used to determine cut scores for Grade 4 Science and Grade 6 Science. Conditional SEMs around the cut scores range from 22 to 29. This implies an interval range around scale scores of approximately plus or minus 40 to 60 points, or more. These interval estimates are sometimes wider than the difference between adjacent performance levels. While classification consistency indices indicate sufficient classification reliability (agreement 0.93 – 0.97, kappa 0.75 – 0.81) for distinguishing two levels (e.g., meets/exceeds vs



does not meet/approaches), kappa values are lower for four achievement levels (agreement 0.80 – 0.87, kappa 0.56 – 0.63).

Recommendation: Conditional SEMs are quite large near the cut scores. Consider including additional items located near the cut scores. The data and psychometric modeling approach support classification into two performance levels, but four to five levels could be considered questionable. Any decisions made based on classifications of the four achievement levels should be supported with additional student data or assessments. Additionally, the use of psychometric models that better support classification (e.g., cognitive diagnosis models; Rupp, Templin, & Henson, 2010) could be explored.



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EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: April 13, 2026

ACTION ITEM:

Educational Performance of Military-Connected Children in SC, 2026 Report

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

§59-18-100: The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish a comprehensive annual report concerning the performance of military-connected children who attend primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in this State. The comprehensive annual report must be in a reader-friendly format, using graphics wherever possible, published on the state, district, and school websites, and, upon request, printed by the school districts. The annual comprehensive report must address at least attendance, academic performance in reading, math, and science, and graduation rates of military- connected children.

CRITICAL FACTS

The 2026 report provides:

- Demographic details of military-connected students in SC from School Year 2024-25.
- An overview of the data collection and reporting at the State level related to military-connected students.
- An update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students as reported for the 2024-25 school year and matching the 180 day enrollment files.
- Existing structures and support for military-connected students in the State
- Findings and recommendations

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

Annual review

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

Cost: no fiscal impact

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN BY SUBCOMMITTEE

Approved
 Not Approved

Amended
 Action deferred (explain)



EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY-CONNECTED CHILDREN IN SC 2026 REPORT

PREPARED BY:
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AMINA ASGHAR

PRESENTATION TO:
ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS SUBCOMMITTEE

MARCH 16, 2026



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

Background

This annual report on the educational performance of military-connected students is produced as a requirement of Act 289, the Military Family Quality of Life Enhancement Act, which was passed in 2014 by the SC General Assembly. The Act’s purpose is to “enhance quality of life issues for members of the armed forces” (Act 289 Preamble). Part V requests the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to develop a comprehensive report on the educational performance of military-connected children:

§59-18-100: The Education Oversight Committee, working with the State Board of Education, is directed to establish a comprehensive annual report concerning the performance of military-connected children who attend primary, elementary, middle, and high schools in this State. The comprehensive annual report must be in a reader- friendly format, using graphics wherever possible, published on the state, district, and school websites, and, upon re-

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The 2026 report provides:

- Demographic details of military-connected students in SC from School Year 2024-25.
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- An update on the academic performance and school attendance of military-connected students as reported for the 2024-25 school year and matching the 180 day enrollment files.
- Existing structures and support for military-connected students in the State; and
- Findings and recommendations.



Acknowledgements

The EOC staff is grateful for the assistance of local, state, and national organizations and staff in the development of this report.

Findings and Recommendations

Findings

1. The demographics of military-connected students closely mirror the statewide, non-military-connected, public school population. A larger percentage of these students are educated in elementary schools and are less likely to be pupils in poverty.
2. With no exceptions in the academic measures evaluated for this report, the performance of military-connected students in SC exceeds the performance of non-military-connected students, based on the data collected by school districts and available in the Student Information System.
3. The collection of military-connected status by school districts is improving. Commendation is once again given to Richland One School District; in 2020-21, three military-connected students were reported. For school year 2024-25, 505 military-connected students were reported.
4. Military-connected students, as a group, were less likely to be Severely Chronically Absent (missing 20% or more of the school year either excused or unexcused). Despite the challenges that military-connected students and their families face, these students attend school at a higher rate than their non-military-connected peers.
5. There continue to be significant challenges associated with reconciling different data sources collecting data on military-connected young people; based on the data from the Student Information System, there were 12,577 public school students (codes 3-8) connected to active duty personnel in school year 2024-25 while the total number of active duty personnel in SC as of December 2024, was reported to be 33,614.
6. Of the 18,823 total military-connected students reported by school districts in School Year 2024-25, approximately 74 percent of these students attended one of ten school districts. Eighteen school districts report no military-connected students despite a federal requirement within ESSA to identify and collect military-connected students data as a distinct subgroup.

Recommendations

1. Identifying military-connected students provides educators with critical information about students who are highly likely to move and frequently change schools, necessitating specialized attention of transitions and resources. SC school districts should require the collection of these data during school enrollment procedures and the data should be populated into the Student Information System.
2. Continue collaborative work with the SC Department of Education (SCDE) on strengthening data related to military enlistment, which will better inform the work that goes into this report. In 2024, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) jointly launched the Military Enlistment Data Access to Lift Student Success (MEDALS) initiative with the Department of Defense. This work was prompted by a letter that Superintendent Ellen Weaver and other state chiefs sent. This pilot effort is designed to create a standardized data-sharing agreement that would facilitate seamless collaboration between states and the Department of Defense.
3. Explore opportunities to partner with SC postsecondary institutions that serve military-affiliated students, strengthening the data pipeline and the opportunities to better serve this student population.



Characteristics of Military-Connected Students in SC

Table 1: Characteristics and Demographics of Military-Connected Students (MCS) compared to Statewide Non-MCS Student Population

Characteristics and Demographics	MCS	Non-MCS
	Number and % of Military-Connected Student Population	Number and % of Non-Military-Connected Student Population
American Indian	193 (1.0%)	5,736 (.8%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	627 (3.3%)	21,174 (3.0%)
Black	6,528 (34.7%)	245,459 (34.7%)
Hispanic	2,763 (14.7%)	100,245 (14.2%)
White	8,705 (46.3%)	334,744 (47.3%)
High School Level Students (9th-12th)	5,797 (30.8%)	220,670 (31.2%)
Middle Level Students (6th-8th)	4,657 (24.7%)	166,202 (23.5%)
Elementary Level Students (K-5th)	8,369 (44.5%)	320,526 (45.3%)
Gifted and Talented	3,588(19.1%)	120,329 (17.0%)
Student with a Disability (SWD)	3,579 (19.0%)	142,406 (20.1%)
Multilingual Learners (ML)	980 (5.2%)	71,222 (10.1%)
Pupils In Poverty (PIP)	6,558 (34.8%)	438,208 (62.0%)
Foster Care	36 (.2%)	1,793 (.3%)
Homeless	92 (.5%)	11,336 (1.6%)
Migrant	*	389 (.05%)

Source: Student Information System; provided by the SCDE at the request of the EOC

*data suppressed due to low student population

Identification of and Reporting of MCS

Identification of military-connected students is challenging because there are various systems that collect and report on these young people. Some data are not publicly available. Although the numbers vary by data source and availability, each military-connected young person is part of a family where at least one member is sacrificing for this country. Table 2 shows the number of military personnel and Department of Defense Appropriated Fund (AFP) Civilian Personnel located or in South Carolina as of December 31, 2025.

