



# STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mick Zais  
Superintendent

1429 Senate Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District Superintendents  
**FROM:** Nancy W. Busbee, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent, Division of Accountability  
**DATE:** January 21, 2014  
**RE:** Course Titles for Students with Disabilities

This memorandum serves to reinforce the requirements regarding course titles as outlined in the *Activity Coding System for the Student Information System, 2013–2014* (<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/programs-services/124/documents/CourseActivityCodes201314-9-10-13.pdf>, page 48). In a review of course titles for the 2013–14 school year, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) found many course titles that do not meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, 2001; the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004 (IDEA); and the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (US-OCR).

Beginning no later than school year 2014–15, course titles must **not** identify students as receiving special education services in any manner. Course titles must **not** contain any reference to special education or categories of disability. For example, course titles such as “Self Contained LD,” “Resource English,” “SC-EMD ELA,” or “EMD-Self Contained Math” would be inappropriate course designations. Core academic classes for students in special education classes must be provided in the same manner as for students in general education programs.

Students in special education programs must receive instruction in core academic areas on or aligned to grade-level standards by highly qualified, appropriately certified teachers. Students in special education programs must access the general education curriculum, unless they are receiving instruction on alternate achievement standards (aligned to grade-level standards) and participating in SC-ALT. Students in special education programs must show yearly progression through the curriculum, unless they are retained or fail a specific grade or academic area.

In *Letter to Runkel*, 25 IDELR 387 (OCR 1996), the United States Office for Civil Rights (US-OCR) cautions states not to use course titles that are only used for courses offered to students with disabilities. Course titles should be state-approved course titles for all students or locally-developed to reflect the general education curriculum offered to students with disabilities. Districts are encouraged to create titles that describe core areas of support and/or skill development for all students if they do not currently have such course titles in place. Districts should avoid course titles with descriptors commonly associated with special education, such as functional, special, resource, self-contained, and itinerant.

We appreciate your attention to this matter as you prepare for the 2014–15 school year. If you have any questions, please contact Darlene Prevatt in the Office of Federal and State Accountability at (803) 734-3477, or Kathy Griffin in the Office of Exceptional Children at (803) 734-8224.

cc: District Assistant Superintendents/Directors of Curriculum and Instruction  
District Technology Directors/Coordinators and District Special Education Directors/Coordinators  
District Accreditation Contacts  
School Principals