



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDA

ed.sc.gov



March 1, 2022

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

As of February 23, 2022, DHEC has reported the following student and staff quarantines and isolations since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year:

- 429,290 student quarantines
- 124,630 student isolations
- 14,899 staff quarantines
- 22,471 staff isolations

[Student, Staff Isolation & Quarantine Report](#) (as of 2/23/2022)

[South Carolina County-Level Data for COVID-19](#) (as of 2/27/2022)

DHEC COVID-19 INFORMATION

Isolation and Quarantine Data Survey: Change in reporting schedule:

Beginning March 3, we will be modifying the Isolation and Quarantine Data survey and reporting schedule. DHEC wants to allow additional time for schools to review their weekly data and use it to make informed decisions about whether contact tracing, quarantine, and/ or Test to Stay can be suspended or should be reimplemented. The current Isolation and Quarantine Data Survey is delivered every Friday at 7 a.m. and is due by the following Tuesday at 12 p.m. noon. **Starting March 3**, we will begin delivering the Isolation and Quarantine Data Survey **each Thursday at 12 p.m. noon**, and the survey will close by the following **Monday at 5 p.m.**

If a school is able to suspend quarantine, TTS, and contact tracing, the school should enter 0 for numbers of staff and students absent due to quarantine. The school should continue to report staff and students absent due to isolation for COVID. **Beginning March 1**, DHEC will be adding additional columns to the weekly school Isolation and Quarantine Data report PDF that will indicate percentages of school staff and student populations absent due to COVID isolations. If for some reason we do not have staff and/or student populations of a school, we

will not include a percentage in these columns. If you notice this and would like to have us update this information, you can email acc-schools@dhec.sc.gov with this updated information.

School Testing:

We've received a number of questions about whether schools should and will be able to maintain COVID testing on campuses. DHEC's announcement that it will reduce and discontinue most vendor-based community PCR testing does not apply to school-based vendor testing. Schools who are using vendors and who wish to begin using vendors will have access to these vendors at no cost through July 31, 2022. We will also continue to supply schools who are using BinaxNOW rapid point of care antigens with CUE tests through the end of the year so long as we have supply. We encourage schools who have implemented testing programs to maintain at least symptomatic testing through vendors and/or BinaxNOW tests performed by school nurses and athletic trainers. This will allow schools to more closely monitor positive cases within the school, which will aid in informed decision making when determining if quarantine, test-to-stay (TTS), and contact tracing within the school should be suspended or reimplemented. This will also allow for more rapid reimplementation of TTS through vendors should a school need to scale up testing.

FACE MASKS ON BUSES

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [announced on February 25, 2022](#) that “it is exercising its enforcement discretion to not require that people wear masks on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and education/child care programs. CDC is making this change to align with [updated guidance](#) that no longer recommends universal indoor mask wearing in K-12 schools and early education settings in [areas with a low or medium COVID-19 Community Level](#).” Therefore, effective immediately, the South Carolina Department of Education will no longer require the use of masks by students and staff on state owned and operated school buses. As is the case with school facilities, school districts have discretion to require masks on school buses in line with CDC and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control guidance.

[Bus Face Mask Update Memo](#)

ESSER

ARP ESSER Funds, Allowable Activities

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, District Business Officials

CONTACT: scesser@ed.sc.gov

Field trips may be an allowable use of American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Funds if they are properly documented and demonstrate a substantiated need. Districts must address how the field trip responds to and/or prepares for COVID-19 and addresses improving learning loss.

The district must include specific information that allows the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to assess whether the field trip and its associated cost are reasonable, allocable and necessary (necessary details may include but are not limited to the cost of the field trip, the number of students attending, and how the field trip is linked to educational standards while addressing learning loss as outlined in the district's ESSER plan). Field trips that are social, entertaining, or similar in nature are prohibited under the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and Other Applicable Grant Regulation.

[ARP ESSER Funds, Allowable Activities - Memo](#) PDF (132 KB)

USED Annual ESSER Report

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, District Business Officials

CONTACT: scesser@ed.sc.gov

As we have shared in previous meetings, the United States Education Department (USED) is planning to conduct its Annual Report on the Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. In order to comply with the terms and conditions of the ESSER program, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is required to report on all past and planned ESSER expenditures at both the state and district level. The Annual Report will require reporting on ESSER I, ESSER II, and ARP ESSER grants.

A timeline that will include upcoming due dates, technical assistance sessions, and more will be announced once the USED releases more information to the SCDE. As of now, the USED has announced their intention to have states submit this annual report in mid-May 2022. The SCDE continues to get updated guidance from the USED on timelines and other reporting requirements.

[USED Annual ESSER Report - Memo](#) PDF (141 KB)

[USED Annual ESSER Report - Attachment](#) PDF (856 KB)

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

2022 South Carolina Teacher of the Year Gala

The annual South Carolina Teacher of the Year Gala, popularly known as the “Academy Awards” of teaching, will take place on **May 4, 2022** at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center in Columbia, S.C.

This event is the largest celebration of teaching in our state and hosts all District Teachers of the Year, legislators, and business and community leaders in an effort to acknowledge the importance of the teaching profession.

Individual tickets to the event are \$75 and multiple sponsorship packages are available.

[Show your support for teachers by purchasing your ticket today!](#)



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