

2019–20 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR

BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SUPERINTENDENT, AND DISTRICT OPERATIONS

NOTE: *For Accreditation purposes, schools and school districts are responsible for determining compliance with the following Accreditation Standards. Schools and school districts are also responsible for complying with all applicable State Board of Education Regulations, and relevant statutes as outlined in the South Carolina Code of Laws.*

I. PERSONNEL

A. BOARD MEMBERS

1. The board of trustees exercises the general powers and duties as prescribed statutory requirements. [§59-19-90]
2. It shall be unlawful for a school trustee to receive pay as a teacher of a free public school that is located in the same school district of which such person is a trustee. [§59-19-300]
3. No person who is a member of a board of trustees or the immediate family of a member of the board of trustees of any school district should be employed by the board as a teacher without the written approval of the board of trustees of the district. [§59-25-10]
4. Within one year of taking office, all persons elected or appointed as members of a school district board of trustees shall complete successfully an orientation program in the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a board member. [§59-19-45]
5. Failure by any school district to develop affirmative action plans or otherwise adhere to the provisions of the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 is cause for intervention by the State Department of Education (SCDE) to take the corrective steps as may be necessary. [§59-1-520]
6. The board of trustees reports termination of certain district employees to State Board of Education (SBE) and State Superintendent. [R43-58.1, §59-19-90]

B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. Each school district shall employ a superintendent who serves as the executive officer of the board of trustees and the professional leader of the school district. [R43-161, §59-13-10, §59-13-30]
2. Administrators serving as district superintendents shall hold a superintendent's certificate. [R43-161, §59-13-20]
3. The superintendent shall employ and discharge all employees of the school, subject to the approval of the board. [§59-49-80]

C. ADDITIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

1. Area superintendents must hold a superintendent's certificate. [R43-161, §59-13-20]

2. Personnel employed as administrative assistants, supervisors, and consultants having responsibilities for supervising instructional programs and student services must hold a master's degree and certified in their area of primary responsibility or must earn a minimum of six semester hours annually toward appropriate certification. The district superintendent must request from the Office of Educator Services a certification permit for members of the central staff who are not properly certified. [R 43-53, R43-205]

D. ALL EMPLOYEES

1. Each individual employed in an instructional, classroom teaching position or who serves in a position designed for the support of the instructional program in a public school of this state must hold an appropriate South Carolina teaching credential. [R43-50, §59-5-60]
2. The licensing of related educational professionals in the areas of Audiology, Nursing, and Social Work are remanded to the established licensing boards. [R43-50, §59-5-60]

E. PRINCIPALS

1. Each school district shall provide a formalized induction program for first time school principals. Appropriate documentation is maintained by the district to verify the evaluation process. [R43-165.1, §59-24-80]
2. Prior to permanent appointment as a principal for any elementary school, secondary school, or career and technology center, the person must be assessed for instructional leadership and management capabilities by the Leadership Academy of the South Carolina Department of Education. [§59-24-10]

F. TEACHERS

1. Before beginning full-time teaching in South Carolina, a teacher education candidate shall undergo a state criminal records check by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and a national criminal records check, supported by fingerprints, by the FBI. [§59-25-115, R43-53]
2. Teachers must meet the applicable certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification. [R43-50, R43-205, §59-25-20, Every Student Succeeds Section 1112(6) page 52, (*Proviso 1.67 for 2019–20 states a teacher certified at the secondary level may teach such courses in grades seven through twelve without having the add on certification for middle level education and a teacher certified in elementary education may teach first grade without having the add on certification in early childhood education.*)]

G. PARAPROFESSIONALS

1. Instructional paraprofessionals who work in Title I schools or a Title I targeted assistance programs meet applicable certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification. [R43-209, Every Student Succeeds Act, Section 1112(6) page 52]
2. Each teacher of trainable, orthopedically, emotionally, or pupils with visual disabilities in a self-contained classroom model shall have a paraprofessional full

time, provided that the class has a minimum membership of four pupils.[R43-205, R43-209]

