

2025-2026 South Carolina Tiered Certification List

This document provides an updated list of South Carolina’s approved career clusters, associated programs of study, and aligned industry-recognized credentials for the 2025–2026 school year.

Introduction to the South Carolina Tiered Certification List

In June 2025, the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) unanimously approved the state’s Tiered Certification System, a structured framework designed to align student certification attainment with workforce priorities, employer demand, and long-term career advancement opportunities. The system classifies industry-recognized certifications into three tiers:

- Tier 1 – Introductory
- Tier 2 – Intermediate
- Tier 3 – Career Ready

Each tier reflects the certification’s relevance to high-demand, high-wage occupations and its impact on future employability.

Beginning with the **2025–26 academic year**, students who entered 9th grade in the 2024–**25** and 2025–**26** school years (referred to as the **9GR25 and 9GR26 cohorts**) will be evaluated under the new three-tiered system. To be designated **career ready** for state accountability purposes, these students must earn a **minimum of three points** by completing one of the following options:

- One **Tier 3** certification aligned to their career cluster;
- A combination of two **Tier 2** certifications or a combination of **Tier 2** and **Tier 1** certifications that are aligned to their career cluster; or
- A **Universal Certification** (e.g., OSHA 10) paired with a **Tier 2** or **Tier 3** certification aligned to their cluster.

Note: Students cannot combine multiple **Tier 1** certifications to meet the three-point requirement.

Students who entered 9th grade in the 2022–**23** and 2023–**24** school years (the **9GR23 and 9GR24 cohorts**) will continue to be evaluated under the previous **single-tier system (CR Yes/No)**. These students must earn a certification from the state-approved list that carries a **Career Ready designation** to meet accountability requirements.

The certification list includes two key indicators to help districts determine eligibility for career-ready status:

- **Tier Designation** – identifies the certification as Tier 1, 2, or 3 for 9GR25 (9th grade 2024-2025) and 9GR26 (9th grade 2025-2026) cohorts;
- **Readiness Status** – confirms whether a certification is approved under the single-tier system for 9GR23 (9th grade 2022-2023) and 9GR24 (9th grade 2023-2024) cohorts.

Certification List Format Updates

This year’s release of the certification list also reflects a significant formatting update. To align with national efforts led by Advance CTE, South Carolina has adopted the [modernized national career cluster framework](#), transitioning from 16 traditional career clusters to 14 streamlined, industry-relevant clusters. The state will fully transition to the modernized career cluster framework in the **2026–27** academic year.

For the **2025–26** year, districts may choose either to begin using the modernized clusters or to continue operating within the traditional cluster framework. To support both approaches, the next section of this document (Pages 5–9) provides a guiding table that maps the traditional clusters to the modernized clusters. This resource is designed to bridge the transition by honoring districts that are already merging into the new system while also supporting districts that remain focused on their current structure. The table also includes aligned programs of study with their CIP codes and **fast-access links** to the associated certifications for each modernized cluster area.

Using the Certification List

As users navigate the certification list, several new features are designed to support accurate interpretation and decision-making:

- **Cluster and Program Table Navigation:** The introductory table titled *2025–26 Career Clusters and Programs* links the traditional 16 national clusters to the 14 modernized cluster areas. For each modernized cluster, users will find:
 - A list of aligned CIP-coded programs of study;
 - A **direct hyperlink** to the group of approved certifications for that cluster;
 - A **return link** at the end of each certification section to navigate back to the cluster overview table.
- **Tier Designation and Career Ready Status:** Within each certification list, users should pay close attention to:
 - The **Tier Designation** column, which identifies the certification as Tier 1 (Introductory), Tier 2 (Intermediate), or Tier 3 (Career Ready);

