

EIA and EAA Budget and Proviso Requests for FY 2024-25

Adopted by EOC
December 11, 2023

Section 59-6-10 of the Education Accountability Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) “review and monitor the implementation and evaluation of the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act programs and funding” and to “make programmatic and funding recommendations to the General Assembly.” To meet this statutory requirement, the EOC required each EIA-funded program or entity to submit a program and budget report detailing the objectives and outcomes of each program for Fiscal Years 2022-23 and any additional requests for Fiscal Year 2024-25.

Additional EIA requests for Fiscal Year 2024-25 total \$426,395,460 (recurring). Total requests for nonrecurring (surplus) funds from current EIA-funded programs total \$231,332,500.

The EIA and Improvement Mechanism Subcommittee met on the following dates:

- October 16, 2023: Held public hearing for entities funded by or requesting EIA revenues. Presentations were voluntary.
- November 13, 2023: Held public hearing for entities funded by or requesting new EIA revenues and convened to discuss EIA budget priorities. Presentations were voluntary. Subcommittee requested EOC staff compile priorities of EIA budget from the discussion and present recommendation for consideration at the November 27, 2023 meeting.
- November 27, 2023: Meeting to be held via Zoom; purpose to review and discuss EIA recommendations to bring to full EOC on December 11, 2023.

On November 16, 2023, the Board of Economic Advisors (BEA) issued updated revenue projections for FY 2024-25. The BEA identified \$75,861,000 increase in EIA funds for FY 2024-25. See Table 1.

Table 1

EIA Estimate 2024-25 November 16, 2023	
EIA Estimate	\$ 1,253,231,000
EIA Base Appropriation 2023-24	\$1,177,370,000
Projected EIA Projected Funds (Recurring)	\$75,861,000

Surplus funds (non-recurring) available have been identified by the Board of Economic of Advisors (BEA) as \$51,000,000. Based on recommendations from the Executive Budget Office and Revenue and Fiscal Affairs, the EOC has been advised to not recommend allocation of these funds under EIA surplus until these funds can be certified to not duplicate any appropriations.

I. EOC Recommendations Regarding Education Improvement Act Teacher Retention and Recruitment Programs

Teacher recruitment and retention is the most pressing issue facing public schools across South Carolina, as well as the nation. Research is evident that a highly qualified teacher has a large impact on student achievement.¹ Currently, the South Carolina General Assembly is funding a number of teacher recruitment and retention programs through Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds with the intent to attract and retain highly qualified teachers for the students of South Carolina.

Specifically, there are 16 programs with goals to recruit and/or retain teachers which total \$68,799,875 in EIA funds. (Monies allocated for teacher salaries have not been included in these figures.) Of the 16 programs, 10 programs are specifically designed to recruit teachers to the profession. Of the 10 programs specifically designated to recruit teachers, only eight (8) provided data that showed the number of certified teachers produced in 2023. These eight programs received \$10,014,605 in EIA funds. In 2023, a total of 239 teachers were certified using EIA funds from these eight (8) programs for a cost per teacher of \$41,902. (Note: Of the 239 teachers produced, 75% or 179 teachers were from the Teaching Fellows program.)

A number of subcommittee members have noted a concern that there is no statewide entity whose sole purpose is to recruit and/or retain teachers in South Carolina; furthermore, there is no comprehensive plan for collecting, evaluating, and reporting on the outcomes of the 16 programs which receive state funding. In the absence of an entity overseeing teacher recruitment and retention statewide, South Carolina has created silos of programs working on the same issue with little coordination among groups and no overall plan or strategy for undertaking this persistent challenge.

Pursuant to Proviso 1.114 of the 2022-23 General Appropriations Act, the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force made recommendations to propose necessary revisions for improving teacher recruitment, retention, and advancement.² While many meaningful recommendations were made, this Task Force was not charged with the responsibility of looking at all programs/structures responsible for teacher recruitment and retention.

The EIA subcommittee recommends an ad hoc committee be formed in the summer 2024 to review current structures/programs in place in South Carolina whose focus is teacher recruitment and retention. Each EIA program will be reviewed, with a specific eye toward duplication of efforts and return on State investments. The responsibility of the ad hoc committee will be the EOC.

¹ <https://compcenternetwork.org/sites/default/files/archive/research-brief-teacher-recruitment-induction-retention.pdf>

² <https://ed.sc.gov/newsroom/teacher-recruitment-and-retention-task-force-recommendations/>

This ad hoc committee will make recommendations to the General Assembly in January 2025 as to the most efficient and effective way to manage and monitor teacher recruitment and retention structures/programs across South Carolina to increase teachers entering the teaching profession and to retain teachers, specifically in the first five (5) years of teaching. The EIA subcommittee recommends that any request received for additional funding or new funding should be postponed until the comprehensive plan from the ad hoc committee have been approved by the General Assembly.

