



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDA

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March 9, 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

COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff and Students

DHEC began reporting positive COVID-19 cases in K-12 schools on September 4, 2020. Since that time, there have been **14,218** [positive cases among K-12 students and staff](#) who attended school face to face during their infectious period. During that same time period (9/4/2020 to 3/7/2021) DHEC has reported **451,026** [positive cases among all South Carolinians](#).

This means that positive cases among K-12 students and staff who attended school account for **3.2%** of South Carolina's total since K-12 positive case reporting began. Public and private K-12 students and staff make up approximately one fifth of South Carolina's total population.

[COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff & Students](#) (as of 3/7/2021)

[Recent Disease Activity, by County Report](#) (as of 3/3/2021)

[Interim DHEC COVID-19 Guidance for Schools](#) (as of 2/26/2021)

COVID-19 TESTING

Medicaid Reimbursement for COVID-19 Testing

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Medicaid Coordinators, Special Education Directors
CONTACT: Vanesha Perrin, vrperrin@ed.sc.gov

Effective March 1, 2021, local educational agencies (LEAs) can be reimbursed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) for COVID-19 testing when administered by a Registered Nurse (RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

LEAs must utilize procedure code, **87811 (Immunoassay, COVID-19 with direct optical observation)** when billing for COVID-19 testing. The reimbursement rate is \$42.00 per

encounter. Reimbursement for procedure code, 87811 is retroactive to October 6, 2020. Please find this information within the [Medicaid Alert](#) released by SCDHHS on February 18, 2021.

[Medicaid Reimbursement for COVID-19 Testing - Memo](#) PDF (192 KB)

DHEC has received an update from Abbott regarding an extension to expiration dates on BinaxNOW test kits. Expiration dates are now extended three (3) months beyond the original expiration dates. Linked below is the notification from Abbott which includes test kit lot numbers with their original expiration dates and their new expiration dates. Additional test kits, can be obtained by emailing PHPWarehouse@dhec.sc.gov.

[BinaxNOW COVID-19 Ag Card Product Expiry Update](#)

EMPLOYMENT

Requirements to Employ Retired Individuals for School Year 2021-22

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Human Resource Directors, School Business Officials
CONTACT: Nancy Williams, nwilliams@ed.sc.gov

The purpose of this memorandum is to confirm all critical need designations, which may be used to determine the eligibility of retired teachers to be employed and exempt from the earnings limitations imposed by S.C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1790.

Please note, based upon Proviso 1.80 of the current fiscal year, school districts may notify retired educators of employment in writing on or before May 1.

[Requirements to Employ Retired Individuals for School Year 2021-22 - Memo](#) PDF (189 KB)

[Assurance Form - Requirements to Employ Retired Individuals - Attachment](#) PDF (258 KB)

SCHOOL SAFETY

Enhancing School Safety: Spring 2021 Training Series

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Principals, District Safety Directors, Instructional Leaders, School Counseling Personnel Directors, Student Services Coordinators
CONTACT: Chenise Wiley, dcwiley@ed.sc.gov

Beginning on March 26, 2021, the Office of Student Intervention Services will host *Enhancing School Safety*, a series of trainings designed to provide participants with practical strategies and resources to expand their capacity to develop high quality emergency operations plans and offer enhanced safety and social emotional support services for staff and students.

All trainings are virtual and being offered at no cost to districts or individuals; however, registration is required.

[Enhancing School Safety: Spring 2021 Training Series - Memo](#) PDF (207 KB)

TECHNOLOGY

District Technology Advisory Group

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, District Information Technology Leaders, District Information Security/Privacy Leaders, PowerSchool IT Contacts
CONTACT: Valarie Byrd, vbyrd@ed.sc.gov

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) created the District Technology Advisory Group (SC-DTAG) initiative in 2016 for districts and the SCDE to collaborate and communicate on technology-related initiatives.

Every district superintendent, or designee of the superintendent, can nominate up to two candidates for each sub-advisory area (total of eight nominations). Individual nominees can only serve on one sub-advisory area during his or her term. All terms will be three years. Candidates must be a full-time district employee who possesses knowledge, skills, and expertise in the area where they may potentially serve.

The nomination process for the 2021 SC-DTAG sub-advisory groups will begin March 9, 2021. All district superintendents will receive an individual request to submit nominations. This year, two separate online polls will be opened – one for nominations and the other for elections. District superintendent or designee of the superintendent, nominations will be accepted March 9–23, 2021. The election period will be March 30–April 14, 2021.

[District Technology Advisory Group - Memo](#) PDF (136 KB)

[Roles of District Technology Sub-Advisory Groups - Attachment](#) PDF (195 KB)

Online Learning Initiative HotSpot Policy Change

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Information Technology Leaders
CONTACT: Jeff Henry, rhenry@ed.sc.gov

Now that the eligibility requirements of Act 142 have expired, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is in the process of implementing changes of the Online Learning Initiative program.

Subject to availability of funding, the SCDE is expanding the availability of hotspot access to the following:

- Students above the 250 percent poverty guidelines who need internet access for education; and
- Teachers who need internet access for education.

[Online Learning Initiative HotSpot Policy Change - Memo](#) PDF (160 KB)

TRANSPORTATION

Bus Capacity

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Transportation Directors
CONTACT: Garry Fast, gfast@ed.sc.gov

In line with South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's (SCDHEC) recent decision to transition, as a state, to focus on community needs at the local level,

districts are no longer required to submit waiver requests to the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to exceed the ridership 67 percent capacity limit. The SCDE recommends that districts make every effort to maximize health and safety by retaining this capacity limit, but the decision as to bus capacity is a local one to be made at the district level. **However, the face covering requirement for individuals while on a school bus and within school facilities remains in effect.**

The Office of Transportation is available to work with districts to highlight strategies that maintain health and safety and facilitate routing that provides five day face to face instruction. Strategies include, but are not limited to, modifying bell schedules, utilizing double routes when possible, prioritizing family members together when three students are occupying one seat, as well as any other means to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 while transporting students.

[Bus Capacity - Memo](#) PDF (133 KB)

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