Table 2:
Number of Military and Dept. of Defense Appropriated Fund (AFP) Civilian Personnel located or in SC

Active Duty: SC						
Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	Space Force	Coast Guard	Total
9,253	8,260	6,184	8,668	5	1,244	33,614
National Guard / Reserve: SC						
Army National Guard	Army Reserve	Navy Reserve	Marine Corps Reserve	Air National Guard	Air Force and Coast Guard Reserve	Total
9,375	3,877	582	393	1,342	2,291	17,860
APF DOD Civilian: SC						
Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	4th ESTATE DOD		Total
2,797	3,105	681	1,919	1,545		10,047
						Grand Total: 61,521

Sources: Active Duty Master File, Reserve Common Components Personnel Data System (RCCPDS) File, Appropriated Fund (APF) Civilian Master File, December 2025, <https://dwp.dmdc.osd.mil/dwp/app/dod-data-reports/workforce-reports>



Federal Requirement for State Collection of Military-Connected Student Data

When the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized in late 2015, as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), military-connected students were recognized as a distinct subgroup for reporting purposes. Beginning in School Year 2017-18, local education agencies (LEAs) were required to identify “students with status as a student with a parent who is a member of the armed forces on active duty or serves on full-time National Guard duty.” The purpose of collecting this information is to evaluate the specific educational needs and the effectiveness of the programs serving military-connected students.

The term “Active Duty” is federally defined as full-time duty in the active military service of the United States. Active military service includes but is not limited to full-time training duty, annual training duty, and attendance, while in the active military service, at a school designated as a service school by law or by the secretary of the military department in which the member serves.

The term “full-time National Guard duty” means training or other duty, other than inactive duty performed by a member of the Army National Guard of the United States or the Air National Guard of the United States in the member’s status as a member of the National Guard of a state or territory, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia for which the member is entitled to pay from the United States or for which the member has waived pay from the United States.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2020 amended Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii) of the ESEA to modify the definition of “military connected” by removing the term “active duty.” As amended, “military connected” means “status as a

student with a parent who is a member of the Armed Forces (as defined in Section 101(a)(4) of Title 10, United States Code).” Under 10 U.S.C. 101(a)(4), “Armed Forces” is defined to include the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast Guard, which would also incorporate their reserve components (i.e., Army National Guard and Air National Guard, and Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Reserves).

When ESSA required the identification and collection of military-connected students, South Carolina already had an established mechanism for collecting the information within the Student Information System (SIS), currently PowerSchool. In PowerSchool, a “Parent Military Status” field includes a drop-down list with eight possible student status options, which are outlined in Table 3.

Data reported by SCDE regarding military-connected students are based on district entry of student information into this field within the current Student Information System. The data are collected via survey from parents and guardians at least once a year. The collection and reporting of these data is a requirement within ESSA.

The amended guidance outlined in the National Defense Authorization Act of 2020 directs that “active duty” be removed as a status for a student to be considered military-connected. This report includes all students with codes 01-08 in Table 3.

Reports published prior to 2025 excluded codes 01 and 02; those students had not previously been considered as military-connected. Therefore, comparisons with previous years’ reports should be made with caution.

Table 3: Military-Connected Student Codes in PowerSchool, the SC Student Information System (SIS)

Code	Meaning
00 or blank	Neither Parent nor Guardian is serving in any military service.
01	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the National Guard but is not deployed.
02	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the Reserves but is not deployed.
03	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the National Guard and is currently deployed.
04	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the Reserves and is currently deployed.
05	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty but is not deployed.
06	A Parent or Guardian is serving in the military on active duty and is currently deployed.
07	The student’s Parent or Guardian died while on active duty within the last year.
08	The student’s Parent or Guardian was wounded while on active duty within the last year.



There is no standard collection and reporting standard for collecting student military-connected status by state although all typically collect it via a survey of parents and guardians.

South Carolina collects information about deceased and wounded military personnel so that appropriate school personnel can assist families and students who are grieving.

Based on the data collected within the Student Information System and summarized in Table 4, the population of military-connected students in SC public schools declined from the 2023-24 school year. The data again illustrates the challenge with reconciling the different data sources. Based on the data from PowerSchool, the SIS, there were 12,577 public school students connected to active duty personnel in School Year 2024-25 (codes 3-8) while the total number of active duty personnel in SC as of December 2024 was reported to be 33,614.

Table 4: Population of Military-Connected Students in South Carolina by School Year, as collected in the current SC Student Information System (SIS)

MILITARY CONNECTION	SY 2021-22		SY 2022-23		SY 2023-24		SY 2024-25	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
National Guard, Not Deployed (01)	3,256	17.5%	3,311	16.4%	3,376	16.5%	3,423	18.2%
Reserves, Not Deployed (02)	2,257	12.1%	2,748	13.6%	2,968	14.5%	2,823	15.0%
National Guard, Active Deployment (03)	502	2.7%	583	2.9%	593	2.9%	422	2.2%
Reserves, Active Deployment (04)	420	2.3%	360	1.8%	326	1.6%	310	1.7%
Active Duty Military, Not Deployed (05)	9,465	50.8%	10,778	53.3%	10,859	53.1%	9,740	51.8%
Active Duty Military, Deployed (06)	1,117	6.0%	1,134	5.6%	1,122	5.5%	976	5.2%
Active Duty Military, Deceased in last year (07)	188	1.0%	176	.87%	183	.89%	162	0.9%
Active Duty Military, Wounded in last year (08)	1,430	7.7%	1,131	5.6%	1,041	5.1%	967	5.1%
GRAND TOTAL:	18,635	100%	20,221	100%	20,468	100.0%	18,823	100%

Source: SC Department of Education, data reported to EOC; 180 day data collection

Military-Connected Students in SC School Districts

Of the 18,823 military-connected students reported by school districts to SCDE in school year 2024-25, approximately 74 percent of the students attended one of the ten school districts listed in Table 5. Appendix A provides additional detail for all school districts.

Table 5: Districts with the Largest Reported Percentage of Military Connected Students, SY 2024-25

School District	SY 2024-25	
	Number of MCS in District	Percent of District Population Identified as Military-Connected
Richland 2	3,364	12.9%
Kershaw	993	9.7%
Sumter	837	6.8%
Dorchester 2	1,536	6.4%
Horry	2,225	5.0%
Beaufort	904	4.7%
Florence 1	638	4.4%
Berkeley	1,429	4.0%
Aiken	689	3.3%
Charleston	1,269	2.8%

Table 6: Districts Reporting NO Military Connected Students, SY 2024-25

No MCS Reported in SY 2024-25		
Anderson 2	Edgefield	Lee
Anderson 5	Florence 5	Marion 10
Bamberg 3	Greenwood 51	Marlboro
Calhoun	Greenwood 52	Spartanburg 4
Dillon 3	Jasper	Spartanburg 6
Dorchester 4	Laurens 55	Spartanburg 7

Academic Performance

This section provides academic performance information for military-connected students in SC compared to the performance of non-MCS in the state.

- student achievement as measured by the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), SY 2024-25
- student achievement on SC READY for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, SY 2024-25
- student achievement as measured by the End-Of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP), SY 2024-25
- high school graduation rates, SY 2024-25
- college- and career-readiness measures for SY 2024-25

Fall 2024 KRA Performance for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

The EOC analyzed student performance in School Year 2025-26 of all kindergarten students who took the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA). The KRA is an instrument that measures a child’s school readiness across four domains: Social Foundations, Language/Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Well-Being. The KRA is administered within the first 45 days of school.

Military-connected students demonstrate higher kindergarten readiness, with 50.2% categorized as “Demonstrating Readiness,” compared to 38.3% for non-military-connected students. A notably smaller proportion of Military-connected students (17.0%) fall into the lowest readiness category (“Emerging Readiness”), compared to 27.0% among non-military-connected peers. The data should be used with caution as there is a small sample size of military-connected kindergarten students.

