

# Flexibility Available to Schools and Districts

Presentation by Roy M. Stehle  
Director of Office of Federal and State Accountability  
South Carolina Department of Education

# Flexibility for Schools and Districts

“From the beginning of my efforts to serve the public as State Superintendent of Education, providing school districts, schools, and teachers more flexibility has been a cornerstone of my vision to transform education.”

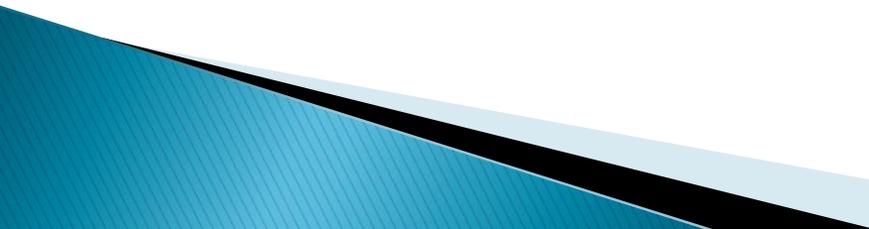
Dr. Mick Zais



# Flexibility Options Offered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE)

- ▶ Flexibility Proviso in 2012–13 Appropriations Bill 4813, Section 1B
  - ▶ Flexibility Through Deregulation
  - ▶ Innovative Programs and Locally Designed Subject Area Courses
  - ▶ Proficiency-based Courses for Initial Credit and Credit Recovery
  - ▶ Federal Flexibility
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# Flexibility Proviso in 2012–13 Appropriations Bill 4813, Section 1B

- ▶ The Flexibility Proviso in 2012–13 Appropriations Bill 4813, Section 1B, allows some flexibility in the area of administrative and professional personnel qualifications, duties, and workloads at the district and school levels.
  - ▶ All school districts and special schools of this State may suspend professional staffing ratios and expenditure regulations and guidelines at the sub-function and service area level, except for four-year old programs and programs serving students with exceptional needs.
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# Flexibility Through Deregulation

- ▶ The Education Accountability Act, S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-8-1110 and 59-18-1120 (2002), provide for the recognition of schools based on student performance. Schools that continually receive recognition are rewarded by exemptions from regulations and statutes (59-18-1110). Special provisions also allow exemptions from some regulations or statutes to other schools (59-18-1120).

# Flexibility Through Deregulation

## Criteria for Schools Through School Plans

- ▶ Schools may receive flexibility status when each of the following conditions is met:
- ▶ The school has met annual improvement standards for subgroups of students in reading and mathematics.
- ▶ Amendments to the school renewal plan must explain why exemptions are expected to improve the academic performance of the students.
- ▶ The plan meets the approval by the SBE.

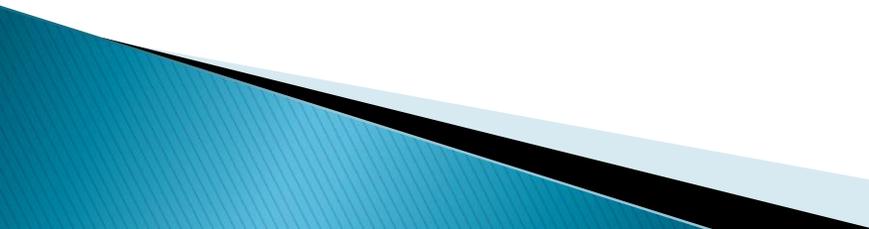


# Innovative Programs and Locally Designed Subject Area Courses

- ▶ State Board of Education (SBE) Regulations 43–231 and 43–232 permit schools to implement an innovative approach in grades K – 5 and 6 – 8 if the innovative approach is approved by the local school board and is incorporated into school and district plans.
- ▶ SBE Regulation 43–234 allows schools in grades 9 – 12 to award credit for a locally designed subject area course if the course is aligned with the state academic standards for the particular subject area and if the course is approved by both the local board of trustees and the State Superintendent of Education.



# Defining Innovative Programs and Locally Designed Subject Area Courses

- ▶ Innovative Program: a program that encompasses nontraditional teaching approaches
  - ▶ Locally–designed subject area courses: subject area courses which include relevant South Carolina state standards, but which are designed by a local district or school; these courses must be approved by the South Carolina Department of Education and meet the 120 hours of mandated seat time.
  - ▶ Locally–designed elective course: elective course that is designed by a school or district, approved by the local board of trustees, and which does not need South Carolina Department of Education approval; these courses must meet the 120 hours of mandated seat time if high school credit is awarded.
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# Proficiency Courses for Initial Credit and Credit Recovery

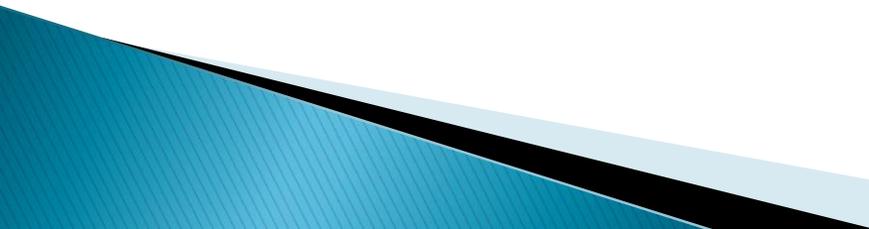
Based on State Board of Education Regulation 43-234, schools can apply for approval to the SCDE for proficiency-based credit for high school coursework.



