SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
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AGENDA
Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, March 16, 2026
10:00 A.M.
Room 433, Blatt Building

I. Welcome and Introductions ..... Dr. Patty Tate

II. Approval of Minutes of January 12, 2026 ..... Dr. Patty Tate

III. Action Items:
Technical Review of SC READY Science, Grades 4 & 6 .... Heather Bolinger, Stehpanie A. Lai & Dr. Matthew Madison, K-12 Assessment Solutions, University of Georgia

Requests for New Industry Certifications (CCR) ..... Dana Yow

Educational Performance of Military-Connected Students In South Carolina, 2026 Report..... Dana Yow

IV. Information Items:
Inclusion of Seal of Biliteracy in CCR..... Dana Yow & Dr. Rocio Zalba, World Languages, SC Department of Education

High School Employability Credential: Inclusion of On-Track Measure..... Dana Yow

V. CCR Measures in Accountability: ASVAB, Advanced Placement Dual Enrollment & WIN..... Dana Yow

VI. Adjournment

Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee

Dr. Patty Tate, Chair	Barbara Hairfield
Tammy Achziger	Sidney Locke
Rep. Terry Alexander	Melissa Pender
Rep. Bill Hager	Sen. Ross Turner

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

Minutes of the Meeting

January 12, 2026

Members Present (in-person or remote): Dr. Patty Tate, Barbara Hairfield, Melissa Pender, Sen. Ross Turner, Tammy Achziger, Sidney Locke, and Rep. Terry Alexander.

Special Guests: Bunnie Ward, Director, TransformSC; Ivy Coburn, Division Director, Education Workforce, SREB; Brooke Culclasure, Director, Research & Strategic Learning, Furman University; Ivy Colburn and Dr. Herb Bocchino, Office of Career Readiness, SCDE.

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

Dr. Patty Tate opened the meeting and asked for a motion to approve the ASA subcommittee minutes from the November 17, 2025, meeting. Senator Turner motioned to approve the minutes which was seconded by Ms. Hairfield. After the minutes were approved, Dr. Tate announced two action items, the first being a report on the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Data Project, required under Section 59-18-920, which directs the Education Oversight Committee, in collaboration with the State Board of Education and the School to Work Advisory Council, to develop a report card for career and technology schools. Bunnie Ward, Director of Transform SC, presented the findings with project partners Ivy Coburn, Division Director of Education Workforce, SREB and Brooke Culclasure, Director of Research and Strategic Learning at Furman University.

The project, supported by the EOC, Transform SC, Council on Competitiveness, Riley Institute, SREB, and the SC Department of Education, focuses on developing a CTE data dashboard with initial emphasis on CTE centers and multi-district centers and future phases to include comprehensive high schools. Over the past nine months, the team gathered research and stakeholder feedback through advisory working group meetings, presentations, group interviews, and questionnaires involving 122 CTE leaders, 30 CTE directors, and business and industry representatives across key sectors. The goal is to increase understanding of CTE and support improved participation, college and career readiness, postsecondary outcomes, and education–business alignment.

The project concluded that a phased, trust-building approach is necessary; stakeholders interpret data differently; only clean, validated data should be used publicly; and the value of the tool lies in how it is used to inform decisions and continuous improvement. Recommendations include developing data visualizations iteratively with stakeholder input, using clear language to modernize perceptions of CTE, providing tiered professional learning for effective data use, and designing the system to evolve as data quality and availability expand.

The presenters recommended that the CTE data dashboard be developed through an iterative and collaborative process, beginning with a limited set of readily available and trusted data elements. Data visualizations should be tested with CTE leaders, educators, and other stakeholders before broader release to ensure users clearly understand what the data shows, what conclusions can reasonably be drawn, and where limitations exist. Stakeholder feedback should directly inform revisions, so the tool builds confidence, accuracy, and usability over time.

They also emphasized the need to use clear and intentional language throughout the dashboard to educate users and reframe outdated perceptions of Career and Technical Education. Labels, explanations, and narrative context should highlight the rigor, relevance, and economic value of modern CTE programs, helping the public, policymakers, and business leaders better understand CTE pathways and outcomes rather than viewing them through historical misconceptions.

In addition, the team recommended a tiered approach to professional learning and data use, starting with facilitated sessions for CTE leaders and administrators focused on interpreting data, identifying trends, and recognizing priority challenges. Follow-up work sessions would support strategy development and implementation, and over time, the state should host best-practice sharing sessions where CTE leaders present how they used data to address challenges and improve outcomes.

Finally, they advised that the data system be designed for continuous review and expansion, with new data elements added only after collaborative stakeholder review to ensure accuracy, clarity, and appropriate interpretation. This approach would allow the dashboard to grow as data quality improves while maintaining trust, credibility, and consistent understanding across stakeholder groups.

EOC member Melissa Pender asked how the CTE directors were selected for participation in the project. Bunnie Ward explained that participation was voluntary and open to all CTE directors statewide, with directors opting in by signing up and committing time to the process using a director-level list provided by the Department of Education. Ms. Ward noted that while statewide

representation was achieved, participation was uneven across regions, citing higher representation from some areas compared to the Lowcountry. Ms. Pender asked whether future surveys could include additional measures to increase participation from underrepresented regions. Ms. Ward agreed this should be considered in future questionnaires and survey efforts to improve regional balance and representation.

A motion was made to accept the recommendations. The motion carried.

The second action item was presented by Dr. Matthew Lavery-inclusion of the Seal of Biliteracy in the CCR (college and career readiness) indicator. This item was brought to the subcommittee as a result of recommendations from the Accountability Advisory Committee for review and consideration.

To earn the Seal, a student in their junior or senior year must meet two requirements: earn a 3.0 GPA or higher in all English Language Arts graduation requirements, or for multilingual learners, achieve a minimum overall composite score of 4.4 on the ACCESS 2.0 English Proficiency Test; and demonstrate at least an Intermediate-Mid level of proficiency on a state-approved, nationally recognized language assessment measuring reading, writing, listening, and speaking in a language other than English. The Seal of Biliteracy has been promoted nationally by ACTFL, is recognized or endorsed in all 50 states, and participation in South Carolina continues to grow. Requests to include the Seal in the College and Career Readiness (CCR) indicator have been received since fall 2023 and were reviewed by the Accountability Advisory Committee as part of its cyclical review.

This item represents the first cyclical review recommendation brought before EOC members for action, specifically Recommendation 8, which proposes recognizing the Seal of Biliteracy within the CCR indicator. The Seal aligns with the Profile of the Graduate by supporting world-class knowledge through multiple languages, world-class skills through communication, and life and career characteristics through a global perspective. The CCR indicator measures the percentage of students in a high school graduation cohort identified as college or career ready.

Staff recommended including attainment of the South Carolina Seal of Biliteracy as an additional criterion for demonstrating college readiness. They further recommended updating the 2027 Accountability Manual to reflect this change for the 2027 School Report Cards and conditionally updating the 2026 Accountability Manual for the 2026 School Report Cards, pending confirmation from the South Carolina Department of Education that the data system can accurately capture

the Seal, the School Report Card website can be updated and tested in time, and the change can be clearly communicated to LEAs.