Table 7: Fall 2025 KRA Performance for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

KRA Performance Level	Military-Connected Students Number (% in performance level)	Non-Military-Connected Students Number (% in performance level)
Demonstrating Readiness	658 (48%)	19,506 (38%)
Approaching Readiness	482 (35.1%)	17,704 (34.5%)
Emerging Readiness	230 (16.8%)	13,853 (27.0%)
No KRA score	*	319 (.62%)
TOTAL	1,372 (100%)	51,382 (100%)

*data suppressed due to low student population (less than 20)

KRA measures readiness in:

1. Social Foundations
2. Language and Literacy
3. Mathematics
4. Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

KRA Performance Levels

Demonstrating Readiness:

The child consistently demonstrates the foundational skills and behaviors that enable a child to fully participate in the kindergarten curriculum.

Approaching Readiness:

The child exhibits some of the foundational skills and behaviors that are needed to participate in the kindergarten curriculum.

Emerging Readiness:

The child displays minimal foundational skills and behaviors, which are needed to successfully meet kindergarten expectations.

SY 2024-25 SC READY Results for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

The South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) program is a statewide assessment in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics administered to students in grades 3-8 as required by the Education Accountability Act. SC READY Science is only given to students in grades 4 and 8.

A higher percentage of military-connected students, on average, met and exceeded standards in math and ELA, compared to non-military-connected students. Fewer military-connected students scored “Does Not Meet” than non-military-connected students, indicating fewer students were not meeting grade-level standards.

In math, military-connected students more frequently scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations (52.0% combined) than their non-military-connected peers (44.4%).

In ELA, military-connected students more frequently scored Meets or Exceeds Expectations (69.4% combined) than their non-military-connected peers (60.4%).



Table 8: SY 2024-25 SC READY Results for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS by Subject and Category

Student Group	Total number of students (% of Student Group)	Does Not Meet	% Approaches	% Meets	% Exceeds
SC READY Mathematics					
MCS	9,390 (100%)	19.6%	28.3%	25.8%	26.3%
Non-MCS	334,195 (100%)	27.4%	28.2%	22.3%	22.1%
SC READY English Language Arts (ELA)					
MCS	9,380 (100%)	12.4%	18.3%	39.6%	29.8%
Non-MCS	334,005 (100%)	18.5%	21.2%	35.6%	24.8%
SC READY Science					
MCS	3,009 (100%)	19.7%	20.4%	30.0%	29.8%
Non-MCS	110,319 (100%)	29.1%	21.7%	26.0%	23.3%

Table 9: SY 2024-25 EOCEP Scores/Passage Rate by Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

School Year	Military-Connected Students (MCS)		Non-MCS Statewide	
	Number of MCS	% Passing (A, B, or C)	Number of Non-MCS	% Passing (A, B, or C)
Algebra I				
2024-25	1,463	63.3%	59,745	53.8%
English 2				
2024-25	1,576	79.6%	59,617	71.4%
Biology I				
2024-25	1,528	53.1%	58,865	46.2%
U.S. History and the Constitution				
2024-25	1,454	57.4%	57,171	48.1%

End-of Course Exam Program

The End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) is a statewide assessment program of End-of-Course exams for gateway courses awarded units of credit in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. EOCEP examination scores are to count 20 percent in the calculation of a student’s final grade. Defined gateway courses currently include Algebra 1, Biology 1, English 2, and United States History and the Constitution.

Table 9 shows the performance of military-connected students on end-of-course exams.

During the 2024-25 School Year, military-connected students outperformed non-military-connected students statewide on the EOCEP exams in Algebra 1, English 2, Biology 1, and United States History and the Constitution.

Algebra I

- MCS had a passage rate of 63.3%, significantly higher than non-MCS at 53.8%.

English 2

- MCS demonstrate superior performance, achieving a passage rate of 79.6%, compared to 71.4% for non-MCS.

Biology I

- MCS had a higher passage rate (53.1%) compared to non-MCS (46.2%).

U.S. History and the Constitution

- MCS again outperformed non-MCS, with a passage rate of 57.4%, 9 percentage points above non-MCS (48.1%).

Table 10: Graduation Rates for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

Military-connected students graduate at significantly higher rates (92.1%) compared to their non-MCS counterparts (86.6%) in 2025.

School Year	MCS	Non-MCS
	On-time Graduation Rate	On-time Graduation Rate
SY 2024-25	92.1%	86.6%
SY 2023-24	94.3%	87.2%
SY 2022-23	93.2%	83.9%
SY 2021-22	94.3%	83.9%
SY 2020-21	91.4%	83.2%
SY 2019-20	90.8%	82.0%
SY 2018-19	86.9%	81.1%

Note: Graduation rates are calculated from the graduation cohort base file for the given school year. The graduation cohort includes all students whose first year in high school occurred three full years prior to the school year being measured. Students are only removed from the cohort for reasons of student death, emigration, transfer to prison or juvenile facility following adjudication, and properly documented transfer out of the state.

Table 11: SY 2024-25 College and Career Readiness (CCR) Results for Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

Student Group	Total number of students (% of Student Group)	Percentage of students meeting CCR criteria
College Ready		
MCS	1,555 (100%)	41.5%
Non-MCS	61,817 (100%)	32.9%
Career Ready		
MCS	1,555 (100%)	82.2%
Non-MCS	61,817 (100%)	73.1%
Both College AND Career Ready		
MCS	1,555 (100%)	39.7%
Non-MCS	61,817 (100%)	31.1%



Military-connected students demonstrate college- and career-readiness, as measured in the SC accountability system, at a higher rate than their non-MCS peers. To learn more about the CCR indicator, go to <https://expectmoresc.com/sc-report-card/college-and-career-ready/>.

Attendance

Table 11: School Attendance of Military-Connected Students (MCS) and Non-MCS

Attendance Category	Military-Connected Students Number (% among MCS)	Non-Military-Connected Students Number (% among non-MCS)
Good Attendance (<5% absent)	6,465 (34.6%)	237,202 (33.5%)
At-Risk Attendance (5–10% absent)	6,611 (35.4%)	237,584 (33.6%)
Moderately Chronically Absent (10–20% absent)	4,153 (22.2%)	166,137 (23.5%)
Severely Chronically Absent (20% and above absent)	1,471 (7.9%)	66,578 (9.4%)
Unknown/Missing	0	20
TOTAL	18,700	707,521

Student attendance rates were computed using information provided by the SCDE from within the Student Information System.

Military-connected students, as a group, were less likely to be Severely Chronically Absent (missing 20% or more of the school year either excused or unexcused.) Despite the challenges that military-connected students and their families face, these students attend school at a higher rate than their non-military-connected peers.

dashboardSC
SC's dashboard for education

PRE-K K-12

Military Connected Students

Home > School Finance Dashboard > Military Connected Students

South Carolina's Military-Connected Students

hover on a dandelion seed to see answers to some commonly asked questions.

- What is a Military-Connected
- How many military-connected students are there in SC?
- Why do we identify military-connected students?
- Is there a requirement to collect data on military-connected students?
- How do we identify military-connected students?
- What challenges exist in collecting and

In 2025, the EOC produced a dashboard for users to easily interact with the K-12 data related to military-connected students.

The dashboard can be found at <https://dashboardsc.sc.gov/k12/finance/military-connected-students>

Structures and Supports

Military Interstate Compact Commission (MIC3)

All states, including South Carolina, have joined the Interstate Compact regarding Educational Opportunity for Military Children to ease the transition for students and to ensure that there are no barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents. Former Governor Mark Sanford signed the Compact on June 11, 2010 and it became law in South Carolina on July 1, 2010.

Students covered are children of the following: Active duty members of the uniformed services, including members of the National Guard and Reserve on active duty orders (Title 10); Members or veterans who are medically discharged or retired for one year; Members who die on active duty, for a period of one year after death; and Uniformed members of the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and United States Public Health Services (USPHS).

<https://mic3.net/>

SC Purple Star Districts

Designation for SC districts who meet specific requirements, target training, and implement programs designed to support the unique situations facing military students and families.