3. Each teacher of a kindergarten unit shall have a paraprofessional full time. [R43-209]

H. READING/LITERACY COACH

1. A reading/literacy coach should be employed in each elementary school. [§59-155-180(C)(2), (*Proviso 1.61(c) for 2019–20 allows a district to assign a reading/literacy coach to a primary school, elementary school, and/or middle school or combination of these schools depending on the area of highest need in the district.*)]
2. The reading coach should not be assigned a regular classroom teaching assignment, and must not perform administrative functions. [§59-155-180(C) (3), (*Proviso 1.61 (D) requires schools and districts accepting funding to support a coaching position agree that the reading/literacy coach must not serve as an administrator. If the department finds that school districts are using these funds for administrative costs as defined in statute they must withhold that districts remaining balance of funds allocated pursuant to this proviso.*)]

I. SUBCONTRACTORS--Child Development

School districts may contract with appropriate groups and/or agencies to provide part or the entire program. In such cases, the school district is charged with the responsibility of maintaining compliance with the regulations governing this program. [R43-264.1]

II. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

A. GENERAL

1. Each school district shall see that in every school under their care there shall be taught, as far as practicable, orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English grammar and instruction in phonics, the elements of agriculture, the history of the United States and of this State, the principles of the Constitutions of the United States and of this State, morals and good behavior, algebra, physiology and hygiene (especially as to the effects of alcoholic liquors and narcotics upon the human system), English literature, and such other branches as the state board may from time to time direct. [§59-29-10]
2. Each public school of the State must instruct students in the history of black people as a regular part of its history and social studies courses. [§59-29-55]
3. The school district offers Advanced Placement courses in all secondary schools. [R43-258.1, R43-234, §59-29-190]
4. All secondary schools offer a college preparatory program. [§59-5-65]
5. The district must maintain a student-teacher ratio of 21:1 or less reading and mathematics in grades one, two, and three. [R43-231, §59-20-40]
6. The district complies with all summer school program requirements. [R43-240]

B. COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH EDUCATION (CHE)

1. The district schools have implemented a comprehensive health education program in accordance with regulatory and statutory requirements. [R43-231, R43-232, R43-234, R43-238, §59-32-10 et seq.]
2. Each district shall publish on its website the title and publisher of all health education materials it has approved, adopted, and used in the classroom. [59-32-30, Proviso 1.49]
3. If SCDE determines that a district is non-compliant with mandated health education upon review of the district's annual CHE Compliance Survey or if the district fails to publish the title and publisher of materials on its website, then the Department of Education shall withhold one percent of the district's funds allocated in Part IA, Section 1, X - Student Health and Fitness Act until the department determines the district is in compliance. (*Proviso 1.49*)
4. Each school district is required to ensure that all comprehensive health education, reproductive health education, and family life education is conducted within the district. [59-32-30, (*Proviso 1.49 for 2019-20*)]
5. If SCDE determines that a district is non-compliant with the mandated health education upon review of the CHE Compliance Survey or if the district fails to publish the title and publisher of materials on its website, then SCDE shall withhold one percent of the district's funds allocated in Part IA, section 1, X- Student Health and Fitness Act until the department determines the district is in compliance. (*Proviso 1.49 for 2019-20*)

C. CHILD DEVELOPMENT/EARLY CHILDHOOD

1. Each district shall provide at least one program for four-year-old children and may serve identified three-year old children who have significant readiness deficiencies. [R43-264.1, §59-19-340, §59-139-10, §59-139-70, §59-139-05]
2. Districts and schools shall construct and implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum model from pre-school through grade three. [R43-267, §59-139-10, §59-29-10]
3. The school district provides a family literacy program that enhances relationships between parents and children, connects the value of literacy development, promotes connections to school, develops knowledge in parenting and child development, and provides support services in the areas of health, nutrition, transportation, childcare, and other related needs. [R43-265, R43-267, §59-139-10, §59-1-450, §59-29-10]

D. GIFTED AND TALENTED

1. Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades one through twelve as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require educational programming beyond that normally provided by the general school programming in order to achieve their potential. [R43-220, §59-29-170]
2. To document planning, districts will submit a local gifted and talented programming plan every five years and delineate progress on this plan annually. [R43-220, §59-29-170]