Rep. Terry Alexander asked how including the Seal of Biliteracy in the College and Career Readiness indicator would impact the School Report Cards. Dr. Lavery emphasized that the Seal is within reach of all high schools, and its inclusion would not disadvantage schools that do not currently have high participation but instead would expand opportunities for students without negatively affecting School Report Cards. Rep. Alexander then asked whether the Department of Education had reviewed the recommendation. Dr. Lavery responded that the Department had representation on the Accountability Advisory Committee and that the recommendation was discussed during those meetings. Phillip Cease, Director of Governmental Affairs at the SC Department of Education, stated that he would confirm the Department's response to the recommendation and report back to the committee.

A motion was made to accept the recommendation. Motion carried.

Next, the committee moved to Information Items, beginning with a presentation by Dr. Lavery on the Multilingual Learners' Progress (MLP) Indicator. He outlined why the indicator exists, noting that ESSA requires school report cards to include progress toward English language proficiency for multilingual learners, as measured in South Carolina by the WIDA ACCESS assessment. Proficiency is defined as a composite score of 4.4, with a state-determined timeline of five years. Dr. Lavery explained that the current MLP indicator measures the percentage of multilingual learners in a school who are on track to reach proficiency within that five-year window.

He noted that recent federal review of amendments to the state's consolidated plan required changes to how the indicator is calculated, including that the MLP must be calculated at the school level rather than the report card level and may only include students tested in the current accountability year. As a result, the population of students included in the indicator changed significantly, making 2023 results not comparable to 2024.

Discussion of the MLP indicator led to three recommendations: adjusting the relative weight of the indicator, examining whether the testing window could be expanded, and enhancing reporting of multilingual learners' progress. A separate focused convening highlighted strengths of the current indicator, including advance knowledge of targets, an appropriate five-year proficiency timeline, and accountability for growth schools directly influence. However, challenges were also identified, such as high student mobility, evenly spaced annual targets that may not reflect actual learning patterns, and complex record-keeping and coding requirements.

Suggested improvements included basing annual growth targets on the most recent proficiency level rather than multi-year progression, grounding targets and cut scores in South Carolina data and research on English language acquisition, and simplifying record-keeping to improve accuracy. Dr. Lavery concluded by sharing that a revised model is under development, informed by consultation with WIDA experts, which uses annual targets based on the most recent test and supports a five-year path to proficiency without requiring five years of data. Next steps include conducting impact simulations using historical data and recalibrating cut scores. Ms. Pender asked whether consideration is given to schools with a high percentage of multilingual learners. Dr. Lavery responded that he would further explore the issue and report back to the committee. The report was received as information.

The next information item was the Education Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF) Parental Satisfaction Survey Report.

Dr. Jenny May presented the Education Scholarship Trust Fund (ESTF) Parental Satisfaction Survey Report, as required under Section 59-8-110(E), which mandates the EOC to report learning gains, graduation rates, comparative academic performance, and annual parental satisfaction survey results to the General Assembly by December 31 each year. The survey, administered November 3–18, received 1,669 parent responses representing 2,973 participating children out of 8,980 active students, with 77% first-year participants and 23% returning families. The response rate was 32% based on parents invited, exceeding industry benchmarks, though 19% when measured by number of participating students. Key reasons for participation included financial support (57%), access to different educational options (25%), and academic or behavioral supports (8%), with many families citing special education needs. While overall satisfaction was strong, concerns emerged around restrictions on braiding funds with other disability scholarships, confusion over allowable homeschool-related expenditures, vendor limitations for school uniforms and supplies, and cost discrepancies among approved vendors. Recommendations included administering one survey per family to reduce burden, convening parent focus groups to improve survey design and vendor processes, clarifying or revising policies related to homeschooling and dual scholarship use, strengthening vendor participation requirements, investigating pricing practices, and considering expansion of allowable uses such as 4K tuition or aligning eligibility with CERDEP thresholds.

Ms. Tammy Achziger asked whether there was any reporting on the return on investment (ROI) for providing ESTF funds to families. Dr. May responded that while some work is underway to collect assessment data, the EOC is responsible for producing the required report, which could

include additional data as it develops. Rep. Terry Alexander then asked about accountability for the program. Dr. May explained that the EOC is charged with administering the parental satisfaction survey and determining satisfaction levels, and she noted that she could bring forward a request to expand reporting and accountability requirements for committee consideration and possible inclusion in a future survey. Ms. Pender asked whether testing data from participating students is comparable. Dr. May replied that it is not currently comparable, as private schools select their own assessments and are not required to administer state assessments, which presents challenges for consistent comparison. Sen. Turner asked whether the survey addressed concerns raised in the prior year about a high percentage of scholarship recipients using the funds to move from one public school to another within the same district. Dr. May responded that the survey did not address this issue, noting that changes in the law last year—clarifying that students may not remain at their resident school but may stay within the district—made that question a lower priority. She added that the survey could be revised in the future to include questions about whether students are attending private schools or different public schools, which would provide additional data.

The next information item was a presentation on Requests for New Industry Certifications within the College and Career Readiness (CCR) indicator, delivered by Ivy Coburn and Dr. Herb Bocchino from the Office of Career Readiness at the South Carolina Department of Education. The presenters provided an update to the EOC on the Tiered Certification application and approval process, highlighted newly developed resources, requested approval of proposed changes to the Approved Tiered Certification List, and outlined next steps in the transition to the tiered certification framework.

They explained that the revised process is more rigorous, intentional, and collaborative, involving internal and external partners including a newly formed advisory committee of CTE directors, the Department of Employment and Workforce, SREB, and technical advisory committees. The process maintains confidentiality to reduce bias and begins with an internal review by the Office of Career Readiness to assess course and program alignment, tier appropriateness, and career cluster placement. Applications then move to the Department of Employment and Workforce for review of labor market value and alignment to priority occupations, followed by review by technical advisory committees to validate tier placement and relevance before final recommendations are sent to the EOC for approval.

The presenters also described updates to the certification application form, now housed in Formstack, which consolidates requests for new certifications and revisions to existing ones and

adapts based on applicant responses. Newly developed resources include “certification library cards,” which summarize certification details, exam information, and workforce alignment, and a publicly accessible live tiered certification list organized by career cluster and tier level.

For this cycle, the Office of Career Readiness reviewed 25 applications and requested EOC approval for 15 new certifications and four tier reassignments. The committee was also asked to determine which certifications should confer career-ready status for legacy students still evaluated under the previous system. Next steps include convening technical advisory committees in the spring, developing professional learning for educators and counselors, publishing a Tiered Credentialing Framework Guide, and continuing work with PowerSchool to improve certification reporting. Ms. Yow asked for clarification, noting that 25 applications were submitted, with 15 recommended for new credentials and four for re-tiering, and asked whether that meant some applications did not advance through the department review process. Dr. Bocchino confirmed that during the internal Office of Career Readiness review, applications were not recommended if they were not aligned with core standards or lacked demonstrated workforce value. In addition, several tier re-evaluation requests—primarily seeking elevation to Tier 3—were not advanced because the certifications were determined to be appropriately placed at their existing tier. The committee was informed that this was their first time seeing the materials and that the remaining applications and supporting resources would be shared electronically to ensure members are fully prepared for review in March.