15 Purple Star Designated School Districts in SC

Aiken	Kershaw
Anderson 1	Lexington 1
Beaufort	Lexington/Richland 5
Berkeley	Richland 1
Charleston	Richland 2
Dorchester 2	Spartanburg 1
Edgefield	Sumter
Florence 1	SC Public Charter SD
Horry	

<https://scdva.sc.gov/purple-star-schools-and-districts>

School Liaison Officers serve as a primary point of contact for students and their families transitioning to new communities and schools. They are also a resource for schools and school districts. To view a list of school liaison officers by branch, go to:

<https://www.dodea.edu/education/partnership-and-re-sources/department-defense-school-liaison-programcfm>.

Fort Jackson School Liaisons provide ongoing educational support for military-connected students and schools. This comprehensive website provides information about public and private schools, homeschooling, and local school districts.

<https://jackson.armymwr.com/programs/school-liaison-officer>

Shaw Air Force Base is home to the 20th Fighter Wing, Headquarters Nine Air Force/United States Central Command of Air Forces, and several associate units. Shaw's units are assigned to Air Combat Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. School Liaison information may be found at the website below:

<https://www.shaw.af.mil/Newcomers/>

Marine Corps Air Station and the Marine Corps Recruit Depot are in Beaufort. School support information may be accessed at the website below.

<http://www.mccs-sc.com/mil-fam/slp.shtml>

Joint Base Charleston School information may be accessed under the "Charleston Area Schools" link at: <https://www.jbcharleston.jb.mil/Welcome-to-Charleston/New-to-JBC/>

National Resources

Department of Defense Education Activity provides professional development training in a webinar format for school liaison officers. This information is also helpful for local school districts to understand the needs of students and how to support them in a comprehensive manner.

<https://www.dodea.edu/>

Military Impacted School Association (MISA) is a national organization of school superintendents. MISA supports school districts with a high concentration of military children by providing detailed, comprehensive information regarding impact aid and resources for families and schools.

<http://militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org/>

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) focuses on ensuring quality educational opportunities for all military children affected by mobility, family separation, and transition. A 501(c)(3) non-profit, world-wide organization, the MCEC performs research, develops resources, conducts professional institutes, and conferences, and develops and publishes resources for all constituencies.

<http://www.militarychild.org/>

Military OneSource is a confidential Department of Defense-funded program providing comprehensive information on every aspect of military life at no cost to active duty, National Guard, and reserve members, and their families. Information includes, but is not limited to, deployment, reunion, relationships, grief, spouse employment and education, parenting, and childhood services. It is a virtual extension to installation services.

The program also provides free resources to schools, including books and videos with relevant topics that help students cope with divorce and deployment.

www.militaryonesource.mil

National Military Family Association (NMFA) is a voice for military families advocating on behalf of service members, their spouses, and their children. According to NMFA's website, NMFA is the "go to" source for Administration Officials, Members of Congress, and key decision makers when they want to understand the issues facing military families.

<https://www.militaryfamily.org/>

Appendix A

Table 1: Reported SY 2024-25 Military Connected Student (MCS) Counts for All SC Districts

District	MCS	District (Cont'd)	MCS	District (Cont'd)	MCS
Abbeville	*	Florence 02	26	Oconee	116
Aiken	689	Florence 03	80	Orangeburg	132
Allendale	*	Florence 05	0	Pickens 01	156
Anderson 01	353	Georgetown	199	Richland 01	505
Anderson 02	0	Greenville	64	Richland 02	3,364
Anderson 03	*	Greenwood 50	*	Saluda	*
Anderson 04	*	Greenwood 51	0	Spartanburg 01	*
Anderson 05	0	Greenwood 52	0	Spartanburg 02	214
Bamberg 3	0	Hampton 03	*	Spartanburg 03	*
Barnwell	0	Horry	2,255	Spartanburg 04	0
Beaufort	904	Jasper	0	Spartanburg 05	*
Berkeley	1,429	Kershaw	993	Spartanburg 06	0
Calhoun	0	Lancaster	147	Spartanburg 07	0
Charleston	1,269	Laurens 55	0	Sumter	837
Cherokee	*	Laurens 56	*	Union	*
Chester	*	Lee	0	Williamsburg 01	*
Chesterfield	156	Lexington 01	472	York 01	36
Clarendon 6	*	Lexington 02	96	York 02	*
Colleton	21	Lexington 03	*	York 03	196
Darlington	230	Lexington 04	*	York 04	122
Dillon 3	0	Lexington / Richland 05	475	SC Public Charter School District	491
Dillon 04	52	Marion 10	0	Charter Institute at Erskine	396
Dorchester 02	1,536	Marlboro	0	Limestone Charter	45
Dorchester 04	0	Newberry	46		
Edgefield 01	0	McCormick 01	*		
Fairfield 01	*				
Florence 01	638				

*data suppressed due to low student population (less than 20)

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Room 502 Brown Building
Columbia, SC 29201
www.eoc.sc.gov



The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) is an independent, nonpartisan group of 18 educators, business people, and elected officials appointed by the legislature and governor. The EOC enacts the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998, which sets standards for improving the state's K-12 educational system. The EOC reviews the state's education improvement process, assesses how schools are doing, and evaluates the standards schools must meet to build the education system needed to compete in this century.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: March 16, 2026

ACTION ITEM:

Industry Certifications and Credentials for School Year 2026-27

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY

Section 59-18-900 of the Education Accountability Act (EAA) as amended by Act 94 of 2017 requires the EOC to “determine the criteria for and establish performance ratings of excellent, good, average, below average, and unsatisfactory for schools.” Furthermore, “the same categories of performance ratings also must be assigned to individual indicators used to measure a school’s performance including, but not limited to, academic achievement, student growth or progress, graduation rate, English language proficiency, and college and career readiness.” The EAA also encourages students to earn industry credentials to be career ready. In addition, the state longitudinal data system created by Section 59-18-1950 requires the Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to measure the continuous improvement of the state public education system and the college and career readiness and success of its graduates by documenting “working-aged adults in South Carolina by county who possess a postsecondary degree or industry credential.”

CRITICAL FACTS

The South Carolina Tiered Credential System, adopted by the EOC, is a structured framework that classifies industry-recognized credentials based on their alignment with workforce priorities, employer demand, and career progression opportunities. It helps students, educators, and employers understand the value of different credentials in preparing individuals for high-demand, high-wage careers. The system is organized into three tiers based on the economic impact, job market relevance, and career advancement potential of each credential.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS

October 1 Cutoff: The credential submission window closes each year on October 1. All tier placements and TAC recommendations must be finalized by this date.

EOC Review: SCDE submits the final master credential list to the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) for annual review and validation.