II. Recommendations for EIA Funding

Table 2

Recurring Funds Available New Funds \$ 75,861,000	
Name of Program	Funds
Teacher Recruitment and Retention	
Teacher Career Ladder Strategic Compensation Pilot-SCDE	\$10,000,000
National Board to Teacher Strategic Compensation (\$26,000,000 remaining after teacher stipends)	(\$10,000,000)
TeachSC	\$727,650
Teacher Supplies (\$350 to \$400)	\$2,700,000
CERRA (enhancement to current web portal)	\$200,000
STEM/Math	
Palmetto Math Project	\$10,000,000
Robotics Curriculum	\$150,000
Early Childhood	
CEDEPP-SCDE	\$14,184,000
CEDEPP (addition of three districts)	\$3,000,000
Half Day 4K (removal of three districts)	(\$3,000,000)
LETRS Training Early Childhood (4K Teachers and Assistants @850 classes)	\$2,975,000
First Steps (personnel costs)	\$362,089
Teacher Salaries	
Other State Agencies' Teacher Salaries	\$1,090,256
Assessment/Learning	
Instructional Materials	\$36,972,005
SC Advanced Placement Partnership (under Professional Learning at SCDE)	\$1,500,000
School Building Safety	
School Building Mapping	\$5,000,000
Total Recurring Funds	\$75,861,000

Current Recurring Funds	
EOC Dashboard	\$3,500,000
EOC Agency Budget Request (to be used for salary and fringe for Dashboard personnel)	(\$394,022)

EIA Projected Growth FY 2023-24

The EIA recurring growth funding estimate is \$75,861,000. The EIA Subcommittee has recommended funding as follows.

Recommendation 1: CERRA \$200,000

CERRA's request is to support the development of an online job board designed to aggregate K-12 education jobs across the state and create a central hub for job seekers. In addition, the proposed system would allow CERRA to recruit potential educators nationwide while also equitably promoting district vacancies. The proposed job board would replace the antiquated online educator employment system currently available on CERRA's website and would be comparable to job boards presently being used/developed by neighboring states. The funds would also be used for the annual costs for maintaining the system.

Recommendation 2: Teacher Strategic Compensation Pilot \$10,000,000

The SDE wants to enhance and support effective school teachers by creating a pilot program by recognizing teachers who demonstrate above average year-to-year student growth in core academic areas.

Recommendation 3: TeachSC \$727,650

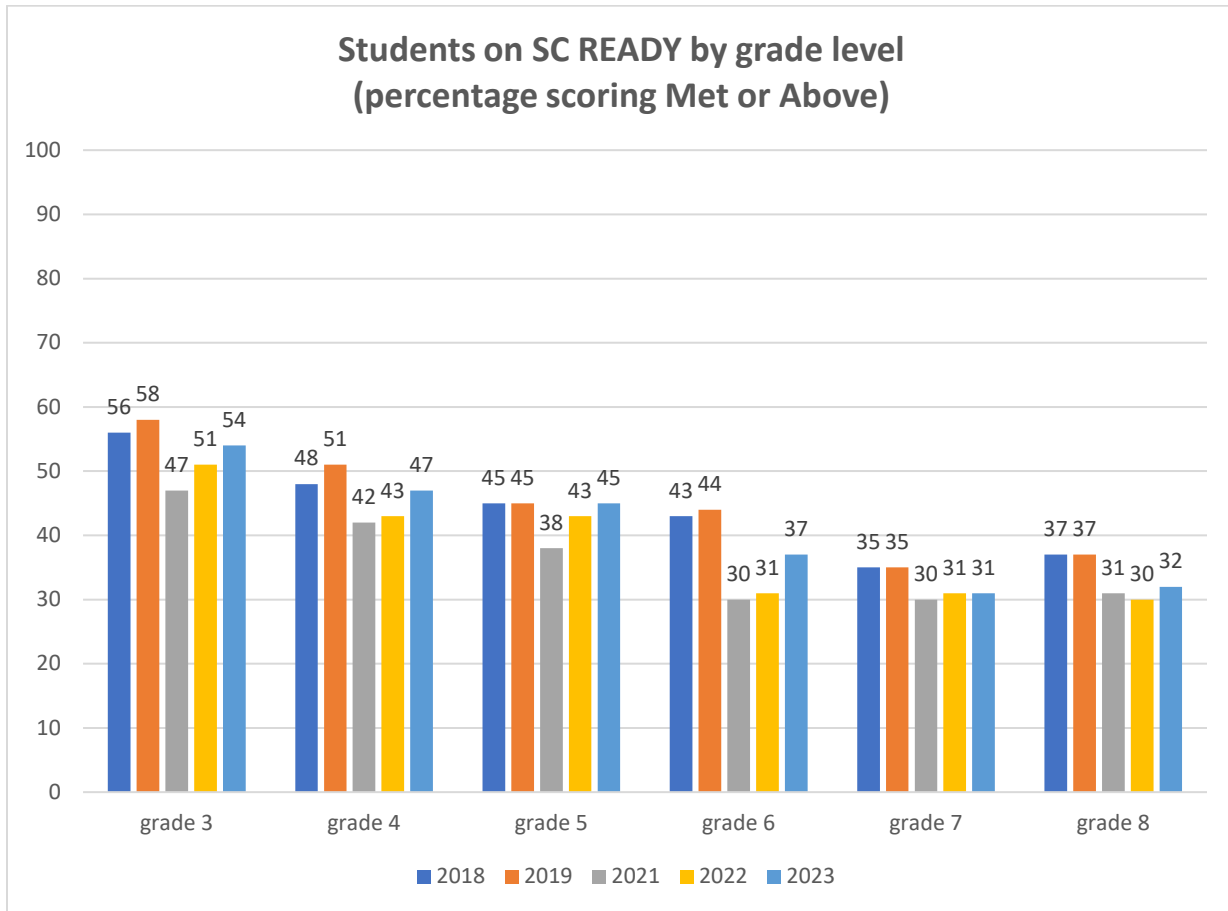
TeachSC is a one-stop-shop on a digital platform with resources, tools and services that increase clarity about the teaching profession to support aspiring teachers. The SDE would house this program.