After this update, the meeting was adjourned.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: March 16, 2026

SUBCOMMITTEE:
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

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:** anticipated 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

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **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

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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 2021South 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 *and* 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 (Zopluoglu & 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: March 16, 2026

SUBCOMMITTEE:
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

INFORMATION 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

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, EOC Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee
FROM: Dana Yow
DATE: March 2, 2026
RE: Staff Recommendations regarding Tiered Certifications

EOC staff has reviewed the 19 certifications received from the SCDE for consideration as either a new credential or for tier re-evaluation in the stackable credential system. The EOC staff offers a recommendation of support to members of this subcommittee for the following:

1. 262: FAA 107 UAV License (Tier Reevaluation): **Tier 3**
2. P-638: Siemens Automation Fundamentals Certification PLC Badge (New Certification): **Tier 2**
3. P-628: Broadcast Project Management (New Certification): **Tier 2**
4. P-635: YouScience Network Fundamentals (New Certification)**: Tier 2**
5. P-639: TOSA Certification for Adobe InDesign (New Certification): **Tier 2**
6. P-640: TOSA Certification for Adobe Premier Pro (New Certification): **Tier 2**
7. P-641: YouScience Carpentry (New Certification): **Tier 2**
8. P-629: CAT SimsScholars Certification (New Certification)**: Tier 3**
9. P-630: CAT Simulator Certification: (New Certification): **Tier 2**
10. P-631: YouScience Exploring Computer Science: (New Certification): **Tier 1**
11. P-632: Final Cut Pro Social Pro Certification: (New Certification): **Tier 2**
12. P-634: Harmony Premium Associate Certification: (New Certification): **Tier 3**
13. P-637: SMFA Turfgrass Science Certification (New Certification): **Tier 2**

In 2024, South Carolina transitioned to a three-tiered credentialing system to better align student industry credentials with workforce needs. The tiered system ensures that students earn credentials valued by employers, leading to higher job placement rates, career progression, and wage growth. The system encourages students to build upon entry-level certifications to earn higher-level, industry-valued credentials, creating clear career pathways rather than disconnected certifications.

Beginning with students entering high school in the 2024-2025 school year, career-ready status for CTE completers will be determined for use in the accountability system by earning a minimum of **three points** within this system.

In the interest of safeguarding the rigor and intent of the tiered credential system, the EOC recommends a **reconsideration of the following credentials** which were submitted:

14. 56: NCCER Core (Request for Tier Reevaluation): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Remain at current Tier 1

15. 575: Science 3D Animation 1 (Request for Tier Reevaluation): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Remain at current Tier 1

16. 618: NOCTI-JROTC Leadership and Employability Skills Credential (Request for Tier Reevaluation): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Remain at current Tier 1

17. P-633: YouScience Game Development Fundamentals 1 (New Certification): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Tier 1

18. P-636: YouScience Retailing (New Certification): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Tier 1

19. P-627: YouScience Agricultural Mechanics & Technology 1 (New Certification): Tier 2
    EOC Staff Recommendation: Tier 1

The FAQ document, created by the Southern Regional Education Board on the stackable credentials, is attached for review. On page 5, the definitions of the three tiers can be found.

Attachments

Understanding the Tiered Credential System

Background

1. What is the Tiered Credential System?

The South Carolina Tiered Credential System 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.

Tier III (3 Points) – Career Ready

A Tier III credential signifies that the holder possesses verified, industry-valued competencies directly supporting employment in a priority occupation or a high-wage, high-demand career pathway in South Carolina. These credentials must demonstrate clear labor market alignment and provide tangible employment outcomes for credential holders.

Requirements:

1. **Industry Alignment** – The credential is explicitly linked to South Carolina's priority occupations and is recognized as a critical hiring or advancement requirement by employers.
2. **Job Market Demand** – The credential is required for initial employment, advanced training, or career progression in high-demand, high-wage industries.
3. **Economic Outcomes** – Credential holders experience significant wage gains, job promotions, or job retention (measured against South Carolina's family-sustaining wage standards).
4. **Stackability & Career Pathways** – The credential serves as a recognized entry point into additional education and training, enabling career advancement and higher-level certifications.
5. **Third-Party Administration** – The credential is granted upon completion of a validated training program, and the assessment is administered by an independent third party with no conflict of interest to the test-taker.

Tier II (2 Points) – Intermediate

A Tier II credential reflects industry-aligned competencies that provide an employment advantage but are not necessarily required for employment in a priority occupation. These credentials support career pathways and indicate job readiness within an industry, but they may not be recognized statewide.

Requirements:

1. **Industry Recognition** – The credential is aligned to industry-recognized standards and is endorsed by a national industry association, trade organization, or a leading employer within South Carolina.
2. **Hiring Consideration** – Credential holders receive priority hiring consideration, but the credential is not a mandatory requirement for employment.
3. **Pathway-Based** – The credential supports entry into an in-demand career, but additional training or experience is required for full career advancement.
4. **Workforce Readiness** – The credential provides demonstrable social and economic benefits, such as job stability, increased employability, and improved workforce participation.

Tier I (1 Point) – Introductory

A Tier I credential is an early-stage certification that validates fundamental, industry-recognized competencies. These credentials do not directly align with priority occupations but lay the groundwork for more advanced credentialing and workforce readiness.

Requirements:

1. **Basic Skills Validation** – The credential measures foundational skills needed for further education, training, or work-based learning experiences.
2. **Regional Industry Recognition** – The credential is recognized by South Carolina's local or regional industries, but it does not yet meet state-level priority occupation requirements.
3. **Entry-Level Attainment** – The credential can be earned within the early stages of a career pathway program (typically within the first or second course in a CTE program of study).

2. Why transition to a tiered credential system? What are the benefits of this change?

South Carolina is transitioning to a tiered credential system to ensure that students earn industry-recognized certifications that align with high-demand, high-wage career opportunities. The previous credentialing system did not differentiate between credentials directly supporting priority occupations and those with less immediate job market value. By implementing a structured, tiered approach, the state can prioritize credentials that provide the greatest career readiness and economic mobility for students.

The benefits of this transition include:

- **Better Workforce Alignment** – The tiered system ensures that students earn credentials valued by employers, leading to higher job placement rates, career progression, and wage growth. The tiered credential list will be reviewed and refined annually to ensure alignment with industry expectations.
- **Clearer Credential Differentiation** – By categorizing credentials into Introductory (Tier 1), Intermediate (Tier 2), and Career Ready (Tier 3), South Carolina provides transparency about which certifications offer immediate employability, advancement opportunities, and industry recognition.
- **Support for Stackable Credentials** – The system encourages students to build upon entry-level certifications to earn higher-level, industry-valued credentials, creating clear career pathways rather than disconnected certifications.
- **Stronger Connections Between Education and Industry** – Employers will play a key role in verifying that credentials provide real hiring advantages. Their direct involvement in credential evaluation strengthens the link between education, workforce readiness, and economic development in South Carolina.