Final Approval: The EOC completes its review and provides formal approval or feedback by January. This year, the EOC will receive as information in January and take action in March/April 2026.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC

none

ACTION REQUEST

For approval

For information

ACTION TAKEN BY SUBCOMMITTEE

Approved

Not Approved

Amended

Action deferred (explain)

The ASA Subcommittee that met in March deferred approval until TACs can meet regarding these certifications. EOC staff had made recommendations to the subcommittee regarding revising some of the SCDE recommendations.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

56 - NCCER Core

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
Application Type	Tier Reevaluation
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Construction
Career Pathway(s)	Building Construction Technology Related: Electricity, Carpentry, and Masonry
Associated CTE Course(s)	Building Construction Technology 1 - 4
Vendor	NCCER
Description	<p>Core: Introduction to Basic Construction Skills prepares individuals for entry-level positions on project sites by providing the basics in safety, hand and power tools, construction math, materials handling, construction drawings, rigging, and employability skills.</p> <p>NCCER Core consists of 10 different modules aligned with the South Carolina Building Construction Standards.</p>

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic Safety ● Career Skills ● Communication Skills ● Conflict Resolution ● Construction Drawings ● Critical Thinking ● Hand Signals ● Hand Tools Handling ● Leadership Skills ● Materials Handling ● Power Tools Handling ● Personal Protective Equipment ● Problem Solving ● Tools Safety
Exam Blueprint	https://www.nccer.org/craft-catalog/core/ https://www.nccer.org/media/2024/08/NCCER-FULL-Catalog.pdf
Format	Computer-based, Performance-based
Questions	10 Modules - Ranging from 15 to 30 questions per test
Duration	1 hour
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes - after a required 2-day waiting period
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	\$20
Cost for Instructor Training	The instructor must be NCCER-accredited. To become accredited, the instructor must complete the NCCER 2- to 3-day Course.
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
Occupational Alignment	
Is the certification used professionally?	
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License
Application Type	Tier Reevaluation & Cluster Reassignment
Recommended Tier	Tier 3 (Career Ready, 3 Points): High-rigor certifications that demonstrate career readiness and are recognized by employers for hiring or advancement.
Career Cluster	<i>Remove from Universal Certification Group</i> Supply Chain and Transportation (primary) Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, and Public Service & Safety
Career Pathway(s)	490109 Drone Technology Related 150801 Aerospace Engineering Technology (SREB) 280101 Air Force JROTC 280301 Army JROTC 280505 Coast Guard JROTC 430203 Emergency and Fire Management Services 430107 Law Enforcement Services 280401 Marine Corps JROTC 280499 Navy JROTC 280502 Space Force JROTC 010205 Agricultural Mechanics and Technology
Associated CTE Course(s)	57T1 Drone Technologies 1 57T2 Drone Technologies 2 57T3 Drone Technologies 3
Vendor	Federal Aviation Administration

Certification ID and Name	262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License
Description	The FAA Part 107 UAS (Drone) certification is a professional license that allows anyone age 16 years or older to immediately qualify for commercial compensation. It requires extensive, complex analytical capabilities and formidable legal knowledge, as well as the application of aeronautical principles, including, but not limited to, safe trafficking throughout the National Airspace System. Drone practitioners must understand how to analyze aviation weather, aeronautical charts, daily flight restrictions and updates, electrical and mechanical maintenance procedures, airspace classifications and clearances, radio communications, and interpersonal crew resource management.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regulations ● Airspace and Requirements ● Weather ● Loading and Performance ● Operations
Exam Blueprint	https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/training_testing/testing/acs/uas_acs.pdf
Format	Computer-based
Questions	60
Duration	2 hours
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes, applicants may retest after a 14-day waiting period. Applicants must pay the full price to retake the test.
Similar Approved Certifications	None

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	\$175
Cost for Instructor Training	The certification requires a one-time \$175 fee for initial training and testing, with free recertification every two years.
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License
Occupational Alignment	27-4031.00 Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Film
Is the certification used professionally?	
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	262 - FAA Part 107 UAV License
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

575 - YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 1

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	575 - YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 1
Application Type	Tier Reevaluation
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Digital Technology
Career Pathway(s)	Game and Interactive Media Design Related: Web & Digital Communication, Digital Art & Design, and Graphic Communications
Associated CTE Course(s)	5350 Foundations of Animation
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The 3D Animation 1 certification validates a student’s ability to create and manipulate 3D digital objects and environments using specialized software. It measures knowledge of fundamental 2D and 3D animation principles and production techniques, including planning, modeling, animating, and rendering. Candidates demonstrate artistic and technical skills by designing and animating original 3D characters and scenes.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Opportunities ● Animation Production Pipeline ● Animation Terms, Tools, and Interface ● 12 Principles of Animation ● Animating 3D Models ● Animating Rigged 3D Characters ● Animating Cameras ● Render Animated Scenes
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/3D-Animation-1-1.pdf
Format	Computer-based

Certification ID and Name	575 - YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 1
Questions	38
Duration	90 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 8 or higher
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	160 – ACE-Web Communications with Animate CC 359 – AutoDesk Maya 372 – YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 460 – Adobe Certified Professional (ACP) Using Adobe Animate 462 – Adobe Certified Professional Video Design Specialist (ACP-VDP)

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	575 - YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 1
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	575 - YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 1
Occupational Alignment	
Is the certification used professionally?	
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	575 - 3D Animation 1
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential
Application Type	Tier Reevaluation
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge
Career Cluster	Public Service & Safety
Career Pathway(s)	All JROTC Programs (Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy)
Associated CTE Course(s)	JROTC 1 - 4 (3751, 3752, 3753, 3754)
Vendor	NOCTI
Description	NOCTI has collaborated with Subject Matter Experts from various military branches to develop the JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills credential, which focuses on core JROTC standards integrated across all branches. Approved JROTC programs are eligible to offer this opportunity to cadets as part of their leadership roles. This assessment measures technical skills at the occupational level and includes items that gauge factual and theoretical knowledge.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team Collaboration ● Interpersonal Skills and Communication ● Ethics, Integrity, and Respect ● Decision Making, Critical Thinking, and Planning ● Management, Mentorship, and Performance Review ● Leadership ● Government, Civic Duty, and Citizenship ● Career and Self Discovery
Exam Blueprint	https://www.nocti.org/wp-content/uploads/Blueprints/PartJROTCLeadEmpSkills9114.pdf
Format	Computer-based or Paper-based
Questions	100
Duration	2 hours

Certification ID and Name	618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	No
Similar Approved Certifications	425 Skills USA Career Essentials A94 Microburst EmployABILITY Soft Skills Certification

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	\$15
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential
Occupational Alignment	
Is the certification used professionally?	
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	618 - NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-627 - YouScience Industry Certification: Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-627 -YouScience Industry Certification: Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Agriculture
Career Pathway(s)	Agricultural Mechanics & Technology Related: Horticulture, Plant & Animal Systems, and Biosystems Engineering & Technology
Associated CTE Course(s)	Agricultural Mechanics and Technology 5660
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The Agricultural Mechanics and Technology 1 industry certification exam assesses a learner’s knowledge of the principles and techniques of power, structural, and technical systems used in the agricultural industry, particularly in production and services. Learners are tested on basic skills in hot and cold metalwork, tool reconditioning, plumbing, painting, bill of materials preparation, small gas engines, and welding, including practices related to soil and water management and the safe use of tools and equipment.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal and Leadership Development ● Supervised Agricultural Experience ● Safety Practices ● Agricultural Structures ● Plumbing Knowledge and Skills ● Internal Combustion Engines ● Metals

Certification ID and Name	P-627 -YouScience Industry Certification: Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Agricultural-Mechanics-and-Technology-1.pdf
Format	Computer-based
Questions	41
Duration	90 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 70% or higher
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-627 - YouScience Industry Certification: Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-627 -YouScience Industry Certification: Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations. Agricultural Equipment Operators 45-2091 Construction Laborers 47-2060
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-627 - Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-628 - Broadcast Project Management

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Arts, Entertainment, and Design
Career Pathway(s)	Media Technology
Associated CTE Course(s)	Media Technology 1 – 4 (5540, 5541, 5542, 5543)
Vendor	National Public School Broadcast Network
Description	<p>The Broadcast Project Management (BPM) Certification, issued by the National Public School Broadcast Network (NPSBN) in partnership with RundownHQ, validates student mastery of the complete broadcast production workflow—from story development and assignment management to scripting, coordination, and live operations.</p> <p>BPM directly reinforces course standards requiring students to plan, produce, and deliver broadcast-quality content. It assesses applied skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-production: storyboarding, rundowns, and workflow organization ● Production: camera operation, lighting, audio, and on-set collaboration ● Post-production: editing, publishing, and project evaluation ● Management: leadership, scheduling, and ethical newsroom practices <p>This alignment ensures the BPM Certification measures career-ready competencies that align with CTE Media Technology standards and industry expectations.</p>

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-Production Planning ● Field and Studio Production ● Script Rundown and Management ● Post-Production and Editing ● Project Leadership and Ethics
Exam Blueprint	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uKEGslRIlhaP-T_KZ2zf4tkUlu4xtCRt/view?usp=sharing
Format	Computer-based
Questions	50 multiple-choice questions and one practical scenario-based task
Duration	90 Minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 80%
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	There are none that are as extensive as BPM.