- The **Readiness Status** column, which confirms whether the certification is approved for use under the single-tier system for students in the 9GR23 and 9GR24 cohorts.
- **Red Font Certifications:** Certifications shown in **red font** indicate **historically low usage**. These certifications are under review and will be closely analyzed during the upcoming Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. Certifications flagged in red may be considered for **removal** from the list in future updates.
- **Cross-Cluster Designations:** Some certifications have been **cross-listed across multiple career clusters** to reflect their relevance in programs that span more than one field. These certifications are highlighted in **peach or yellow tones** to indicate flexible use across aligned pathways under the modernized cluster framework. These adjustments improve access but do **not** alter the EOC-approved tier designation.
- **Ongoing Review and TAC Meetings:** Certifications and tier designations are reviewed through a **multi-agency process** led by the SC Department of Education, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, and cluster-specific **Technical Advisory Committees** composed of industry, secondary, and postsecondary leaders. The next round of TAC meetings will occur in **Fall 2025** and cover all 14 cluster areas. Any updates to the certification list—including additions, removals, or tier changes—will be shared with district and center leaders.
- **Data Reporting and Return on Investment:** Accurate district and center reporting of certification attainment is critical. TACs will analyze both **certification usage and cost** to inform decisions that safeguard state funds and maximize **return on investment** in relation to South Carolina’s priority occupations.

Additional Resources

The South Carolina Department of Education’s Career and Technical Education website provides several resources to support local use of this certification list:

- **Expanded Certification Usage Data** – An extended data file is available with historical usage information for each certification, including overall counts and career cluster alignment. This resource allows districts and centers to review trends and inform future certification planning and program alignment.
- **Voiceover Overview** – A brief recording is available to walk through the structure of the certification list, highlight key features, and demonstrate how to navigate the document. This overview helps educators and leaders locate relevant certifications, interpret tier designations, and understand how to use the data tools.

- **Certification Application** – Districts and centers wishing to request the addition of new certifications to the state-approved list can access the updated application form through the SCDE CATE Programs webpage at <https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/career-and-technical-education/programs-and-courses/cate-programs/>.

For questions or concerns regarding the transition to the modernized career cluster framework and the new tiered certification system, CTE leaders and teachers should contact the Office of Career and Technical Education at careerreadiness@ed.sc.gov.

2025-2026 Career Clusters and Programs		
Original Cluster	New Cluster	CIP Coded Programs
Cross-Cutting Clusters: Modernizing Industries and Connecting Communities		
Information Technology	Digital Technology (View Certifications)	Computer & Info Systems Security/Info Assurance (111003)
		Computer Science (PLTW) (110701)
		Game and Interactive Media Design (500411)
		Informatics (110104)
		Information Support and Services (151202)
		Networking Systems (110901)
		Programming and Software Development (110201)
		Web and Digital Communications (110801)
Cross-Cutting Cluster: Driving Business Success Across All Industries		
Business Management & Administration	Management & Entrepreneurship (View Certifications)	Administrative Services (520401)
		Business Information Management (520208) * NEW CIP Code*
		General Management (520201)
		Human Resources Management (521001)
		Operations Management (520204)
Cross-Cutting Cluster: Improving Communication and Connections		
Marketing	Marketing & Sales (View Certifications)	Marketing Analytics (521402)
		Marketing Communications (090903)
		Marketing Management (521401)
		Merchandising (521802)
		Real Estate (521501)

2025-2026 Career Clusters and Programs		
Original Cluster	New Cluster	CIP Coded Programs
Engineering and Producing Tomorrow's Solutions		
Manufacturing	Advanced Manufacturing (View Certifications)	Electronics Technology (470101)
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing		Integrated Production Technology (150613)
		Machine Technology (480503)
		Mechatronics Integrated Technologies (150404)
		Metal Fabrication (480501)
		Welding Technology (480508)
		Aerospace Engineering Technology (150801)
Core Engineering (143501)		
Pre-Engineering (Project Lead the Way) (140101)		
Siemens Engineering (144201)		
Cultivating Sustainability and Nourishing the World		
Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources	Agriculture (View Certifications)	Agricultural Mechanics and Technology (010205)
		Biosystems Engineering Technology (140301)
		Horticulture (010601)
		Plant and Animal Systems (011101)
Inspiring Creativity, Innovation, and Artistry		
Arts, A/V Technology & Communication	Arts, Entertainment, & Design (View Certifications)	Architecture/Mechanical Design (151301)
		Digital Art and Design (500402)
		Media Technology (100299)
		Graphic Communications (100301)
		Fashion Design and Apparel Construction (500407)
		Interior Design (500408)

