



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDA

ed.sc.gov



August 24, 2021

Missed last week's memos?

All SCDE weekly memo communications are archived [here](#). Individual memos can be found on the [School District Memoranda Archive](#).

COVID-19 CASES

COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff and Students

[COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff & Students](#) (as of 8/22/2021)

[South Carolina County-Level Data for COVID-19](#) (as of 8/22/2021)

NEW - [COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools Booklet](#) (as of 8/23/2021)

NEW - [The Science of Mask Use in K-12 Schools](#) (as of 8/20/2021)

NEW - [The Evidence of Mask Use in K-12 Schools](#) (as of 8/20/2021)

DHEC COVID-19 Physical Distance Guidance Statement:

DHEC initially provided guidance on the physical distancing guidelines for quarantine based on evidence from last school year in an attempt to make it as easy as possible for teachers and school staff to identify close contacts. Maintaining and assessing compliance with recommendations for physical distancing and the use of masks is not simple. The agency's guidance for COVID-19 is often updated as more information and data becomes available during this rapidly evolving pandemic. It has become apparent based on data being reported by schools, along with increasing levels of the highly transmissible Delta variant that now comprises essentially all cases of COVID-19 in the state, that more protective measures are needed to lower the risk of virus transmission in schools. For this reason, DHEC is realigning its guidance to mirror CDC recommendations for indications for the quarantine of close contacts of cases.

SCDE School Closure Guidance:

Districts with a State Board of Education approved full time virtual program are permitted to offer a full time virtual option for up to 5% of their student enrollment in addition to a five day face to face instruction option.

Districts and schools, except virtual charters, are not permitted to offer only virtual instruction unless the district or school can no longer safely operate and provide face to face instruction due to staffing shortages resulting from COVID-19 or a similar infectious disease. Should

staffing shortages exist and the school or district feels it cannot safely offer face to face instruction, the school or district should contact the local or regional public health office and allow public health officials to assess the situation and provide a recommendation on current operations and additional options for infection control.

Should all local or regional public health recommendations for transmission reduction be exhausted and/or are unable to be implemented and the number of positive cases, quarantines, and relevant public health data warrant it, the school or district is permitted to move temporarily to a virtual mode of instruction. There is no defined standard or threshold for closing schools or classrooms. Local, regional, and state public health officials will provide the most current data and guidance, or other information requested by a school, so school and district officials can make the most informed decisions possible, in the best interest of the health and wellbeing of their students and staff.

The decision making should be handled on a school by school basis rather than district wide unless the staffing shortages exist district wide and district wide closure is recommended by public health officials. The school or district must move back to face to face instruction as soon as staff becomes available. The school or district should also notify the SCDE prior to announcement of the move to temporary virtual only instruction.

ESSER III

Districts are reminded that their ARP ESSER (or ESSER III) plans are due to the South Carolina Department of Education today, August 24, 2021. For information regarding ARP ESSER funds, please visit <https://ed.sc.gov/policy/federal-education-programs/esser-funding-information/arp-esser-funding-information/>.

If you have any questions or need technical assistance, please e-mail scesser@ed.sc.gov.

ATTENDANCE

2021-22 Attendance Guidance - Updated August 19, 2021

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Principals, District Technology Coordinators
CONTACT: Aveene Coleman, acoleman@ed.sc.gov, Sabrina Moore, smoore@ed.sc.gov, Dan Ralyea (PowerSchool Coding), dralyea@ed.sc.gov

The purpose of this memo is to address onsite attendance and attendance in a virtual environment for students temporarily impacted by COVID-19.

The South Carolina Department of Education recommends that districts make appropriate accommodations for students who may be required to quarantine or self-isolate in accordance with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's [K-12 Schools Interim Guidance for Management of COVID-19 Cases](#). Accommodations may include temporarily moving the student(s) to a distance learning environment, such as electronic platforms or offsite environments (including home) utilizing instructional packets.