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	
Cost for Instructor Training	\$1,495
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Occupational Alignment	<p>Certification does not align with statewide or regional priority occupations.</p> <p>Broadcast Technician — 27-4012.00 Audio and Video Technician — 27-4011.00 Film and Video Editor / Camera Operator — 27-4031.00</p>
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 3 (Career Ready, 3 Points): High-rigor certifications that demonstrate career readiness and are recognized by employers for hiring or advancement.
Career Cluster	Construction
Career Pathway(s)	Heavy Equipment Operator
Associated CTE Course(s)	Heavy Equipment Operator (68B0,68B1,68B2) - Innovative Courses
Vendor	CAT Simulators/Simformation
Description	The SIMSCHOLARS Certification is a comprehensive instructional curriculum designed to support the training and preparation of heavy equipment operators. It provides structured lesson plans, instructional materials, and aligned assessments that build foundational knowledge in equipment operation, safety, and industry practices.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Opportunities ● Construction Stakes ● Earthmoving ● Earthmoving Equipment ● Excavating ● Grading Slopes ● Identify Heavy Equipment ● Mining ● Operating Heavy Equipment ● Prepare Graded Surfaces ● Safety Requirements ● SDCB Forklifts ● Trenching ● Utility Tractors
Exam Blueprint	https://simformation.com/simscholars-curriculum/ https://lms.simscholars.com

Certification ID and Name	P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification
Format	Computer-based, Performance-based
Questions	25-30 Depending on Module
Duration	No Time Limit - Class period is 2 hours and 30 minutes
Scoring	70-Beginner; 80-Intermediate; 85-Advanced
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	Included in yearly subscription - \$3,500/year
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	Yearly subscription

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations. Other Construction Equipment Operators 47-2073
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-629 - CAT SimScholars Certification
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Construction
Career Pathway(s)	Heavy Equipment Operator
Associated CTE Course(s)	Heavy Equipment Operator (68B0,68B1,68B2) - Innovative Courses
Vendor	CAT Simulators/Simformotion
Description	<p>The NCCER simulation-based credential is an industry-recognized credential for heavy equipment operations that integrates Cat® simulator training with NCCER classroom curriculum and assessment. Through aligned resources from NCCER and Simformotion™, learners gain realistic, hands-on training in a safe virtual environment while developing the knowledge and skills required of heavy equipment operators. To earn the credential, organizations must offer heavy equipment operations training using the NCCER curriculum and Cat Simulator systems; simulator performance serves as the performance profile for each NCCER module. Candidates complete simulator training, submit a simulated performance evaluation through NCCER’s performance application, and pass the associated NCCER module test to validate competency. Organizations that are not NCCER-accredited may still use Cat Simulators for instruction, but only accredited organizations can award the NCCER simulation-based credential.</p>

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career Opportunities ● Construction Stakes ● Earthmoving ● Earthmoving Equipment ● Excavating ● Grading Slopes ● Identify Heavy Equipment ● Mining ● Operating Heavy Equipment ● Prepare Graded Surfaces ● Safety Requirements ● SDCB Forklifts ● Trenching ● Utility Tractors
Exam Blueprint	https://catsimulators.com/nccer-credential/
Format	Computer-based, Performance-based
Questions	Varies by Exercise/Assessment on the Simulator
Duration	No Time Limit - Class Time - 2hours 30 minutes
Scoring	70-Beginner; 80-Intermediate; 85-Advanced
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	Included in yearly subscription - \$3,500/year
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	Yearly subscription - \$3,500/year

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations. Other Construction Equipment Operators - 47-2073
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	No - certification (at this scoring level) does not meaningfully support postsecondary credential attainment.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-631 - YouScience Industry Certification: Exploring Computer Science

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-631 - YouScience Industry Certification: Exploring Computer Science
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 1 (Introductory, 1 Point): Entry-level certification earned early in a CTE program sequence.
Career Cluster	Digital Technology
Career Pathway(s)	Programming and Software Development Related: Web & Digital Communications and Game & Interactive Media Design
Associated CTE Course(s)	Fundamentals of Computing 5023
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The Exploring Computer Science industry certification exam is designed to introduce learners to the breadth of the field of computer science through the exploration of engaging and accessible topics. The exam focuses on core computing concepts and assesses learners' understanding of why certain tools or languages might be used to solve particular problems. The goal is to evaluate learners' computational thinking practices of algorithm development, problem-solving, and programming within the context of problems relevant to their lives. The exam also covers topics such as artificial intelligence, web development, programming, and physical computing.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer science practices • Problem-solving with computers • Web development • Programming and algorithms
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Exploring-Computer-Science.pdf

Certification ID and Name	P-631 - YouScience Industry Certification: Exploring Computer Science
Format	Computer-based
Questions	34
Duration	60 Minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 70
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-631 - YouScience Industry Certification: Exploring Computer Science
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-631 - YouScience Industry Certification: Exploring Computer Science
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. Software Developers - 15-1252 Web Developers - 15-1254
Is the certification used professionally?	No
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-631 - Exploring Computer Science
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Arts, Entertainment, and Design
Career Pathway(s)	Media Technology
Associated CTE Course(s)	6124 Media Technology 1 6125 Media Technology 2 6126 Media Technology 3 6127 Media Technology 4
Vendor	Future Media Technology
Description	This certification validates foundational proficiency in video editing using Final Cut Pro, a professional, industry-standard editing software. Learners develop skills across the full editing workflow, including media organization, timeline editing, visual and audio enhancement, and exporting for digital and social media platforms. The certification is well-suited for emerging content creators, filmmakers, and social media professionals seeking to produce high-quality, polished video content for a variety of audiences and purposes.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with an iPhone for Video and Post-Production ● Final Cut Pro for iPad ● Workspaces- Import and Organize ● Transitions, Speed, and Effects ● Basic Clip Navigation, Creating Projects, and Editing Video ● Working with Sound ● Transforming Clips ● Color Correction and Multicam ● Publishing Video to Social ● Titles

Certification ID and Name	P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification
Exam Blueprint	https://fpcertification.com/live-courses/final-cut-pro-for-social-media/
Format	Computer-based
Questions	50 questions
Duration	75 minute timed exam
Scoring	Passing Score: 80% or higher
Retest Option	Yes, after a 24 hour waiting period
Similar Approved Certifications	463 - Adobe Certified Professional Visual Design Specialist (ACP-VDS)

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	None
Testing Cost	\$149
Cost for Instructor Training	\$2,000
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification
Occupational Alignment	Certification does not align with statewide or regional priority occupations. Video Editor - 27-4032
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-632 - Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Application Card](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-633 - YouScience Industry Certification: Game Development Fundamentals 1

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-633 - YouScience Industry Certification: Game Development Fundamentals 1
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2: Intermediate - Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge
Career Cluster	Digital Technology
Career Pathway(s)	Game and Interactive Media Design
Associated CTE Course(s)	Game Design And Development - 5352
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The Game Development Fundamentals industry certification exam assesses learners' knowledge and project-based experience of fundamental game development concepts relating to STEM. Concepts assessed include game design, scripting, creation of digital assets, graphic resources, animation, understanding of hardware, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, and project management.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Video Game History ● Communication Features and Game Interface Design ● Game Platforms ● Game Genres and Types ● Game Design Production Cycle ● Understanding Careers
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Game-Development-Fundamentals-1.pdf
Format	Computer-based
Questions	30 questions
Duration	1 hour