Recommendation 4: Teacher Supplies (\$350 to \$400) \$2,700,000

Classroom supply monies for teachers is recommended from \$350 per eligible teacher to \$400.

Before and after the pandemic, student performance has been anemic. There has been a precipitous drop in 2022 SC READY results with slight improvements for 2023. However, most grade levels have not met pre-pandemic levels of mathematics achievement. What makes this most critical and alarming is that math is sequential and cumulative in nature and without specific interventions, students may fall further behind. See Table 3 below.

Table 3

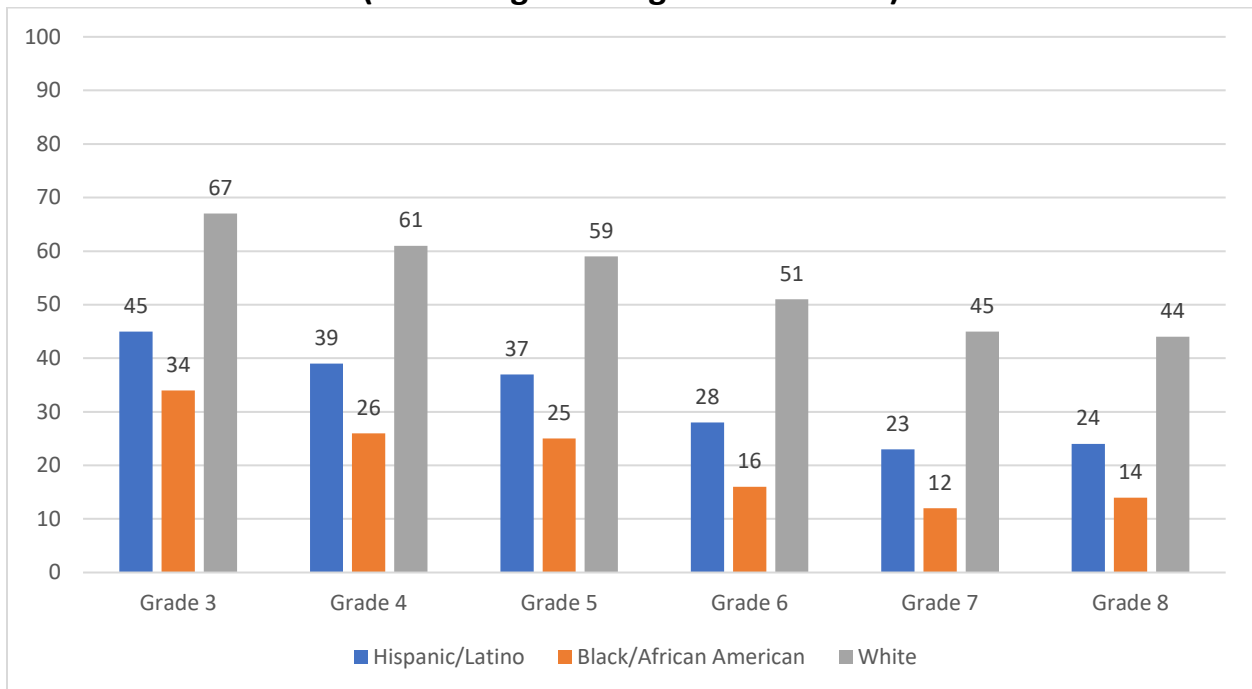


Of significant concern, is the percentage of African American students who are scoring significantly low in middle grades at 16%, 12% and 14% meeting grade level in grades 6, 7 and 8, respectively. Recent research suggests that students who are “off track” in grade 8 have only a

19% chance of being college /career ready; and students “way off track” have only a 3% chance of being college/career ready.³

Table 4

**Students on SCREADY by Subgroups
(Percentage scoring Met or Above)**



Critical next steps needed to erase unfinished learning are to allocate resources to identify gaps in student learning in specific math content/skills and corresponding teacher strategies to support teaching and learning.