This transition supports students, educators, and employers alike by ensuring that credentialing decisions are data-driven, employer-validated, and aligned with South Carolina's workforce priorities.

3. How Does a Credential Get Assigned to a Tier?

South Carolina's tiered credential system ensures that industry-recognized credentials align with workforce demand, employer needs, and career advancement opportunities. To streamline communication and maintain a clear, transparent process, the state has adopted a year-round submission model supported by quarterly reviews and annual approvals.

The updated credential review process includes the following stages:

Ongoing Credential Submission

Flexible Submission: Districts and career and technology centers may submit credential applications year-round through a standardized online submission form managed and reviewed by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

Consistent Tracking: Each submission is automatically logged in a centralized tracking system to ensure transparency and ease of monitoring.

Quarterly SCDE and DEW Reviews

Quarterly Compilation: SCDE compiles submitted credentials every quarter and forwards them to the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) for the related employability review.

Employability Review: DEW evaluates each credential using a standardized digital review form to determine its relevance to South Carolina's high-demand, high-wage occupations.

Tier Coordination: Within one month of DEW's employability determination, SCDE and DEW jointly assign the credential to the appropriate tier based on workforce alignment and career advancement potential.

Master List Management: Approved credentials and their tier designations are added to a shared master list. This list is updated quarterly by SCDE/DEW and reviewed by the appropriate Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) annually for validation and alignment with industry trends.

Annual EOC Submission and Final Review

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.

Alignment with PowerSchool Updates

March 1 Integration: All updates to the approved credential list, including any new additions or changes in tier placement, will be integrated into PowerSchool by March 1. This ensures districts have timely access to the most current credential information for course planning and reporting for the upcoming academic year.

4. Who can submit a credential for review?

In South Carolina, school districts and career and technology centers may apply for an industry credential review for inclusion in the tiered credential system. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) oversees this process to ensure that credentials align with state workforce priorities, employer demand, and career pathway opportunities.

The application must include:

- **Sponsorship from Local or Regional Employers –** The submitting district or center must provide documentation from businesses verifying that the credential supports employment, career advancement, or industry recognition.
- **Industry and Career Pathway Alignment –** The credential must align with an identified industry sector and career pathway, ensuring it meets state and national workforce standards.
- **Higher Education and Industry Endorsement (if applicable) –** In addition to employer sponsorship, postsecondary institutions may also support some credentials to confirm their value in advanced training and education.
- **Standardized Assessment Criteria –** The credential must meet established criteria, such as being nationally recognized, psychometrically sound, independently graded, and regularly reviewed for quality and relevance.

The application is submitted electronically to SCDE and must include all supporting documentation. A formal review process follows, where SCDE, SCDEW and industry representatives assess the credential's rigor, workforce demand, and alignment with South Carolina's economic and educational priorities.

5. How will South Carolina ensure that the credential list remains accurate and relevant over time?

To maintain the accuracy and workforce relevance of the credential list, South Carolina will implement an annual review process that engages industry leaders, educators, and workforce experts. This process ensures credentials reflect current hiring needs, industry standards, and career advancement opportunities.

The Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) will play a key role in this review. Each career cluster area will have a TAC composed of business and industry representatives, postsecondary institutions, and secondary career and technical education (CTE) leaders and instructors. These committees will:

- **Evaluate Credential Relevance** – TACs will review the credential list for their industry sector to determine which certifications remain valuable, which have gained importance, and which may no longer align with industry needs.
- **Make Recommendations for Tier Adjustments** – If a credential demonstrates strong employment outcomes, increased industry demand, and clear labor market alignment, it may be recommended for a higher tier. Conversely, if a credential declines in demand, it may be downgraded or removed from the approved list.
- **Strengthen Communication Between Industry and Education** – By engaging in this process, businesses gain awareness of approved credentials and can begin incorporating them into job postings. At the same time, educators receive direct insights from employers, ensuring that CTE programs align with real workforce demands.

Once TACs submit their recommendations, they will be reviewed annually by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) and the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) for final approval. This structured process ensures that students earn industry-valued credentials that lead to meaningful employment and career growth, while also providing employers with a qualified, job-ready workforce.

Transitioning to the Tiered Credential System

6. What is changing in South Carolina's credentialing system?

South Carolina is transitioning to a three-tiered credentialing system to better align student industry credentials with workforce needs. **Beginning with students entering high school in the 2024-2025 school year**, career-ready status for CTE completers will be determined by earning a minimum of **three points** within this system.

The new credentialing structure classifies industry-recognized credentials into:

- **Tier 1 (Introductory, 1 Point):** Entry-level credentials earned early in a CTE program sequence.
- **Tier 2 (Intermediate, 2 Points):** Credentials requiring additional coursework, skills, or specialized knowledge.

- **Tier 3 (Career Ready, 3 Points):** High-rigor credentials that demonstrate career readiness and are recognized by employers for hiring or advancement.

While multiple career-ready pathways remain in place (see text box below), this update specifically impacts CTE completers, who must now earn credentials contributing to the three-point requirement for career-ready status.

Career Readiness Requirements

A student is deemed "career-ready" if the student meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Is a CTE completer and earns a national industry credential or a state industry credential as determined by the EOC following the advice and guidance of technical advisory committees composed of educators and members of the business community (see guidelines and additional information posted at https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/career-and-technical-education/programs-and-courses/cate-programs/.
- Earns a Silver, Gold or Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate on the ACT WorkKeys exam or earns a Level 3 Credential or above on the WIN SC Career Ready Test (SCRT).
- Earns a scale score of 31 or higher on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).
- Successfully completes a state-approved work-based learning exit evaluation from an employer. The work-based learning program must:
    - Include a training agreement which defines a combination of objectives and a minimum of 40 practical experience hours or the highest number of hours required by industry defined competencies in a career pathway;
    - Include a WBL placement aligned to the student's Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) career goal;
    - Include an industry evaluation that is created from the training agreement, which includes the world-class skills from the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate; and
    - The student must have earned a minimum of one unit in the pathway related to the work-based placement or completed a personal pathway of study.
- Is identified as a student with a disability who successfully completes the South Carolina High School Employability Credential https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/special-education-services/programs-and-initiatives-p-i/sc-employability-credential/ according to their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Source: https://eoc.sc.gov/educators

7. How can students meet the career-ready requirement under the new system?

Under the new tiered credential system, students **must earn at least three points** through one of the following combinations:

- One Tier 3 credential aligned with their career cluster.
- A combination of one Tier 2 and one Tier 1 credential within the same career pathway.
- A Universal Credential (e.g., OSHA 10) paired with a Tier 2 or higher credential within the student's career cluster.

It is important to note that students cannot mix and match credentials from different career pathways to meet the requirement. Credentials must align with the student's designated program of study to count toward career-ready status.

8. What are universal credentials, and how do they fit into the system?

Universal credentials are certifications that demonstrate foundational workplace skills applicable across multiple industries. These credentials validate essential employability skills, technical knowledge, or safety competencies that enhance a student's workforce readiness regardless of their chosen career path.