2025-2026 Career Clusters and Programs		
Original Cluster	New Cluster	CIP Coded Programs
Building Futures and Pioneering Sustainable Horizons		
Architecture & Construction	Construction (View Certifications)	Building Construction (460000)
		Cabinetmaking (480703)
		Carpentry (460201)
		Electrical Line Worker Technology (460303)
		Electricity (460301)
		HVAC Technology (470201)
		Plumbing (460503)
Transforming Lives and Enriching Futures Through Lifelong Learning		
Education & Training	Education (View Certifications)	Early Childhood Education (131210)
Human Services		Introduction to Teaching (130101)
		Family and Consumer Sciences (190101)
		Family Systems & Mental Health (190704)
Powering Progress and Preserving Our Planet		
	Energy & Natural Resources (View Certifications)	Environmental & Natural Resources Management (030101)
		Innovations in Science and Technology (410000)
		Clean Energy (149999)
Empowering Financial Resilience		
Finance	Financial Services (View Certifications)	Academy of Finance (520801)
		Accounting (520301)
		Banking Services (520803)
		Business Finance (520804)
		Insurance (521701)
		Securities and Investments (520807)

2025-2026 Career Clusters and Programs			
Original Cluster	New Cluster	CIP Coded Programs	
Supporting the Whole Health of Individuals, Families, and Communities			
Health Science	Healthcare & Human Services (View Certifications)	Biomedical Sciences (Project Lead the Way) (260102)	
		EMS (510999)	
		Health Science (510000)	
		Practical Nursing (513999)	
		Public Health (512208)	
		Sports Medicine (310505)	
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing			Food Science (190501)
Human Services			Barber/Master Hair Care (120402)
			Cosmetology (120401)
		Esthetics (120409)	
		Nail Technology (120410)	
		Natural Hair Braiding (120407)	
Unlocking Adventures and Elevating Experiences			
Hospitality & Tourism	Hospitality, Events, & Tourism (View Certifications)	Baking and Pastry (120501)	
		Culinary Arts Management (520905)	
		Hospitality and Tourism Management (520904)	

2025-2026 Career Clusters and Programs		
Original Cluster	New Cluster	CIP Coded Programs
Shaping, Serving, and Protecting Our Communities		
Public Service & Safety	Public Service & Safety (View Certifications)	Emergency and Fire Management Services (430203)
Government & Public Administration		Law Enforcement Services (430107)
		Paralegal Systems Technology (220301)
		Governance (440501)
		Public Management and Administration (440401)
		Air Force JROTC (280101) *NEW*
		Army JROTC (280301) *NEW*
		Coast Guard JROTC (280505) *NEW*
		Marines JROTC (280401) *NEW*
		Navy JROTC (280499) *NEW*
Space Force JROTC (280502) *NEW*		
Driving Efficiency and Streamlining Tomorrow's Transport		
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	Supply Chain & Transportation (View Certifications)	Automotive Collision Repair Technology (470603)
		Automotive and Hybrid/BEV Technology (470604)
		Automotive Technology (470604)
		Commercial Vehicle Operation (490205)
		Diesel Engine Technology (470605)
		Drone Technology (490109)
		Global Logistics & Supply Chain Management (520203)
		Power Equipment Technology (470606)

[View Universal \(ALL\) Certification List](#)

[View OLD GOV Certification List](#)

[View OLD HUM Certification List](#)

[View OLD STEM Certification List](#)