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is proposing to create a program to identify and support elementary through middle grades schools with one half or more of fifth or eighth grade students scoring at the lowest level on SC READY mathematics. For each school identified the SCDE will support schools through Instructional Coaching, High Quality Instructional Materials, High Quality Professional Learning and High Dose Tutoring.

Recommendation 6: Robotics Curriculum \$150,000

Funding for a robotics program in an underserved district is recommended. A robotics program

³ Chrys Dougherty and Steve Fleming, “Getting Students On Track to College and Career Ready”, ACT, November, 2012.

should be identified that allows students to investigate, tinker, and explore endless design possibilities.

Recommendation 7: CDEPP-SCDE **\$14,184,000**

CERDEP showed a large increase of 1,120 students and 56 classrooms in 2023-24. With this expansion and anticipation of additional students for 2024-25, the SCDE is requesting additional funds to fully fund the increase in 2023-24 and 2024- 25.

Recommendation 8: LETRS Training Early Childhood (4K) **\$2,975,000**

Research supports the single greatest influence upon student achievement is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher. For current 4K teachers to continue to grow and build their teaching skills and content, the opportunity for continued professional learning is critical.

Teachers are graduating from teacher education programs with limited skills in reading. National studies have shown that only 51 percent of higher education teacher preparation programs include the science of reading in its curriculum.⁴

When teachers do not have the knowledge or skills to teach reading to all students, a large number of students lag behind and struggle, particularly minority students. Problems compound and comprehension gap continues to widen, while teachers are left behind feeling frustrated and ineffective.

The EOC recommends 4K teachers and assistants in 4K classrooms be trained in the companion to LETRS, LETRS Training Early Childhood (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling). Current training for literacy is focused on kindergarten-grade 3. Adding the 4K programs is a critical piece to ensuring a seamless transition for students and teacher development in elementary and early childhood centers. LETRS Training Early Childhood is a proven professional learning designed to teach teachers the content and principles of literacy and effective language instruction. Its content extends across five essential components of reading plus oral language, spelling, and writing. Each of these aspects of instruction are essential especially for students at risk for reading failure due to the life circumstances, prior instruction, language development background and neurodevelopmental reading disabilities (including dyslexia).⁵

Recommendation 9: First Steps **\$362,089**

The EOC recommends the funding request by First Steps for personnel costs.

⁴ <http://www.voyagerspris.com/professional-development/letrs/overview>

⁵ <http://www.voyagerspris.com/professional-development/overview>

Recommendation 10: Other Agencies Teacher Salary \$1,090,256

The EOC recommends providing funds for salary increases for teachers in schools not associated with school districts such as Governor’s Schools, Will Lou Gray, SC School for Deaf and Blind, and Disabilities and Special Needs.

Recommendation 11: Instructional Materials \$37,999,236

With the request from the South Carolina Department of Education for additional funds for instructional materials and to ensure instructional materials for schools and teachers are up-to-date and aligned with newly revised academic standards, a recommendation is made to utilize these funds with a priority for mathematics in elementary and middle schools.

Recommendation 12: South Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership \$1,500,000

The EOC recommends a partnership between the SC Department of Education and College Board to provide staffing, consulting expertise and technical assistance to improve college and career readiness of secondary and middle school students. This partnership aims to improve student outcomes and expand reach for all students. High schools will be provided Pre-AP courses that prepare students for success in AP courses. The Pre-P courses will increase the rigor and expectations for student performance. Pre-AP courses can also be delivered to middle schools.

Recommendation 13: School Building Safety Mapping \$5,000,000

Currently, there is no uniform mapping system to equip first responders from responding to emergency calls to schools. This finding would equip South Carolina to harness the technology to develop a statewide mapping system of school buildings.

Recommendation 14: EOC Agency Budget \$394,022

The EOC staff met with the Governor’s Office staff and has requested to move \$394,022 to the EOC agency operating budget from Data Dashboard. That amount includes salary and fringe for staff managing the Education Data Dashboard. Staff believes the work of the Education Data Dashboard can be accomplished with a recurring annual appropriation of \$2 million, rather than the current allocation of \$3.5 million. The General Assembly may wish to reallocate the remaining funds.