Examples of universal credentials include:

- **Workplace Readiness & Soft Skills**: Microburst EmployABILITY, Career and Life Essentials, Leadership Essentials.
- **Safety & Technical Certifications**: OSHA 10, FAA Part 107 UAV License.
- **Business & Technology Readiness**: Express Employment Professionals Business Office Technology.

Universal credentials may fulfill the career-ready requirement when paired with a Tier 2 or Tier 3 credential in the student's career cluster.

9. What happens if a student earns a credential that is not on the approved list or outside their program of study?

Only credentials included in South Carolina's approved Tiered Credential List will count toward career-ready status in the SC Education Accountability System. Additionally, students must earn credentials that align with the career cluster and program of study they are enrolled in.

Students should work closely with their instructors and counselors to ensure they are pursuing recognized credentials that align with South Carolina's workforce priorities. Credentials that are not on the approved list or that are outside the student's designated career pathway will not count toward meeting career-ready requirements under the tiered credentialing system.

10. What does this change mean for students already in high school before the 2024-2025 school year?

Students who enrolled in high school **before the 2024-2025 school** year will continue to be evaluated under the previous credentialing system. They can achieve career-ready status by:

- Completing the required sequence of CTE courses within their program of study.
- Earning a Career Ready Credential from the state's approved secondary certification list.

These students will not be required to meet the new three-tiered point system but should work with their schools to understand how these changes may impact future opportunities.

11. How does this transition impact districts and CTE programs?

Districts and career and technical centers (CTCs) will need to:

- Ensure that CTE programs offer credentials that align with Tier 2 and Tier 3 classifications to support student success.
- Assist students in planning course sequences that allow them to earn a minimum of three points by graduation.
- Work with local businesses and industries to submit credentials for review and ensure alignment with workforce needs.
- Engage with Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) to stay informed about industry trends and credential relevance.

Districts and CTE leaders should evaluate existing programs to ensure students can access high-value credentials that meet the new requirements.

Clarification Notes:

- A bundle of Tier 1 credentials will not be considered career-ready.
- Only credentials from the state's approved list will count toward career-ready status in the accountability system.
- To be considered career-ready, a student's earned credentials must align with their designated program of study and career cluster. Credentials earned outside of the student's career cluster or program of study will not count toward career-ready status.

Example Stackable Credentials Leading to Career Ready Status

Agriculture Cluster–Veterinary Science (School Example)				
Course	Agriculture Science and Technology	Farm Animal Production	Small Animal Care	Introduction to Veterinary Science
Certification		Elanco Fundamentals of Animal Science Certification (3)	OSHA 10 General (1)	Elanco Veterinary Medical Applications Certification (3)

Health Science Cluster–Pharmacy Tech (School Example)				
Course	Health Science 1	Health Science 2	Medical Terminology	Pharmacology for Medical Careers
Certification		Healthcare Providers Basic Life Support (2) Stop the Bleed (1)	National Health Science Assessment (2)	Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPHT) (3)

Manufacturing Cluster–Machine Technology				
Course	Machine Tool Technology 1	Machine Tool Technology 2	Machine Tool Technology 3	Machine Tool Technology 4
Certification	-OSHA-10 (1) -Microburst (1) -SkillsUSA Career Essentials Certification (1)		NIMS(National Institute for Metalworking Skills) (3)	-Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME) (3)

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Cluster– Automotive Technology (District Example)				
Course	Automotive Technology 1	Automotive Technology 2	Automotive Technology 3	Automotive Technology 4 OR Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, work-based credit
Certification	-ASE: Student Certification – Brakes (2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Engine Repair (2) -S/P2 – Auto Technology (2) -S/P2 Ethics and You in the Automotive Industry 2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Engine Performance (2)	-Snap-on/NC3: 504 Multimeter Certification (2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Maintenance & Light Repair (2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Electrical/ Electronic Systems (2)	-Snap-on/NC3: ShopKey Pro Service & Repair Information Level 1 (2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Heating & Air Conditioning (2) -ASE: Auto Technology – Suspension & Steering (2) -ASE: Auto Maintenance and Light Repair Certification Test (G1) (2) -Snap-on/NC3: ShopKey Pro & SureTrack Advanced Level 2 (2)	-Snap-on/NC3: Verus Edge Lab Scope Operation & Data Management (2) -Snap-on/NC3: Verus Edge Navigation & Scanner Operation (2)

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	*Remove from Universal Certification Group* 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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	Certification aligns with both statewide and regional priority occupations. Electrical Engineers: 17-2071 Mechanical Engineers: 17-2141 Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers: 51-2028
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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	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. BPM directly reinforces course standards requiring students to plan, produce, and deliver broadcast-quality content. It assesses applied skills in: ● 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 This alignment ensures the BPM Certification measures career-ready competencies that align with CTE Media Technology standards and industry expectations.

Certification ID and Name	P-628 - Broadcast Project Management
Skills/Concepts Assessed	• 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	Certification does not align with statewide or regional priority occupations. Broadcast Technician — 27-4012.00 Audio and Video Technician — 27-4011.00 Film and Video Editor / Camera Operator — 27-4031.00
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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	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. This certification is similar in nature to the NCCER certification but is accessible to students with Visual Disabilities
Skills/Concepts Assessed	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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/Simformotion
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	• 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://simformotion.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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	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.

Certification ID and Name	P-630 - CAT Simulator Certification
Skills/Concepts Assessed	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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://fcpcertification.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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Application Card - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	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. 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.

Certification ID and Name	P-637 - SFMA Turfgrass Science Certification
Skills/Concepts Assessed	• Benefits of Turfgrass • Turfgrass Anatomy, Identification and Adaptations • Turfgrass Environment • Turfgrass Cultural Practices • Playing Surface Preparation
Exam Blueprint	https://www.icevonline.com/hubfs/Certfications/Certification%20Blueprints/Blueprint_SFMATurfgrassScienceCert.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	Certification aligns with one or more statewide priority occupations. 37-1012 First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service & Groundskeeping Workers

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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	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. NCCER Core consists of 10 different modules aligned with the South Carolina Building Construction Standards.

Certification ID and Name	56 - NCCER Core
Skills/Concepts Assessed	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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	• 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	**To be completed in the Spring of 2026*

Links

Review Documentation - Contains full SCDE internal review, DEW review, and TAC review.

Full Application - Initially submitted application.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: March 16, 2026

COMMITTEE:
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

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

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF MILITARY-CONNECTED CHILDREN IN SC

2026 REPORT

PREPARED BY:
DANA YOW
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 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.*

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; 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

	MCS	Non-MCS
Characteristics and Demographics	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)

	SY 2021-22		SY 2022-23		SY 2023-24		SY 2024-25	
MILITARY CONNECTION	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%.