Certification ID and Name	P-633 - YouScience Industry Certification: Game Development Fundamentals 1
Scoring	Passing Score: 72%
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None Identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-633 - YouScience Industry Certification: Game Development Fundamentals 1
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-633 - YouScience Industry Certification: Game Development Fundamentals 1
Occupational Alignment	Certification does not align with statewide or regional priority occupations. 27-1014 Special Effects Artists and Animators
Is the certification used professionally?	Unsure
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-633 - Game Development Fundamentals 1
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 3 (Career Ready, 3 Points): High-rigor certifications that demonstrate career readiness and are recognized by employers for hiring or advancement.
Career Cluster	Digital Technology
Career Pathway(s)	Game and Interactive Media Design (500411) Related: Web and Digital Communications (110801) Graphic Communications (100301) Digital Art and Design (500402)
Associated CTE Course(s)	Foundations Of Animation Course Code: 5350 Advanced Animation Course Code: 5351
Vendor	Toon Boom
Description	The Toon Boom Harmony Premium Associate Certification validates foundational skills in Toon Boom's industry-standard animation software, proving competency in key areas like software navigation, drawing, rigging cut-out puppets, compositing, applying effects, staging scenes, and exporting projects, essential for entry-level animation roles and further specialization. It confirms understanding of core animation principles and software functionality.

Certification ID and Name	P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● History of Animation ● Animation Techniques ● Animation Principles ● Animation Pipeline ● Efficiency & Organization ● Project Creation ● Interface Navigation ● Drawing Tools ● Bitmap Drawing ● Design ● Layout ● Layers ● Paperless Animation ● Timing & Drawing Exposure ● Visual Reference Tools ● Color Styling ● Color Palettes ● Painting ● Rigging ● Cut-out Animation ● Library & Templates ● Lip-Sync ● Sound ● Import ● Staging ● Keyframes & Motion ● Camera Move ● Playback ● Composting & Effects ● Node System ● 3D Space ● Exporting
Exam Blueprint	https://learn.toonboom.com/files/modules/253/en/Toon%20Boom%20Harmony%20Premium%20Associate%20Certification%20Study%20Guide.zip
Format	Computer-based
Questions	35
Duration	45 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes, each voucher allows three attempts at completing the exam.
Similar Approved Certifications	160 – ACE-Web Communications with Animate CC 359 – AutoDesk Maya 372 – YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation 460 – Adobe Certified Professional (ACP) Using Adobe Animate 461 – Adobe Certified Professional (ACP) Visual Effects & Motion Graphics Using Adobe After Effects 462 – Adobe Certified Professional Video Design Specialist (ACP-VDP) 463 - Adobe Certified Professional in Video Design 575 – YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation I 576 – YouScience Industry Certification: 3D Animation II 514 - Unity Certified User: Artist 515 - Unity Certified User: Programmer 516 - Unity Certified User: VR Developer

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	None
Testing Cost	\$75
Cost for Instructor Training	None, training is free.
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. Graphic Designers 27-1024 Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other 27-2099
Is the certification used professionally?	Unsure
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Yes — supports the learning progression for postsecondary education/training.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-634 - Harmony Premium Associate Certification
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2: Intermediate - Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge
Career Cluster	Digital Technology
Career Pathway(s)	Networking Systems Related: Computer and Information Systems Security/Information Assurance Programming and Software Development Web and Digital Communications
Associated CTE Course(s)	Cyber Security Fundamentals 5370 Networking Fundamentals 5310
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The Network Fundamentals industry certification exam assesses the knowledge and skills required to implement a defined network architecture with basic network security. Learners demonstrate their ability to configure, maintain, and troubleshoot network devices using appropriate network tools. Learners also show an understanding of the features and purpose of network technologies, make basic solution recommendations, analyze network traffic, and are familiar with common protocols and media types.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Networking concepts ● Network installation and configuration ● Network media and topologies ● Network management ● Network security

Certification ID and Name	P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Network-Fundamentals.pdf
Format	Computer-based
Questions	67
Duration	1 hour and 20 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	301 - Network Technology Associates

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. 15-1212 Information Security Analysts 15-1231 Computer Network Support Specialists 15-1241 Computer Network Architects 15-1244 Network and Computer Systems Administrators
Is the certification used professionally?	Unsure
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Yes - the certification clearly supports the progression to a high-value postsecondary credential.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-635 - YouScience Industry Certification: Network Fundamentals
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Marketing & Sales (Primary) Management & Entrepreneurship Financial Services
Career Pathway(s)	Marketing Analytics Marketing Communications Marketing Management Merchandising
Associated CTE Course(s)	Marketing 5421 Fashion Marketing 5410 Marketing Management 5431 Merchandising 5430
Vendor	YouScience
Description	The Retailing industry certification exam assesses learners' understanding of how to operate businesses that sell, rent, or lease goods and services. Learners demonstrate their understanding of the theory and application of merchandise/service assortment, pricing, promotion mix, location, store layout, and customer service activities necessary for successful retail operations. The exam also evaluates participation in a related CTSO organization for students enrolled in marketing courses.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Operations Management ● Buying and Merchandising ● Customer Experience ● Sales and Promotions ● Employability
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Retailing.pdf

Certification ID and Name	P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing
Format	Computer-based
Questions	42
Duration	50 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 35.35 of 47 points
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. 41-1011 First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
Is the certification used professionally?	Unsure
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-636 - YouScience Industry Certification: Retailing
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Agriculture
Career Pathway(s)	Horticulture (010601) Related: Plant and Animal Systems (011101) Biosystems Engineering Technology (140301)
Associated CTE Course(s)	Turf and Lawn Management 5654 Sports Turf Management 5655
Vendor	iCEV Provider: Sports Field Management Association
Description	<p>The SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification verifies individuals who have obtained foundational knowledge and skills in the areas of turfgrass science and management, as well as the ability to pursue a career in the turfgrass industry. The certification assesses industry-recognized standards developed by the Sports Field Management Association. Comprised of sports field managers from across the country, SFMA serves as an official voice for green-industry professionals.</p> <p>The certification validates that individuals have acquired knowledge and skills in turfgrass development, turfgrass environment, preparation, practices and benefits. Those who earn the certification are more qualified and prepared to pursue a meaningful career in the turfgrass or sports field management industries. Additionally, the certification allows employers to identify and connect with more skilled candidates, filling gaps in the labor market and jumpstarting individuals' careers.</p>

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Benefits of Turfgrass ● Turfgrass Anatomy, Identification and Adaptations ● Turfgrass Environment ● Turfgrass Cultural Practices ● Playing Surface Preparation
Exam Blueprint	https://www.icevonline.com/hubfs/Certifications/Certification%20Blueprints/Blueprint_SFMA_Turfgrass_Science_Cert.pdf
Format	Computer-based
Questions	100
Duration	2 hours
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes, the candidate must pay the full exam price to retest.
Similar Approved Certifications	None Identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	None
Testing Cost	iCEV offers a certification subscription for \$35/year, sold in bundles of 25 for \$875. Certification vouchers cover one exam attempt and cost \$50 for iCEV subscribers & \$75 for non-iCEV subscribers.
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Occupational Alignment	<p>Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations.</p> <p>37-1012 First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service & Groundskeeping Workers</p>

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Advanced Manufacturing
Career Pathway(s)	Siemens Engineering Related: Machine Technology Mechatronics Integrated Technologies Core Engineering
Associated CTE Course(s)	Siemens Manufacturing and Automation - 57R1
Vendor	Siemens Digital Industries