Provisos Recommended for Approval

EOC Proviso Revision Requests Fiscal Year FY 2024-25

Career Readiness Proviso

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **deleting** the following proviso. The legislative intent of this proviso was exclusive to the 2022-23 school year.*

~~**1.91.** (SDE: Career Readiness Assessments) For the current fiscal year, the Education Oversight Committee and the State Board of Education are directed to create a waiver form by which school districts and high schools may request an exemption from reporting student performance on the career readiness assessment for the 2022-23 school year only for students who are taking the career readiness assessment for the second time and when the career readiness assessment is different from the career readiness assessment the student took in 11th grade. The exemption form must be available for schools no later than July 31, 2023.~~

CHE Teacher Prep Report Card Proviso

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **deleting** the following proviso. The intent of this proviso was exclusive to a transfer of funds to the CHE for only one year.*

~~**11.22.** (CHE: Educator Report Card) To maximize the effectiveness and to minimize cost, the Commission on Higher Education shall collaborate with the Education Oversight Committee and the Department of Education to develop and build out the online educator report card by expending up to \$350,000 in funds carried forward from Fiscal Year 2022-23 into Fiscal Year 2023-24 by the Education Oversight Committee for implementing the Education Data Dashboard.~~

Full-Day 4K Proviso

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **amending** the following proviso. The current proviso language outlines the allocated monies and directive for the EOC to conduct an annual evaluation of full day, State funded 4K programs, also known as the South Carolina Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP). Through the Education Data Dashboard, the EOC now visualizes potential gaps in service by county for four-year-olds, and the agency is only able to surface the data we have, which is related to CERDEP-funded programs. The landscape is larger, and students are served in half day, EIA-funded programs, using federal funds, district funds, or in other capacities. Expanding the data collection in this proviso would allow for a more accurate reporting of four-year-olds in poverty served in formal education programs in SC public schools. Furthermore, attendance data from both First Steps and public school CERDEP programs*

would help the EOC determine which students received 4K with fidelity when evaluating later performance on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA).

1A.26/1.47 (SDE-EIA: Full-Day 4K) Eligible students residing in any school district or attending any charter school authorized by the South Carolina Public Charter School District or an approved institution of higher education may participate in the South Carolina Early Reading Development and Education program (CERDEP) pending the availability of space and funding. Student eligibility as defined by Section 59-156-130 of the 1976 Code is an annual family income of one hundred eighty-five percent or less of the federal poverty guidelines as promulgated annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or a statement of Medicaid eligibility.

A parent or guardian may choose to enroll their child in a public school participating in the program and approved by the Department of Education pursuant to Section 59-156-210 or in a private provider participating in the program and approved by the Office of First Steps pursuant to Section 59-156-200. A private provider includes, but is not limited to, a child care center, a military child care facility regulated by the United States Department of Defense, or a non-profit independent school. State funds appropriated for the provision of CERDEP services in military child care facilities may not be used to supplant existing federal child care funds. No school district can be denied participation in CERDEP or be denied CERDEP funding pursuant to the terms of this provision.

4K programs in public schools and non-profit independent schools participating in CERDEP are not required to be approved, registered, or licensed by the Department of Social Services in order to participate in CERDEP. Instead, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps are responsible for ensuring that providers deliver high-quality educational programs pursuant to Section 59-156-160.

Public and private providers shall be funded for instructional costs at a minimum rate of \$5,100 per student enrolled. Eligible students enrolling during the school year or withdrawing during the school year shall be funded on a pro rata basis determined by the length of their enrollment. Private providers transporting eligible children to and from school shall also be eligible for reimbursement at a minimum of \$620 per eligible child transported. First Steps and the Department of Education must provide an equitable distribution above the minimum between public and private providers. First Steps and the Department of Education must provide a quarterly report beginning October 1 detailing funding above the minimum made to any provider to the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. All providers who are reimbursed are required to retain records as required by their fiscal agent. New providers participating for the first time in the current fiscal year and enrolling between one and six eligible children shall be eligible to receive at a minimum of \$1,000 per child in materials and equipment funding, with providers enrolling seven or more such children eligible for funding at a minimum of \$10,000. The Department of Education and the Office of First Steps Readiness are authorized to utilize carry forward funds and federal funds to supplement the amount expended for materials and equipment. Providers receiving equipment funding are expected to participate in the program and provide high-quality, center-based programs as defined herein for a minimum of three years. Failure to participate for three years will require the provider to return a portion

of the equipment allocation at a level determined by the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps to School Readiness. Funding to providers is contingent upon receipt of data as requested by the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps. The Department of Education shall only provide funding for public school students whose complete records have been entered into PowerSchool based on the one hundred and thirty-five day student average daily membership. For the current fiscal year, providers may enroll pay-lunch children who score at or below the twenty-fifth national percentile on two of the three DIAL-3 subscales by July 1 if at least seventy-five percent of the total number of children eligible or the Child Early Reading Development and Education Program in a district or county are projected to be enrolled in that program, Head Start, or ABC Child Care Program as determined by the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps, Child Early Reading Development and Education Program. Providers may receive reimbursement for these children if funds are available. The Department of Education is required to offer waivers allowing students with disabilities to be served in multi-categorical classroom settings based on similar cognition and abilities. Funding appropriated for CERDEP may be carried forward and expended for the same purpose.