E. ASSESSMENTS

1. All students entering the eleventh grade must be administered a Ready to Work (R2W) assessment. [§59-18-325]
2. All tenth grade students are offered the PSAT or PLAN test, and the results are used as a diagnostic tool. [§59-18-340, (*Proviso 1A.17 resumes reimbursements for the current school year for PSAT, pre-ACT, or 10th grade Aspire.*)]

F. PROFICIENCY-BASED SYSTEM

A school may award credit for courses that have been approved by the SCDE in a proficiency-based system. A proficiency-based course may also be offered for one-fourth, one-half, or one unit if the system specifies these units. Each school district that seeks to implement a proficiency-based system must submit a plan to the SCDE that provides procedures for establishing and developing a proficiency-based system including the method for determining proficiency. The SCDE must approve the district-submitted plan prior to the district's use of the proficiency-based system. Districts are accountable for making sure that the academic standards and the individual learning needs of the students are addressed. [R43-234]

G. DUAL CREDIT ARRANGEMENT

A school may award credit for a college course that students take under the district's dual credit arrangement. A three-semester-hour college course transfers as one unit of credit. [R43-234]

III. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

A. SCHOOL YEAR

1. The statutory school term is one hundred ninety days annually and shall consist of a minimum of one hundred eighty days of instruction. [§59-1-425]
2. Three days must be used for collegial professional development. No more than two days may be used for the preparation of opening of schools and the remaining five days may be used for teacher planning, academic plans, and parent conferences. [§59-1-425]
3. No more than three days of the school year are reduced in instructional time for the purpose of administering end-of-the-semester examinations, end-of-the-year examinations, teacher conferences, or for staff development. The reduced days are not less than three hours in length. [§59-1-425]
4. Early dismissal days for emergencies must be reported to and approved by the director of the Office of Federal and State Accountability. A plan to make up days by lengthening the school day must be approved by the SCDE, Office of Federal and State Accountability before implementation. [R43-231, R43-232, R43-234]
5. All school days missed because of snow, extreme weather conditions, or other disruptions requiring schools to close must be made up. All school districts shall designate annually at least three days within their school calendars to be used as make up days in the event of these occurrences. If those designated days have been used or are no longer available, the local school board of trustees may lengthen the hours of school operation by no less than one hour per day for the total number of hours missed, operate schools on Saturday, or may waive up to three days. A waiver granted by the local board of trustees may only be authorized by a majority vote of

the local school board, and may not be granted until the school has made up three full days, or the equivalent number of hours.

The State Board of Education may waive the requirements of making up days beyond the three days forgiven by the local school district, not to exceed three additional days. The State Department annually, before July first, shall provide the General Assembly with a detailed report of information from each district listing the number of days missed and the reason, regardless of whether any were missed; days made up; and days waived. [§59-1-425, R43-231, R43-232, R43-234]

B. DISTRICT STRATEGIC AND SCHOOL RENEWAL PLANS

1. Each school district must develop a five-year district strategic plan and each school must develop a five-year school renewal plan. District and schools' plans shall coordinate and align improvement initiatives. [§59-20-60(3), R43-261]
2. New five-year district and school plans shall be submitted to the SCDE by April 30 and every five years thereafter. The annual update of the district strategic and school renewal plan must be submitted to the SCDE by April 30 of each year. [§59-20-60, §59-18-1310, R43-261]
3. The district strategic plan, school renewal plans, and annual updates must be reviewed and approved by the local board of trustees and coordinate funding from local, state, federal, and private sources. [§59-20-60(3), §59-139-5 et seq., R43-261]
4. The district strategic plan includes the accountability system that directs an annual needs assessment; prioritizes the performance goals; and reports how the district supports schools, students, and families. [§59-20-60, §59-139-5 et seq., R43-261]

C. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

1. Each school district board of trustees shall provide a program of staff development for all educational personnel. [R43-261, §59-20-60]
2. Three days must be used for collegial professional development based upon the educational standards as required by Section 59-18-300. The professional development must address, at a minimum, academic achievement standards including strengthening teachers' knowledge in their content area, teaching techniques, and assessment. [§59-1-425]