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
Description	The Siemens TIA (Totally Integrated Automation) Portal Basics Badge is awarded to students who demonstrate foundational understanding of Siemens TIA Portal software and S7-1200 PLC (Programmable Logic Controller) concepts, including creating projects, adding hardware, and answering basic programming questions. Students who complete the Siemens Manufacturing and Automation course within the Advanced Manufacturing pathway will have the knowledge and skills needed to sit for the certification exam. The Siemens SCE (Siemens Cooperates with Education) Automation Fundamentals Certification provides a structured method for training and verifying a candidate's ability to implement a Totally Integrated Automation solution using sound engineering and SIMATIC best practices. After meeting training and knowledge requirements—either through Siemens materials or experiential learning—candidates sit for a three-part electronic exam covering PLC, HMI (Human-Machine Interface)/Networking, and Drives, with the option to test and earn certification in each area independently.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support creation of a PLC application program using Ladder Logic (LAD), following the SIMATIC recommended best practices ● Troubleshoot errors associated with the automation system ● Troubleshoot functional errors in the application program or equipment under control ● Manage project-related tasks ● Recognize key S7-1200 and TIA Portal features and documentation
Exam Blueprint	https://www.sitrain.us/LMS/CourseView.aspx?cps=1186&view=course&coursecode=SCT-CEPLCS1A
Format	Computer-based
Questions	90 multiple-choice
Duration	No time limit
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes. The candidate may take the exam up to three times in one calendar year.
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
Proctor Required	None

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
Test Site Requirements	None
Testing Cost	\$0
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
Occupational Alignment	<p>Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations.</p> <p>Electrical Engineers: 17-2071 Mechanical Engineers: 17-2141 Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers: 51-2028</p>
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-638 - Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

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[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Arts, Entertainment, and Design
Career Pathway(s)	Digital Art and Design (500402) Related: Graphic Communications (100301) Media Technology (100299)
Associated CTE Course(s)	Digital Art And Design 1 – 4 (6120, 6121, 6121, 6123) Graphic Communications 1 – 4 (6200, 6201, 6202, 6203)
Vendor	Isograd
Description	The TOSA InDesign Certification validates a learner's proficiency in Adobe InDesign, assessing skills in layout design, text and image management, and document preparation for print and digital media. It aligns closely with South Carolina's Digital Art and Design and Graphic Communications CTE courses, which emphasize visual communication, digital publishing, and print production using industry-standard software. Integrating TOSA InDesign within these pathways reinforces core course objectives by providing students with a measurable, globally recognized credential that demonstrates professional-level design and production skills relevant to modern creative industries.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interface, digital workspace, and fundamentals ● Text and tables ● Images and graphic objects ● Preparation for printing
Exam Blueprint	https://static.TOSA.org/TOSAorg_1/pdf/skillsframeworks/indesign_en.pdf
Format	Computer-based

Certification ID and Name	P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign
Questions	35
Duration	1 hour
Scoring	Numeric score between 1 and 1,000 points that corresponds to a proficiency level as described: Expert Level: 876 to 1,000; Advanced Level: 726 to 875; Productive Level: 551 to 725; Basic Level: 351 to 550; Beginner Level: 1 to 350. Students earn a certificate at the Productive Level and above.
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	Yes
Testing Cost	\$16-\$45 without courseware, \$22.50-\$70 with courseware
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. Graphic Designers 27-1024
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-639 - TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Arts, Entertainment, and Design
Career Pathway(s)	Digital Art and Design (500402) Related: Media Technology (100299) Graphic Communications (100301)
Associated CTE Course(s)	Digital Art and Design 1 - 4 (6120, 6121, 6121, 6123) Graphic Communications 1 - 4 (6200, 6201, 6202, 6203) Media Technology 1 – 4 (6124, 6125, 6126, 6127)
Vendor	Isograd
Description	The TOSA Adobe Premiere Pro Certification validates a learner's ability to use industry-standard video-editing tools and assesses skills in project setup, visual editing, color correction, audio adjustments, motion graphics, and media publishing. It aligns closely with K-12 and CTE pathways in South Carolina that emphasize digital media production, audiovisual communication, and creative technology. Integrating TOSA Premiere Pro into these programs supports core course objectives by providing students with a measurable, globally recognized credential that demonstrates the professional-level editing and production skills required in modern digital media careers.
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environment and Project Set Up ● Visual Elements ● Video Project Structure and Industry ● Publishing Digital Media
Exam Blueprint	https://static.TOSA.org/TOSAorg_1/pdf/skillsframeworks/premierepro_en.pdf

Certification ID and Name	P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro
Format	Computer-based
Questions	35
Duration	1 hour
Scoring	Numeric score between 1 and 1,000 points that corresponds to a proficiency level as described: Expert Level: 876 to 1,000; Advanced Level: 726 to 875; Productive Level: 551 to 725; Basic Level: 351 to 550; Beginner Level: 1 to 350. Students earn a certificate at the Productive Level and above.
Retest Option	Yes
Similar Approved Certifications	None identified

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro
Proctor Required	Yes
Test Site Requirements	None
Testing Cost	\$16-\$45 without courseware, \$22.50-\$70 with courseware
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. Graphic Designers 27-1024 Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other 27-2000
Is the certification used professionally	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-640 - TOSA Certification for Adobe Premiere Pro
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

[Review Documentation](#) - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

[Full Application](#) - Initially submitted application.

OFFICE OF CAREER READINESS

Tiered Certification Summary Cards

P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry

Certification Details

Certification ID and Name	P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry
Application Type	New Certification
Recommended Tier	Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points): Certifications requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.
Career Cluster	Construction
Career Pathway(s)	Carpentry
Associated CTE Course(s)	Carpentry 1 - 4 (6091, 6092, 6093, 6094)
Vendor	YouScience
Description	<p>The Carpentry industry certification exam assesses the learner’s ability to lay out, fabricate, erect, install, and repair wooden structures and fixtures using hand and power tools. The exam assesses knowledge of common systems of framing, construction materials, blueprint reading, concrete placement, siding, and mechanical systems.</p> <p>This certification is similar in nature to the NCCER certification but is accessible to students with Visual Disabilities</p>
Skills/Concepts Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Materials, Fasteners, and Adhesives ● Safety Practices ● Concrete & Reinforcing Materials ● Framing 5. Windows and Doors Installation ● Roofing Installation ● Insulation Installation ● Drywall Installation and Finishing ● Interior Finishing ● Professional Skills
Exam Blueprint	https://www.youscience.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Carpentry.pdf
Format	Computer-based, Performance-based

Certification ID and Name	P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry
Questions	73
Duration	60 - 90 minutes
Scoring	Passing Score: 70%
Retest Option	Yes, after a prescribed waiting period
Similar Approved Certifications	326 - CTECS Carpentry Certification 26 - NCCER Carpentry

Administration Requirements

Certification ID and Name	P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry
Proctor Required	Yes - the instructor can serve as the proctor.
Test Site Requirements	No - any partnering site can host the exam.
Testing Cost	\$20/student or \$5,450 annual site license
Cost for Instructor Training	None
Other Costs	None

Workforce Relevance Details (SCDEW Review)

Certification ID and Name	P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry
Occupational Alignment	Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations. Carpenters 47-2031 Construction Laborers 47-2601 Painters, Construction and Maintenance 47-2141
Is the certification used professionally?	Yes
Does the certification have a benefit at the postsecondary level?	Possible — may support the learning progression depending on the program or pathway.

Technical Advisory Committee Feedback

Certification ID and Name	P-641 - YouScience Industry Certification: Carpentry
TAC Review Summary	<i>*To be completed in the Spring of 2026</i>

Links

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