Biology I

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

English 2

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

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 sudents 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

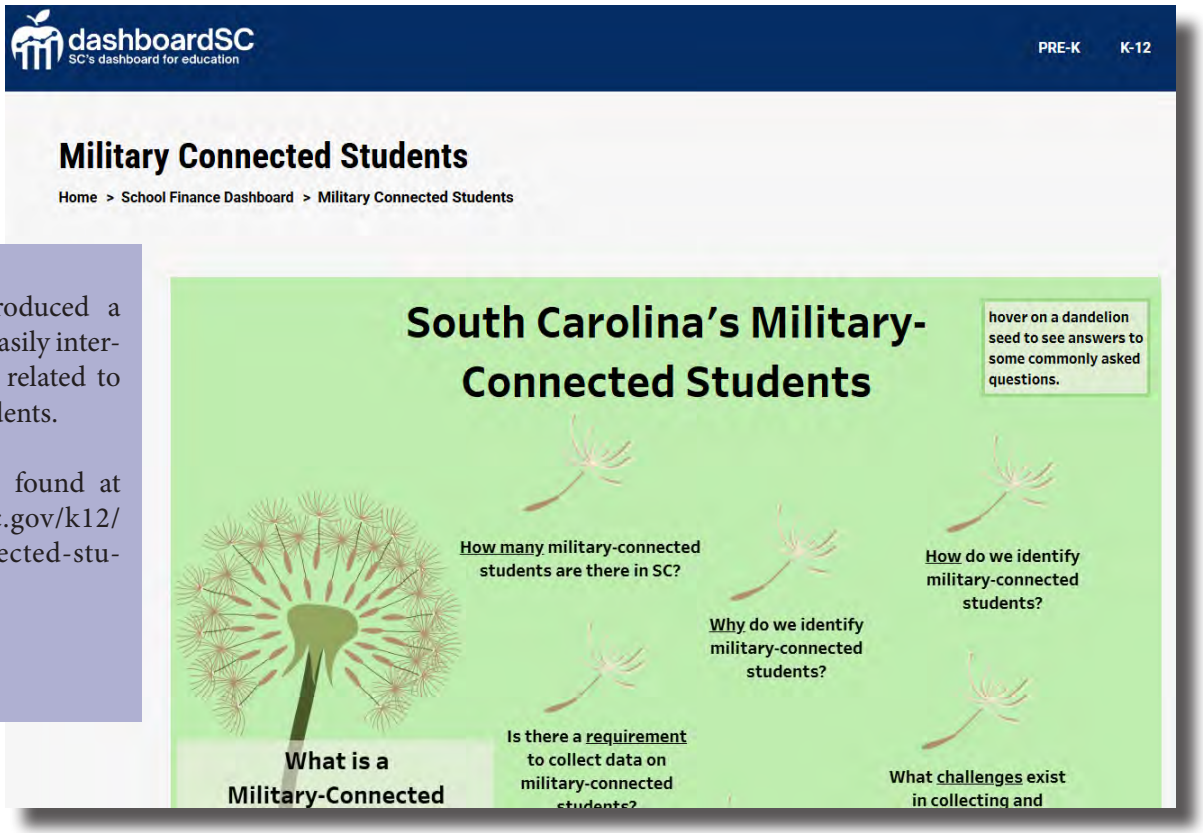
Attendance Category	Military-Connected Students Number (% among MCS)	Non-Military-Connected Students Number (% among non-MCS)
Good Attendance (<5% absent)	6,465 (34.6%)	237,202 (33.5%)
At-Risk Attendance (5–10% absent)	6,611 (35.4%)	237,584 (33.6%)
Moderately Chronically Absent (10–20% absent)	4,153 (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.

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-resources/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
Abbeville	*
Aiken	689
Allendale	*
Anderson 01	353
Anderson 02	0
Anderson 03	*
Anderson 04	*
Anderson 05	0
Bamberg 3	0
Barnwell	0
Beaufort	904
Berkeley	1,429
Calhoun	0
Charleston	1,269
Cherokee	*
Chester	*
Chesterfield	156
Clarendon 6	*
Colleton	21
Darlington	230
Dillon 3	0
Dillon 04	52
Dorchester 02	1,536
Dorchester 04	0
Edgefield 01	0
Fairfield 01	*
Florence 01	638

District (Cont'd)	MCS
Florence 02	26
Florence 03	80
Florence 05	0
Georgetown	199
Greenville	64
Greenwood 50	*
Greenwood 51	0
Greenwood 52	0
Hampton 03	*
Horry	2,255
Jasper	0
Kershaw	993
Lancaster	147
Laurens 55	0
Laurens 56	*
Lee	0
Lexington 01	472
Lexington 02	96
Lexington 03	*
Lexington 04	*
Lexington / Richland 05	475
Marion 10	0
Marlboro	0
Newberry	46
McCormick 01	*

District (Cont'd)	MCS
Oconee	116
Orangeburg	132
Pickens 01	156
Richland 01	505
Richland 02	3,364
Saluda	*
Spartanburg 01	*
Spartanburg 02	214
Spartanburg 03	*
Spartanburg 04	0
Spartanburg 05	*
Spartanburg 06	0
Spartanburg 07	0
Sumter	837
Union	*
Williamsburg 01	*
York 01	36
York 02	*
York 03	196
York 04	122
SC Public Charter School District	491
Charter Institute at Erskine	396
Limestone Charter	45

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

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SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE:
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

INFORMATION ITEM:
Inclusion of Seal of Biliteracy in CCR

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY
§SECTION 59-18-900(C) In setting the criteria for the academic performance ratings and the performance indicators, the Education Oversight Committee shall report the performance by subgroups of students in the school and schools similar in student characteristics. Criteria must use established guidelines for statistical analysis and build on current data-reporting practices.
(D) The comprehensive report card must include a comprehensive set of performance indicators with information on comparisons, trends, needs, and performance over time which is helpful to parents and the public in evaluating the school. In addition, the comprehensive report card must include indicators that meet federal law requirements. Special efforts are to be made to ensure that the information contained in the report card is provided in an easily understood manner and a reader-friendly format. This information should also provide a context for the performance of the school. Where appropriate, the data should yield disaggregated results to schools and districts in planning for improvement.

CRITICAL FACTS
In SC's current accountability system, a High School student in the fourth-year cohort (also called the graduating cohort) may be identified as College- or Career-Ready on any of up to 11 criteria. Under the current proposal, earning the Seal of Biliteracy would be added as a College-Ready Criterion, since several postsecondary institutions in SC and in other states award college credit to incoming students who have earned the seal.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS
January 12, 2026: Following Cyclical Review of the Accountability System, ASA considers action item to include seal in CCR. EOC asks staff to run data to see impact of seal in SC and nationally.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC
none

ACTION REQUEST

☐ **For approval** ☒ **For information**

ACTION TAKEN

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

February 25, 2026
Heena Kuwayama
hkuwayama@ecs.org

This response was prepared for Dana Yow, Executive Director, South Carolina Education Oversight Commission

Your Question:

You asked about how states handle the Seal of Biliteracy and its appropriateness as a measure of college readiness.

Our Response:

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given to students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. Though the seal may be awarded by schools or districts, it is most often awarded at the state level. As of 2024, **all 50 states and D.C.** have at least one school or district that awards a seal of biliteracy to students who meet proficiency requirements.