Annually, the Department of Education is directed to audit the annual allocations to public providers to ensure that allocations are accurate and aligned to the appropriate pro rata per student allocation, materials, and equipment funding. In the event the department, during the audit process determines that the annual allocations of the prior fiscal year are not accurate, the department must adjust the allocations for the current fiscal year to account for the audit findings. The department must provide the results of the annual audit findings to the General Assembly no later than December first. Likewise, in the event the Office of First Steps determines that the annual allocations of the prior fiscal year to private providers are not accurate, the Office of First Steps must adjust the allocations for the current fiscal year to account for the findings.

Of the funds appropriated, \$300,000 shall be allocated to the Education Oversight Committee to conduct an annual evaluation of the South Carolina **Child Development Education Pilot Program Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP)** and to issue findings in a report to the General Assembly by March first of each year. To aid in this evaluation, the Education Oversight Committee shall determine **and obtain** the data necessary and both public and private providers are required to submit the necessary data as a condition of continued participation in and funding of the program, **including average daily attendance data, so that consistent enrollment may be determined.** This data shall include developmentally appropriate measures of student progress. Additionally, the Department of Education shall issue a unique student identifier.

for each child receiving services from a **public or private provider including those funded by CERDEP, Head Start, SC Child Care Scholarships, EIA, Title I, district funded, and all other federal, state or local public sources.** The Department of Education shall be responsible for the collection and maintenance of data on the public state funded full day and half day four-year-old kindergarten programs. The Office of First Steps to School

Readiness shall be responsible for the collection and maintenance of data on the state funded programs provided through private providers. The Education Oversight Committee shall use this data and all other collected and maintained data necessary to conduct a research-based review of the programs implementation and assessment of student success in the early elementary grades along with information, recommendations, and a

timeline for how the state can increase the number of students served in high-quality programs. **To aid in the accurate reporting of four-year-olds in poverty served in formal education programs in public schools in SC, the Department of Education must provide to the EOC data related to four-year-olds served in formal education programs funded with other state, local, or federal funds including Title 1, and EIA, District funded programs, denoting full or partial day status.**

For eligible children residing in school districts that do not participate in CERDEP, the Department of Education is required to develop and implement inter-district transfer policies that give parents or guardians the option of their eligible child attending an out-of-district school that participates in CERDEP.

For the current fiscal year, the Office of First Steps may expend: (1) up to \$2,000,000 to pilot a program to provide higher reimbursement rates to high-quality providers. The reimbursement rate for students enrolled by child care providers rated B or higher in the ABC Quality System operated by the Department of Social Services may be increased by up to 10% of the per-student base following guidelines developed by the Office of First Steps; and (2) up to \$250,000 to provide one-time supplemental, needs-based incentive grants in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 for newly created and/or newly approved private providers proposing to expand service to ten or more CERDEP eligible children in communities unable to enroll all eligible students in a public, private, or Head Start setting during the prior fiscal year. These grants are designed to address building renovations, documented as necessary to bring proposed classrooms into compliance with licensing regulations, materials and staffing costs, and/or other obstacles currently preventing their participation in the program. The First Steps Board of Trustees shall develop and approve an application process that incorporates formal review and fiscal safeguards designed to ensure grant funds are used solely to address documented barriers to program participation. Providers receiving this one-time supplement shall be expected to participate in the program and provide high-quality, center-based programs as defined herein for a minimum of three years. Failure to participate for three years shall require the provider to return a portion of the supplemental allocation at a level determined by the Office of First Steps to School Readiness. First Steps shall submit a report detailing its process, expenditures and expanded enrollment to the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee by March 15.

If by August first, the Department of Education or the Office of First Steps determines that appropriations will exceed expenditures, available funds may be used to fund an extended program and to increase the length of the program to a maximum of eight and a half hours per day or two hundred and twenty days per year or to fund summer programs. If a district chooses to fund summer enrollment, the program funding shall conform to the funding in this act for full year programs; however, it shall be reduced on a pro rata basis to conform with the length of the program. A summer program shall be no more than eight

and a half hours per day and shall be not more than ten weeks in length. The per pupil allocation and classroom grant must conform with the appropriated amount contained in this act and end of year adjustments shall be based on the one hundred and thirty-five-day student average daily membership or later student average daily membership for districts choosing to extend the program past one hundred and eighty days. Funds may also be used to provide parent engagement, professional development, and quality evaluations of programs. No later than April first, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps shall report to the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee on the expenditure of these funds to include the following information: the amount of money used and specific steps and measures taken to enhance the quality of the 4K program and the amount of money used for professional development as well as the types of professional development offered and the number of participants. The Office of First Steps is directed to determine if the provision of extended programs in private centers improves the ability of parents to enter the workforce or to pursue postsecondary training or industry credentials.

