STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: John R. Payne
Director, Office of Special Education Services

DATE: March 7, 2017

RE: Instructional Materials and Students with Disabilities

This memorandum is to provide guidance and information about forthcoming changes regarding instructional materials for students with disabilities. Over the past three months, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), Office of Special Education Services (OSES) and the Office of Instructional Materials (OIM) have convened and collaborated to investigate and review instructional materials for students with disabilities.

Federal law and regulations require that unless instructed on alternate standards and assessed on alternate assessments, students with disabilities must be given access to the standards for the grade in which the student is enrolled; and must be given opportunity to access and make progress in the general education curriculum. As a result, effective school year 2017–18, please note the following. First, unless instructed in alternate achievement standards and assessed on alternate assessments, students with disabilities should have access to the grade-level instructional materials/course materials aligned to South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Standards consistent with their nondisabled peers.

Special education instructional materials for students with mild to moderate disabilities should be considered supplemental materials that focus on skill deficit areas. To that end, the OSES strongly recommends that districts use the large, one-time, supplemental, February 2017 IDEA awards (totaling roughly $20 million) to procure supplementary instructional materials as special education instructional materials. These supplementary instructional materials should address deficit skill areas and should be evidence/research-based materials. For example, funds may be used on decoding or written expression

instructional materials to better address students' skill deficits in these areas. The OSES will provide districts with a rubric on selecting evidence-based instructional materials. Beginning with the 2017–18 school year, the instructional materials typically housed at and provided by the OIM will be discontinued.

Second, the OSES recommends that these supplemental funds also be spent to provide general education Teacher Editions in core content areas to special education teachers only so that specialized instruction may be linked to the content and South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards most effectively. Last, given this is the last large supplemental award planned for distribution, districts are encouraged to procure extra consumable instructional materials to serve students with disabilities in the forthcoming years.

As indicated in your revised Grant Award Notification (GAN), these supplemental funds must be expended by September 30, 2017; and the final claims submitted by the date indicated on your GAN. We appreciate your timely action and expenditure of these funds.

For students who are instructed and assessed via alternate achievement standards and assessments, the OSES will provide additional funds (above the supplemental awards) to cover related costs for instructional materials in the core content areas of ELA, math, science, and social studies for this population. Schools may order these materials through OIM's online ordering system for the 2017–18 school year. More information about the materials will be provided to districts and schools in mid-April.

If your district needs technical assistance in this area, please complete an online request at https://scde.formstack.com/forms/leasop_request_for_assistance or call 803-734-8224.

cc: District Special Education Directors
District Instructional Leaders
District Instructional Materials Coordinators