A 2022 study based in **New Mexico** found that graduates with a biliteracy seal enrolled in college at a higher rate than graduates who did not earn a seal. In addition, among graduates who attended the same high school and enrolled in college, graduates who earned a biliteracy seal were more likely to enroll in a four-year college and to enroll as full-time students. In a survey conducted after the first year of implementation of **California**'s State Seal of Biliteracy, employers also indicated that they would be more likely to hire a candidate who holds a seal.

States acknowledge biliteracy seals as a measure of achievement or readiness in a variety of ways. In many states, students must meet state English graduation requirements to qualify for a seal of biliteracy, linking the seal to coursework the state has identified as foundational for postsecondary success. Some states also allow students to earn a seal by demonstrating proficiency through assessments that are widely accepted as indicative of college and career readiness, such as Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams, the SAT, or the ACT. In addition, several states have integrated biliteracy seals into their accountability systems, either through a state ESSA plan or otherwise, to explicitly designate the seal as a measure of college and career readiness.

While not exhaustive, the examples below showcase state policies regarding the seal of biliteracy and its connection to college and career readiness.

State Examples Regarding Seals of Biliteracy

California's statewide accountability system includes a College/Career Indicator (CCI) that shows how well schools prepare students for success after graduation. Receiving a seal of biliteracy and a score of Level 3 or higher in ELA on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments is one state board-approved way that a student may be classified as "Prepared" under the CCI. In addition, the state department of education

publishes **annual participation data** (found in the "Data" tab), including lists of participating districts and schools and the number of seals awarded by county and district in each language.

Maryland provides several approved assessments through which students may demonstrate **English proficiency**, including the SAT, AP English exams, an IB English exam, or the ACT. Students are also permitted to demonstrate **world language proficiency** by earning minimum qualifying scores on AP assessments for certain languages.

The state **ESSA plan** includes a state-added "Readiness for Postsecondary Success" indicator. One measure of the indicator is the percentage of students who graduate or exit with a certificate of program completion and achieve at least one of several possible additional results, including receiving a seal of biliteracy.

Minnesota (**Minn. Stat. Ann. § 120B.022**) requires colleges and universities in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system to establish criteria to translate seals of biliteracy and multiliteracy into college credits based on the world language course equivalencies identified by the system, allowing students to request postsecondary foreign language credits based on receipt of a seal upon high school graduation.

New Hampshire **allows** students to demonstrate proficiency in English for biliteracy seal eligibility through the SAT, AP English Literature and Composition assessment, or AP English Language and Composition assessment, among other options. Students are also permitted to demonstrate world language proficiency through AP exams.

The state **ESSA plan** includes college and career readiness as one of its School Quality or Student Success (SQSS) indicators for high schools. Students are counted as postsecondary ready by meeting any two of eleven possible requirements, one of which is receipt of a New Hampshire Seal of Biliteracy.

New York's **ESSA plan** establishes the College, Career, and Civic Readiness (CCCR) Index as an SQSS measure for accountability. Diplomas with a seal of biliteracy are included in the list of student achievements and given the largest weights in the calculation of the CCCR. The state department of education also publishes **annual reports** on the state seal that include information such as the number of students who have earned the seal, the number of schools offering it, and future goals for growth.

Oregon **S.B. 141** (2025) adds new school performance metrics to the state's K-12 accountability system, including one local metric that districts may choose from five options provided by the state board of education. In December 2025, the state board approved a rule (**Or. Admin. R. 581-003-0015**) listing these options, one of which is the number of students earning a seal of biliteracy or multiliteracy.

Virginia **H.B. 2360** (2025) requires the state board of education to include the state's seal of biliteracy on its list of industry workforce credentials and to consider the seal to be a high-demand credential for the purpose of satisfying graduation requirements.

Washington (**Wash. Rev. Code Ann. § 28A.300.575**) indicates that the criteria for awarding a seal of biliteracy must require students to demonstrate proficiency in English by meeting high school graduation requirements, and permit a student to demonstrate proficiency in one or more world languages other than English through multiple methods, including nationally or internationally recognized proficiency tests and competency-based world language credits.

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

DATE: March 16, 2026

SUBCOMMITTEE:
Academic Standards & Assessments Subcommittee

INFORMATION ITEM:
High School Employability Credential: Inclusion in On-Track Measure

PURPOSE/AUTHORITY
§SECTION 59-18-900(C) In setting the criteria for the academic performance ratings and the performance indicators, the Education Oversight Committee shall report the performance by subgroups of students in the school and schools similar in student characteristics. Criteria must use established guidelines for statistical analysis and build on current data-reporting practices.
(D) The comprehensive report card must include a comprehensive set of performance indicators with information on comparisons, trends, needs, and performance over time which is helpful to parents and the public in evaluating the school. In addition, the comprehensive report card must include indicators that meet federal law requirements. Special efforts are to be made to ensure that the information contained in the report card is provided in an easily understood manner and a reader-friendly format. This information should also provide a context for the performance of the school. Where appropriate, the data should yield disaggregated results to schools and districts in planning for improvement

CRITICAL FACTS
In SC's current accountability system, the High School Student Success Measure includes an On-Track to Graduate Measure and a Five-Year Student Success Rate. The High School Employability Credential is not currently included in the On-Track to Graduate measure but is included in the 5-Yr. Student Success rate. The Credential is also part of the CCR indicator.

TIMELINE/REVIEW PROCESS
December 2025: Resolution passes the SC School Boards Association House of Delegates addressing the inclusion of courses taken by students seeking the credential to be included in the On-Track measure.
March 2, 2026: EOC staff convenes meeting with members of Greenville School District, school board, SC Senate, SCASA, SCDE, and SCSBA staff.

ECONOMIC IMPACT FOR EOC
none

ACTION REQUEST

☐ **For approval** ☒ **For information**

ACTION TAKEN

☐ **Approved** ☐ **Amended**
☐ **Not Approved** ☐ **Action deferred (explain)**

Inclusion of Employability Credential courses in on-track-to-graduate calculations

SCSBA believes that the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) should take immediate action to include state approved core courses of the Employability Credential in the numerator when calculating On-Track-to-Graduate in the High School Success Indicator on the School Report Card.

Rationale: On May 19, 2017, Governor Henry McMaster signed legislation into law that created a state-recognized Employability Credential for a specific population of students with disabilities, offering an essential pathway for these students to demonstrate their skills and readiness for the workforce. This law solidified the South Carolina Employability Credential as an integral component of the state's education framework. The purpose of the SC Employability Credential is to provide equitable job-readiness opportunities for these students throughout the state, ensure they have evidence of employability skills, and honor the work they have undertaken in our public schools. However, the current report card calculations include practices that do not align with the 2017 amendment of Section 59-39-100 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, concerning the uniform diploma for graduates of accredited high schools, completely disregarding the SC Employability Credential and therefore not accurately reflecting the success of all students. Making this change would ensure that all students, regardless of their pathway, are given the opportunity to be fairly evaluated in the context of their individualized education programs and would end the current practice of systematically excluding or marginalizing a class of students by not recognizing their progress throughout their academic careers.