On or before November 15, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps shall share data that identifies the total number of children enrolled in CERDEP in both public and private providers. If available appropriations exceed the instructional costs of serving children enrolled in the program and if a waiting list of eligible children can be documented by the Department of Education and by the Office of First Steps, then the Executive Budget Office may authorize the transfer of funds between the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps.

The Office of First Steps and the Department of Education shall collaborate with the South Carolina Head Start State Collaboration Office to inform parents of all publicly funded full-day 4K programs including Head Start by participating in PalmettoPreK and First5SC.

Rural Teacher Recruiting Incentive Proviso

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **amending** the following proviso. It has been recommended by multiple entities, including CERRA, that a third party conduct an evaluation of funds allocated per this proviso, determining the effectiveness of the monies in recruiting, and retaining classroom educators in rural, underserved districts. Agency staff at the EOC agrees that the need is great, considering the State investment and the teacher vacancies.*

1A.45. (SDEEIA: Rural Teacher Recruiting Incentive) (A) There is created a program within the South Carolina Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) to recruit and retain classroom educators in rural and underserved districts experiencing excessive turnover of classroom teachers on an annual basis. (B) During the current fiscal year CERRA shall publish eligibility requirements and applications for individual educators, school districts, and institutions of higher education not inconsistent with existing licensure requirements for each, but also including: (1) Eligible districts identified by CERRA as experiencing greater than eleven percent average annual teacher turnover, as reported on the districts five most recent district report cards issued by the South Carolina Department of Education and are not one of the fifteen

wealthiest districts based on the index of taxpaying ability, may make application to participate in the program.

(2) Individuals eligible for incentives shall be willing to provide instructional services in an eligible district in exchange for participation in an incentive detailed in item (C) of this section, pursuant to the obligations and restrictions stated for each.

(3) Institutions of higher education eligible to receive education funding as a component of recruiting incentives created pursuant to item (C) of this section shall not be excluded from participation in Teaching Fellows Program.

(4) Any incentives requiring individuals to relocate into an eligible district to provide instructional services shall not be made available to individuals providing instructional services in other eligible districts.

(C) Pursuant to item (A), CERRA shall develop a set of incentives including, but not limited to, salary supplements, education subsidies, loan forgiveness, professional development, and mentorship to be provided to classroom educators that offer instructional services in eligible districts and shall provide incentive options for eligible individuals at all stages of their careers, including high school and college or university students interested in entering the teaching profession and including individuals entering the field through an alternative certification pathway to include, but not limited to, PACE, ABCTE, Teach for American, and CATE Work Based Certification. At a minimum, the incentives shall include:

(1) Development of a program for forgiveness of undergraduate student loans, not to exceed \$5,000 per year, for up to 7 years, for teachers participating in this incentive that achieve certification through an alternative pathway or who have a loan from an institution other than the South Carolina Student Loan Corporation or program other than the South Carolina Teachers Loan Program.

(2) Development of a forgivable loan program for individuals pursuing graduate coursework in furtherance of a teaching career, including enrollment in graduate level coursework necessary to seek additional credentialing or certification relevant to the participants teaching practice, or individuals seeking an alternative pathway to certification as a teacher.

(3) Support for the establishment and maintenance of a teaching mentorship program, including salary supplements for teaching mentors not to exceed \$2,500 per year.

(4) Other technical support and recruiting incentives as developed by CERRA in conjunction with the Department of Education and the Education Oversight Committee consistent with the objectives of this section.

(D) In addition to eligibility and application requirements, CERRA shall develop a process for recovering an amount equal to the incentives given to individual participants who fail to comply with the obligations associated with a relevant incentive in which they participate including, but not limited to, failure to complete a prescribed course of study, failure to obtain a relevant

certification or licensure upon completion of a course of study, or failure to provide instructional services in an eligible district for a prescribed period of time.

(E) CERRA shall report by July thirty-first of the current fiscal year to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House on the incentives developed pursuant to item (C) of this section and make recommendations for attracting and retaining high quality teachers in rural and underserved districts. The report shall contain at a minimum eligibility requirements and application processes for districts and individuals, descriptions of and proposed budgets for each incentive program and an analysis of the number and demographics of individuals potentially eligible for each.