# Defining Proficiency for Initial Credit and Credit Recovery

- ▶ Proficiency: demonstration of competency or advancement, based upon mastery of South Carolina State Subject Area Standards in any subject and which does not require a waiver of seat time.
- ▶ Proficiency-based learning course credits: credit received for courses based upon mastery of South Carolina State Subject Area Standards and for which attendance requirements of 120 hours of seat time may not apply; these courses may be designed to include, but not be limited to, the following instructional methodologies: distance learning, on-line learning, project and inquiry-based learning, independent study, and/or a combination thereof.

# Defining Proficiency for Initial Credit and Credit Recovery, continued

- ▶ Proficiency-based system: a structure which outlines courses, curriculum, and instructional methods used in awarding proficiency-based course credit.
  - ▶ Credit recovery: self-paced, semester long courses that target learning in areas of greatest weakness, allowing nontraditional or at risk students to rapidly complete courses, recover credits, and progress to graduation.
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# SCDE's Position on Offering Proficiency Courses for Initial Credit

- ▶ Should be offered as an alternative to a traditional class prior to student's enrollment in the class
- ▶ Should be an option for all students



# Offering Proficiency-based Courses for Initial Credit

## Reviewed Online and Credit Recovery Course List

- ▶ The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) has approved several online courses offered by specific online vendors which may be used in South Carolina public schools for initial course credit in a proficiency-based system.
- ▶ The SCDE approved course and vendor list, *Reviewed Online and Credit Recovery Courses*, may be found on the Division of Accountability website.

# Offering Proficiency-based Courses

## Circumstances Where No Proficiency-based Course Credit Application is Required

- ▶ If a school/district is using online instruction as supplemental instruction in a class that meets 120 hours, schools/districts do not need to submit an application.
  - ▶ If a school/district is offering a course from the SCDE's approved reviewed online and credit recovery course list, no application needs to be submitted for approval.
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# Offering Proficiency-based Courses for Initial Credit

## Circumstances for Submitting the District-Designed Subject Area Course Application for High School Proficiency-based Credit

- ▶ If a school/district is using online instruction not on the SCDE approved list, the full *District-Designed Subject Area Course Application for High School Proficiency-based Credit* application should be completed. Once the application is approved, the vendor/course will be added to the list.
- ▶ If a school/district is offering its own unique course for proficiency-based credit, the full application should be submitted to the SCDE.

# Waiver Requests

State Board of Education 43-261 states the following:

“Upon request of a district board of trustees or its designee, the State Board of Education may waive any regulation that would impede the implementation of an approved district strategic plan or school renewal plan.”



# Waiver Requests

- ▶ To request a waiver, please have the superintendent write a letter stating the regulation number that he or she wishes to have waived, along with an explanation and supporting documentation.
- ▶ Send the request to Darlene Prevatt by e-mail at [dprevatt@ed.sc.gov](mailto:dprevatt@ed.sc.gov) or by regular mail to the following address:
  - South Carolina Department of Education
  - Rutledge Building,
  - 1429 Senate Street, Room 501
  - Columbia, SC 29201

# More Information on Flexibility Options for Schools and Districts

- ▶ More information regarding the flexibility options discussed today, along with necessary applications and directions, can be found at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/195/>
- ▶ If your school or district is considering any of these flexibility options, please contact Maria Boggs by telephone at 803-734-3749 or by e-mail at [meboggs@ed.sc.gov](mailto:meboggs@ed.sc.gov), or contact Darlene Prevatt at 803-734-3477 or by e-mail at [dprevatt@ed.sc.gov](mailto:dprevatt@ed.sc.gov).
- ▶ To have either a proficiency-based course application or locally a designed subject area course application sent to you as a Word document, please contact Maria Boggs, whose contact information is listed above.

# Federal Flexibility

- The ESEA Flexibility Waiver allows some flexibility from the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act – NCLB Act.
  - Current ESEA provisions allow for the transfer of funds from program to program under specific conditions established in the law and guidance.
  - Current ESEA provisions allow for the consolidation of funds in Title I Schoolwide Programs.
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# Federal Flexibility

- For information and guidance regarding federal flexibility, please contact Roy Stehle at 803-734-8118 or by e-mail at [rstehle@ed.sc.gov](mailto:rstehle@ed.sc.gov)