Despite the recognized value and legislative support, the Employability Credential calculation of the On-Track-to-Graduate indicator for State Report Cards for high schools completely disregards "student success" for those working toward an Employability Credential. Furthermore, students pursuing the SC Employability Credential count against their respective schools, creating a discrepancy that undermines the very intent of the Employability Credential legislation.

Including the state approved core courses for all students in the report card calculations would accurately and appropriately honor the work of educators, the success of the students, and would provide for the accountability practices to align with SC Regulation 43-235.

History: adopted December 6, 2025 at South Carolina School Boards Association's Annual Business Meeting

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Employability Credential Report

Pursuant to S.C. Code of Laws § 59-39-100

February 19, 2026

Ellen E. Weaver
State Superintendent of Education

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Employability Credential Report

Section 59-39-100(2)(D) of the South Carolina Code of Laws provides that: "The department shall monitor the number of diplomas and employability credentials earned by students and shall report to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly biannually by February 15, beginning in 2020."

In the 2024–25 school year, South Carolina provided services to 114,284 students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The majority of these students are able to earn a state high school diploma with appropriate services and supports.

Given the varying levels of student achievement, as well as the inability of some students to complete required high school coursework, there is an alternative course of study (Employability Credential) for students with disabilities to demonstrate their ability to transition into the work community. The uniform state-recognized Employability Credential is aligned to a career ready course of study for students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team determines this course of study is appropriate for the student. The first class of Employability Credential students completed their requirements and received their credentials in 2022.

Because the first class of students earned the Employability Credential in 2022, the agency began submitting reports on the number of diplomas and Employability Credentials earned by students with disabilities in accordance with Section 59-39-100(2)(D) in 2022. Below is a table displaying state-wide numbers of students with disabilities who have exited with a diploma or Employability Credential from 2022–2025.

Table 1. State-wide Numbers of Students Exiting with Diploma or Employability Credential

School Year	Number of Diplomas	Number of Employability Credentials
2021-2022	3,360	348
2022-2023	3,751	472
2023-2024	3,584	501
2024-2025	4,109	553

Exiting Data displayed in Table 1 was obtained from exiting data (Table 4 Exiting Data) collected and submitted annually to the US Department of Education pursuant to IDEA requirements. This data includes the number of students with IEPs graduating from high school with a regular high school diploma or Employability Credential. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A)).

The South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Special Education Services (OSES), has set a goal that 75% of students with IEPs will graduate with a Diploma or receive an

Employability Credential by 2030. Data analysis captured from Table 4 Exiting Data 2021-22 to 2024-25 demonstrates significant improvement over the course of four years for students with IEPs with respect to exiting outcomes (see Table 2 below). Based on this improvement, and with continued support at both the State and district levels, OSES believes that the State can achieve the target goal of 75% of students with IEPs graduating with a Diploma or receiving an Employability Credential by 2030.

Table 2. Percentage of Students with IEPs Graduating with a Diploma or Receiving an Employability Credential

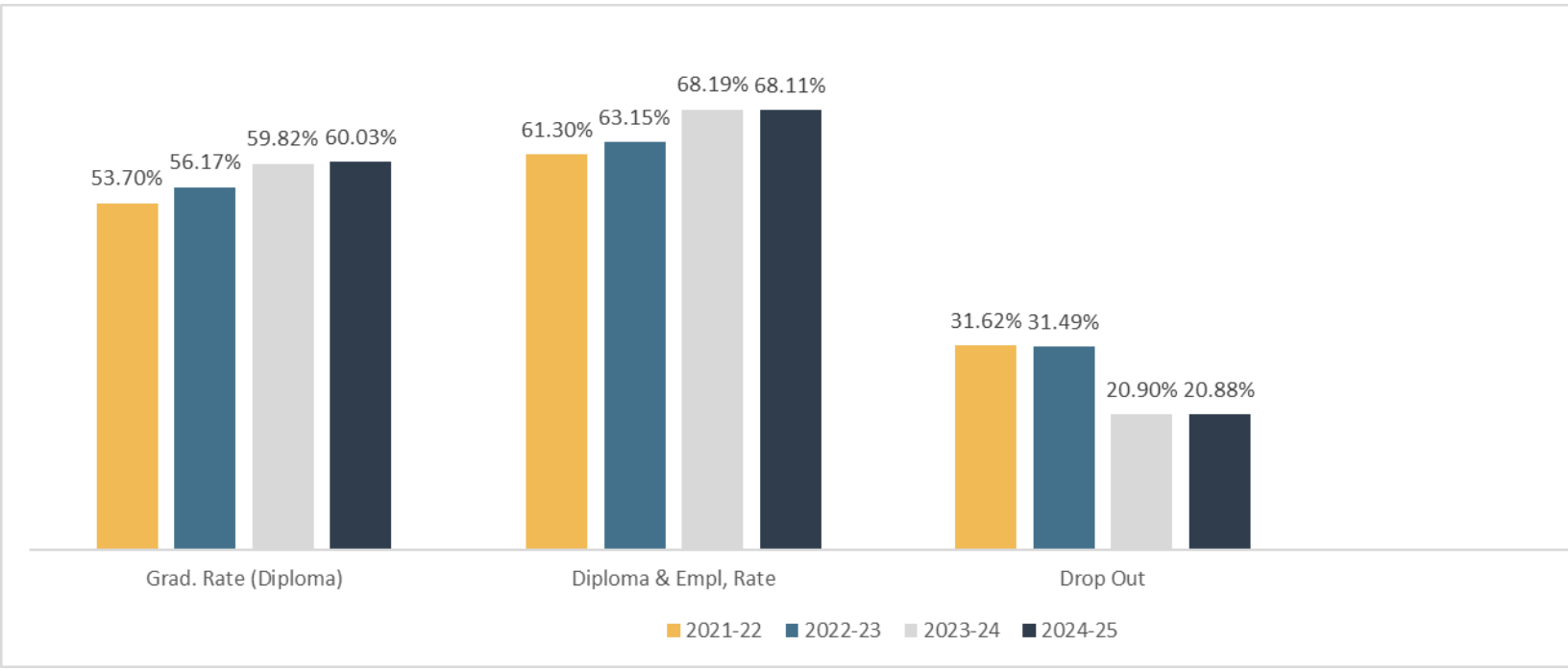

Table 2, which also utilizes Table 4 Exiting Data, displays the percentage of students with IEPs exiting with a Diploma, the percentage of students with IEPs exiting with a Diploma or an Employability Credential, and the Drop Out Rate for students with IEPs from 2021-22 to 2024-25. As Table 2 illustrates, there is a growth trend of students with IEPs graduating with a Diploma from 53.70% to 60.03%. For students with IEPs graduating with a Diploma or Employability Credential, the data displays an overall growth trend from 61.30% to 68.11%. The data also displays a decreasing trend of Drop Out Rate for students with IEPs from 31.49% to 20.88%.

References

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1416 (a)(3)(A))

S.C. Code of Laws §59-39-100 (2017)