[2021-22 Attendance Guidance - Memo](#) PDF (190 KB)

[Frequently Asked Questions: Attendance - Attachment](#) PDF (294 KB)

Discipline and Attendance Data Collection Training
Opportunities

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Student Services Director, Attendance Supervisor, Incident Management Coordinator

CONTACT: Aveene Coleman, acoleman@ed.sc.gov

The Office of Student Intervention Services is hosting a series of webinars titled *Chronic Absenteeism, Dropout, Truancy, and Incident Management Data Collection*, beginning Thursday, August 26, 2021. These webinars are designed to help participants better understand state and federal data collection and reporting requirements.

[Discipline and Attendance Data Collection Training Opportunities - Memo](#) PDF (167 KB)

FACE COVERINGS

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 Requirements and COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Directors of Special Education, District 504 Plan Coordinators

CONTACT: Barbara Drayton, bdrayton@ed.sc.gov

The purpose of this correspondence is to reiterate the requirements under not only the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but also Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) when considering whether mask mandates are necessary for certain individuals in an educational setting. There are instances where the consideration of mask mandates is necessary for specific individuals who provide instruction and related services to, or come into contact with, students who are medically fragile, have immunocompromised and immunodeficiency conditions, or are otherwise at significant risk for medical conditions that make them more likely to become seriously ill, consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

[IDEA, ADA, and Section 504 Requirements and COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies - Memo](#) PDF (157 KB)

FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2021 Family and Community Engagement Virtual Summit

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Principals, Professional Development for District Personnel

CONTACT: Regina Thurmond, rthurmond@ed.sc.gov

The South Carolina Department of Education, in partnership with the Carolina Family and Community Engagement Center, will host the **2021 Family and Community Engagement Virtual Summit, September 17, 2021, from 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.** The Virtual Summit, **Moving Beyond Family Night: Renew, Reboot, Reengage**, is designed to help participants better understand the positive impact of family-school-community partnerships on student academic, social, and emotional wellbeing.

State Superintendent of Education, Molly Spearman, will open the Summit; and Dr. Tammy Pawloski, a Professor of Education and Director of the Center of Excellence to Prepare Teachers of Children of Poverty at Francis Marion University, will serve as the keynote

speaker. During concurrent sessions, experts will provide practical strategies for implementing and enhancing family and community engagement initiatives. To conclude the Summit, Dr. J. R. Green, Superintendent of Fairfield County Schools and member of the State Board of Education, will inspire participants to work collaboratively for the sake of the children.

[2021 Family and Community Engagement Virtual Summit - Memo](#) PDF (142 KB)

GRANTS

2022 African American History Instructional Materials Grant

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Nonprofit Organizations, Institutions of Higher Education

CONTACT: Stephen Corsini, spcorsini@ed.sc.gov

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) announces that the 2022 Request for Proposals for the African American History Instructional Materials Grant is now available online. Approximately \$200,000 in funding will be distributed on a competitive basis and the deadline to apply is **November 1, 2021**.

For this funding round, the SCDE will fund nonprofit organizations, school districts, or Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) that are capable of developing one of the African American History instructional materials as detailed in the Request for Proposals. The purpose of this program is to facilitate the development of additional instructional materials for African American history curricula.

[2022 African American History Instructional Materials Grant - Memo](#) PDF (174 KB)

JROTC

Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC)

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, High School Principals, Middle School Principals, School Counselors

CONTACT: Laura McNair, lmcnair@ed.sc.gov

A recent federal amendment paved the way for the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to now allow eighth grade students to take a credit-bearing course in JROTC 1, beginning with the 2021–22 school year, for those cadet units approved by the military headquarters affiliated with the high school program. Potential eighth grade cadets must be physically co-located with a ninth grade JROTC unit and the program must meet additional requirement as determined by the applicable branch of the US Armed Forces.

Currently, JROTC is a Physical Education (PE) replacement in the SC high school graduation requirements found in [SBE Regulation 43-234](#). The [Uniform Graduation Policy \(UGP\)](#) and [Reg. 43-232](#) prohibit PE or health for high school credit until the time in which the district considers students to be ninth graders. Therefore, JROTC 1 in the eighth grade is for elective credit only and will not count as the PE requirement for the SC High School Diploma.

[Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps \(JROTC\) - Memo](#) PDF (134 KB)