D. STUDENTS - GENERAL

1. A parent or guardian whose child is not six years of age on or before the first day of September may elect for their child not to attend kindergarten. The parent or guardian shall sign a written document making the election with the governing body of the school district in which the parent or guardian resides. [§59-65-10]
2. The board of trustees of each school district may establish and provide for the education of children who will attain the age of four on or before September first of the applicable school year in child development programs. [59-19-340]
3. Students are enrolled in accordance with state laws pertaining to age of attendance and qualifications for attendance. [§59-63-20, §59-63-30, §59-63-31, §59-65-10]
4. District policies have been developed addressing minimum standards of student conduct and discipline. [R43-279, §59-63-210 et seq.]
5. Policies include provisions regarding expulsion for no less than one year of a student who brings a firearm to school. [§59-63-235]

6. District policies have been developed pertaining to student participation in interscholastic competition is in accordance with regulatory and statutory requirements. [R43-244, R43-244.1, §59-63-100]
7. The caseload for speech/language therapist does not exceed sixty. [R43-205]
8. The school district shall develop guidelines and procedures regarding the identification and management of suspected concussions in student athletes per statutory requirements. [§59-63-75]

E. FINANCE

1. Financial resources are to be allocated, expended, and accounted for in accordance with accounting practices specified in the Financial Accounting Handbook, Funding Manual, and the Pupil and Staff Accountability Manual. [R43-172, §59-20-60]
2. The district board of trustees makes its annual fiscal report available to the general public. School districts must maintain a transaction register that includes a complete record of all funds expended over one hundred dollars, from whatever source, for whatever purpose. [§59-20-60, (Proviso 1.25 for 2019-20)]
3. The board of trustees prepares an annual written report accounting for funds expended in each pupil classification. [§59-20-60]
4. No teacher or other employee shall be employed or any purchase made except in a duly called meeting of the board, of which meeting each member has been notified in writing by the clerk of the board at least three days in advance thereof, unless a written waiver of such notice of meeting is signed by each member of the board, and unless such action or the memoranda of the terms of any such contract of employment or purchase shall be duly recorded in the minutes of such meeting and approved by the board. [§59-19-80, (Proviso 1.23 for 2019-20)]

F. RECORD KEEPING

1. All school district must report the student-teacher ratio for every classroom to SCDE at the 90 and 180 day mark. (Provisos 1.25; 1A.14 for 2019-20)
2. Each school district must file a record of all dropouts that specifies for each student the name of the school in which he or she was enrolled and provides the following information: his or her name, grade, race, sex, date of birth, free/reduced meals status, English proficiency status, and migrant status. [R43-231, R43-232, R43-234, §59-65-470]
3. Each district superintendent must verify the accuracy of the student enrollment, attendance, membership by category, and dropout reports submitted to the State Department of Education's Office of Finance. [R43-231, R43-232, R43-234, §59-65-470]
4. Each district superintendent must verify the accuracy of course records for students. [R43-234]
5. Graduation rates must be used as an additional accountability measure for high schools and school districts. (If a high school has a graduation rate below sixty percent, the board of trustees must provide a report detailing a plan to increase the graduation rate in accordance with the provisions of the EAA to the SBE.) [§59-18-900(B)(3), (Proviso 1.63 for 2019-20)]
6. The district maintains accurate records related to pupil bus transportation in accordance with the SCDE's transportation manual. [R43-80, §59-67-410]

7. An annual district programmatic report to the parents and constituents of the school district must be developed by the local school board. Each report shall include the goals and objectives of the school district, the strategies implemented to meet the goals and objectives, and an evaluation of the outcomes. An annual school report to the parents and constituents of the school must be developed by the School Improvement Council and shall provide information on the school's progress on meeting the school and district goals and objectives. These reports shall be provided by November fifteenth of each year. [§59-20-60]
8. Each school district must maintain accurate student data according to pupil accounting systems as prescribed by SCDE. [R43-234]

