

South Carolina Educator Preparation Guidelines: Standards, Policies, and Procedures

Specialty Area Program Approval Standards

Section 59-26-20 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, establishes the authority of the State Board of Education (SBE), through the State Department of Education (SCDE), and in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education, to adopt standards, policies, and procedures for the approval of preparation programs leading to the certification of educators. Specifically, the SBE is authorized to adopt standards for specialty area programs that support providers in developing preparation programs and facilitate the initial and continuing review and approval processes. For the purpose of these guidelines, a specialty area program is defined as one preparing a candidate for issuance of an educator credential in a specific certification field and associated grade span.

For initial and continuing approval, specialty area programs must demonstrate the capacity to prepare teachers, service personnel, and school and district leaders who will be effective in professional practice. In most instances, the specialty area program standards adopted by the SBE are those of the specialized professional association (SPA) for the content area. In some instances, however, the standards adopted by the SBE are those of a national specialized accreditation agency. For additional specialty areas, including those for which no SPA or accrediting agency exists, the SCDE will work with preparation program faculty and content-area specialists to develop standards for SBE approval.

The SBE has adopted the following specialty area standards for both initial and continuing approval of educator preparation programs. Unless otherwise indicated, educator preparation providers must use the most recent, approved version of the standards listed below in the development of new program proposals and for program review purposes.

Teaching Fields

Agriculture Education

- [South Carolina Agriculture Education Program Approval Standards, 2018](#)

Art Education

- [South Carolina Art Education Program Approval Standards, 2020](#)
Providers may use National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) accreditation in lieu of South Carolina Art Education Program Approval Standards.

Business and Marketing Education

- Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International)

Computer Science

- [South Carolina Computer Science Education Program Approval Standards, 2020](#)

Dance

- National Association of Schools of Dance (NASD)

Early Childhood Education

- National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators, 2019

Elementary Education

- [South Carolina Elementary Education Program Approval Standards, 2019](#)

English

- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)

English for Speakers of Other Languages

- Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

Family and Consumer Science

- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AACCS)

Health Education

- Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America) Health Education

Industrial Technology Education (Reserved)

There are no current South Carolina educator preparation programs leading to certification in this field.

Literacy

- International Literacy Association (ILA) Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals

Mathematics

- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

Middle Level Education

- Association of Middle Level Education (AMLE)

Montessori Education

- Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE)

Music Education

- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

Physical Education

- Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America) Physical Education

Science (all certification fields)

- National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)

Special Education (all certification fields)

- [South Carolina Program Approval Standards for Special Education Pre-kindergarten to Grade 2, 2025](#) or Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educator (EI/ECSE) Standards and
- CEC Initial K-12 Standards

Social Studies (all certification fields)

- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

Theater

- National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST)

World Languages

- American Council on the Teaching of a Foreign Language (ACTFL)

Service Fields

Library Media Specialist

- American Library Association (ALA)/American Association of School Librarians (AASL)
- Providers may use American Library Association (ALA) accreditation in lieu of ALA/AASL standards.

School Counselor

- Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)

School Psychologist

- National Association of School Psychologist (NASP) or American Psychological Association (APA)

Speech-Language Pathologist

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

Leadership and Administrative Fields

Educational Leadership and Administration: Building Level

- National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Recognition Standards – Building Level

Educational Leadership and Administration: District Level

- National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Program Recognition Standards – District Level

Policy History

- February 11, 2020
 - Initial approval
- December 14, 2021
 - Approval of the inclusion of American Sign Language as a World Language
- May 9, 2021
 - Approval of TESOL standards for English for Speakers of Other Languages
- June 3, 2025
 - Approval of South Carolina Program Approval Standards for Special Education Pre-kidergarten to Grade 2, 2025