(F) Funds appropriated or transferred for use in the Rural Teacher Recruiting Incentive may be carried forward from prior fiscal years and used for the same purpose. **The Education Oversight Committee is required to complete an evaluation of the impact of the funds and incentives related to the Rural Teacher Recruiting Incentive. A completed evaluation is due to the House Ways and Means Committee, the House Education Committee, the Senate Finance Committee, the Senate Education Committee and the Governor’s Office no later than December 15 of the current fiscal year.**

Foundational Literacy Skill Training

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **amending** the following proviso. This proviso directs the Department of Education to provide training in foundational literacy skills to public school educators in kindergarten through grade three. The amendment expands the training to educators in state-funded four-year-old programs and allows the Department to carry forward funds as needed to provide the training.*

1A.73.(SDE-EIA: Foundational Literacy Skill Training) Beginning with the ~~current~~ **2023-24** fiscal year, the Department of Education shall provide training in foundational literacy skills to public school educators working with students in kindergarten through grade three, pending the availability of funding and space. The Department of Education shall deliver professional development that has demonstrated success in establishing deep knowledge of evidence-based foundational literacy skills grounded in the science of reading and promoting student reading achievement. **Beginning in the 2024-25 fiscal year with funds available, the Department of Education will extend the training to public school educators and class aides working with children in the South Carolina Early Reading Development and Education program (CERDEP). The Department of Education will collaborate with the Office of First Steps to School Readiness to also include CERDEP teachers in private providers participating in CERDEP.**

Each school district shall participate in the implementation of this foundational literacy skills training. The department and school districts shall create an implementation plan to include

educator cohorts to begin in the fall and spring of the 2023-24 school year, with a goal of state-wide implementation for every educator working with students in kindergarten through grade three certified in early childhood, elementary, and special education. Elementary administrators should also be included in the foundational literacy skills training.

Selected educators shall participate in foundational literacy skills training provided and paid for by the Department of Education. Successful completion of this training shall satisfy the requirements of the literacy teacher endorsement. Educators who successfully complete the training, as determined by the department, shall receive a monetary stipend.

The Department of Education shall identify reliable and valid universal reading screeners as potential replacements for the readiness assessment required under Section 59-155-150. The identified screeners may be selected and used by school districts to screen and monitor kindergarten through second grade student progress in foundational literacy skills, and to identify or predict those who may be at risk for poor reading outcomes. Each identified universal reading screener must:

- (1) provide screening and diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress in reading;
- (2) measure, at a minimum, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; and
- (3) identify students with a reading deficiency, including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia.

In its annual Reading Proficiency Plan, each district shall:

- (1) document how the reading and writing curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all PK-5 students are aligned with the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational skills. PK-5 textbooks or instructional materials that employ the three-cueing system model of reading, visual memory as the primary basis for teaching word recognition, or the three-cueing system model of reading based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual, which is also known as “MSV”, shall not be used in reading instruction;
- (2) document the number of first and second grade students who are projected to score “Does Not Meet” on the statewide summative reading assessment;
- (3) document how scientifically-based supplemental interventions are provided to struggling readers who fail to demonstrate grade-level proficiency as demonstrated by a score of “Meets or Exceeds Expectations”; and
- (4) explain how the district will provide teacher training in the science of reading, structured literacy, and foundational literacy skills.

As used in this provision:

- (1) “Foundational literacy skills” means phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. This definition of foundational literacy skills specifically excludes the “Three-cueing system”, which is any model of teaching students to

read based on meaning, structure and syntax, and visual cues, which may also be known as “MSV”.

(2) “Science of Reading” means the body of research that identifies evidence-based approaches of explicitly and systematically teaching students to read, including foundational literacy skills that enable students to develop reading skills required to meet state standards in literacy.

(3) “Structured Literacy” means an evidence-based approach to teaching oral and written language aligned to the science of reading founded on the science of how children learn to read and characterized by explicit, systematic, cumulative, and diagnostic instruction in phonology, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

The Department of Education is authorized to carryforward and expend any balance of funds appropriated in the prior fiscal year for the training for the same purposes in the current fiscal year.

Ad Hoc Committee on EIA Funded Teacher Recruitment and Retention

*Staff recommendation: We recommend **adding** the following proviso. Teacher recruitment and retention is the most pressing issue facing public schools across South Carolina, as well as the nation. Research is evident that a highly qualified teacher has a large impact on student achievement.⁶ Currently, the South Carolina General Assembly is funding a number of teacher recruitment and retention programs through Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds with the intent to attract and retain highly qualified teachers for the students of South Carolina.*

This proviso recommends an ad hoc committee be formed to review current programs and structures. The EOC EIA subcommittee recommends that any request received for additional funding or new funding should be postponed until the comprehensive plan from the ad hoc committee have been approved by the General Assembly.

An ad hoc committee will be formed in summer 2024 to review current EIA structures/programs in place in South Carolina whose focus is teacher recruitment and retention. The responsibility of the ad hoc committee will be the EOC. Each program will be reviewed, with a specific eye toward duplication of efforts and return on State investments. This ad hoc committee will make recommendations to the General Assembly in January 2025 as to the most efficient and effective way to manage and monitor teacher recruitment and retention structures/programs across South Carolina to increase teachers entering the teaching profession and to retain teachers, specifically in the first five (5) years of teaching.

⁶ <https://compcenternetwork.org/sites/default/files/archive/research-brief-teacher-recruitment-induction-retention.pdf>