G. DISTRICT WEBSITES

1. Each school district should maintain information on the district website content based on state and federal requirements. [(*Provisos for 2019-20: 1.23, 1.25, 1.30, 1.43*), §23-3-535(F)(1)(b), §59-18-900]
 - a. Each local school district must prominently post on the district's website and make available for public viewing and downloading the most recent version of the school district's policy manual and administrative rule manual. [*Proviso 1.30 for 2019-20*]
 - b. School districts must have a website and shall place a notice of a regularly scheduled school board meeting twenty-four hours in advance of such meeting. The notice shall include the date, time, and agenda for the board meeting. The school district shall place the minutes of the board meeting on their website within ten days of the next regularly scheduled board meeting. [§59-19-80, (*Proviso 1.23 for 2019-20*)]
 - c. School districts must report the amount of funds spent on administrative costs, as defined by In\$ight in the prior fiscal year and post the report on the districts website. (*Proviso 1.43 for 2019-20*)
 - d. The register must be prominently posted on the district's internet website and made available for public viewing and downloading. [§59-18-900, (*Proviso 1.25 for 2019-20*)]
 - e. Each school district must maintain on its website a copy of each monthly statement for all of the credit cards maintained by the entity, including credit cards issued to its officers or employees for official use. The credit card number on each statement must be redacted prior to posting on the internet website. Each credit card statement must be posted not later than the thirtieth day after the first date that any portion of the balance due as shown on the statement is paid. [*Proviso 1.25 for 2019-20*]
 - f. Each district shall publish on its website the title and publisher of all health education materials it has approved, adopted, and used in the classroom. (*Proviso 1.49 for 2019-20*)
 - g. Each school district must post the Sex Offender Registry Website. [§23-3-535(F)(1)(b)]
 - h. Annual report cards for individual primary, elementary, middle, high schools, and school districts must be of the pushed via the corresponding school and district websites. [§59-18-900]

2. School districts must maintain a transaction register that includes a complete record of all funds expended over one hundred dollars, from whatever source, for whatever purpose. [§59-18-900, (*Proviso 1.25 for 2019–20*)]

G. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCILS

1. Each district board of trustees shall establish an Improvement Council at each school in the district and this council is to be involved in improvement and innovation efforts at the school. [§59-20-60]
2. The School Improvement Council must actively participate in the development of the school renewal plan and annual updates. [§59-20-60, R43-261]
3. The local school board made provisions to allow any School Improvement Council to file a separate report to the local school board if the School Improvement Council considers it necessary. [§59-20-60]

IV. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

A. STUDENT IMMUNIZATION

Immunization records are current for each student. Records of vaccinations or immunizations must be maintained by the institution, school, or day care facility to which the child or person has been admitted [§44-29-180]

B. EVALUATION FOR TUBERCULOSIS

No person will be initially hired to work in any public or private school, kindergarten, nursery or day care center for infants and children until appropriately evaluated for tuberculosis. [R43-207, §44-29-150, §44-29-160]

C. PROTECTIVE EYE DEVICES

Pupils and teacher shall wear an industrial quality eye device while participating in courses necessitating wearing of protective eye devices. [§59-1-390]

D. FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Each school shall provide adequate first aid supplies and equipment. [R43-166]

E. SCHOOL FACILITIES

1. All operating school facilities shall comply with sanitation and health regulations prescribed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. [R61-42, §59-31-330]
2. All operating school facilities shall comply with safety regulations prescribed by the State Fire Marshall. [§5-25-20, §5-25-370, §5-25-390, §5-25-400]

F. DISASTER PLANS AND SCHOOL DRILLS

1. A plan shall be designed to provide for the protection and welfare of students in the event of any disaster which threatens to involve the school community. [R43-166]
2. All schools shall conduct fire drills at least once each month. [§405.2]

3. Each school shall conduct at least one emergency drill within the first month of school. [R43-166]
4. All public schools, including charter schools whose instruction is not primarily delivered online, shall conduct fire, active shooter/intruder, and severe weather/earthquake drills. Within each school year, schools must conduct at least two fire drills, two active shooter/intruder drills, and two severe weather/earthquake drills, with at least one of each drill conducted each semester.[§59-63-910(A)]