



## Equitable Services to Private Schools Every Student Succeeds Act *General Information and the Private School Ombudsman*

### General Information

With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, the opportunity for participation by private school students and teachers increased. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) provides clear guidelines for both districts and private schools to ensure these resources are proportionately shared and utilized as intended under the federal statute. There are many changes under the reauthorized statute. The purpose of this resource document is to communicate changes to the law. SCDE aims to support both public and private schools as they collaborate in the services provided to students and teachers in private schools.

### Ombudsman

States are required to appoint a Private School Ombudsman to ensure that private school regulations are implemented. Specifically, the duty of the Ombudsman is to:

- Monitor and enforce equitable services under Titles I and VIII
- Serve as a general resource for both private schools and public-school districts (LEA)
- Provide technical assistance to private schools and public-school districts
- Collect and archive documentation from public school districts regarding consultation meetings
- Ensure a timely and meaningful consultation has occurred and equitable services are provided to private school students, staff, and families
- Participate in the SCDE Title I Committee of Practitioners
- Participate in consultation meetings between private schools and public-school districts as requested by either party
- Mediate disagreements between private schools and public school districts

The Ombudsman is a resource for both public and private schools that provides technical assistance and guidance. The Ombudsman will also receive required documentation about the consultation process from school districts.

The South Carolina Private School Ombudsman is **Theresa Gregory**. You may reach her at [equitableervices@ed.sc.gov](mailto:equitableervices@ed.sc.gov) or (803) 734-3749.