

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District Stronger Connections Project Directors  
District Superintendents  
District Dropout Coordinators  
District Student Services Directors  
District Attendance Supervisors  
District Special Education Directors  
Principals

**FROM:** Tonia Mallet Smith  
Director, Office of Student Support

**DATE:** July 1, 2025

**RE:** 2025 Stronger Connections Summer Conference Joint Registration

The South Carolina Department of Education Office of Student Support (OSS) will host the 2025 Stronger Connections Summer Conference July 7-10, 2025, at the Lexington Two Innovation Center, 509 Bulldog Blvd., Cayce, SC 29033.

This convening is designed to support both Stronger Connections subgrantees as well as districts who are not participants in the grant program. The conference will offer three (3) training opportunities. Please review the information below carefully along with the informational flyer before registering.

If interested, you may register for more than one workshop. There is no cost to attend, but space is limited and registration is required.

### CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

#### I. Eric Landers, PhD

Behavioral Resources Consulting, Inc.

**Recognize, Respond, and Reduce: A Data-Driven Approach to Bullying Prevention**

**Part 1 - Monday, July 7, 2025 (8:30 am - 4:30 pm)**

**Part 2 - Tuesday, July 8, 2025 (8:30 am - 11:30 am)**

July 1, 2025

This one-and-a-half-day training session equips participants with an understanding of bullying, its impacts, and effective strategies to address it proactively. Participants will learn how to identify bullying behaviors, differentiate bullying from other peer conflicts, and use the Problem Analysis Triangle to intervene systematically. Attendees will be trained in practical strategies for establishing an effective adult network to support students, empower victims, constructively address aggressors, and reduce opportunities for bullying within the school environment. The session will also include strategies for assertiveness training, conflict resolution, and promoting a positive school culture through clear expectations and consistent practices.

## II. Robert N. Stevens, PhD, CSP

**Session: Action Planning for Successful Behavioral Initiatives in MTSS**

**Tuesday, July 8, 2025**

**1:30 pm - 4:30 pm**

This half-day session is designed to review critical features of MTSS/PBIS and help school teams systemically create action plans to integrate other initiatives such as CPI, Bullying Prevention, SRO's, Mental Health, and Team Two Crisis Response into school-wide behavioral response. Participants will (a) create plans to work with various stakeholders who work in the school with issues of behavioral health, (b) learn to use multiple existing implementation checklists which can help lead to understanding of how to apply three-tiered prevention logic in the school, and also how it relates to secondary and tertiary interventions, (c) learn about best practices for connecting services from the many school-based providers, including; SRO's, Mentors, MH clinicians, Nurses, Social Workers, etc., and (d) consider that school leadership and school teams should review how systems are connected with-in the schools Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF.) Finally, attendees will learn about opportunities and locations for behavioral health materials and discover what coaching is available.

Dates and Times	2025 Stronger Connections Conference Workshop Registration Links	Registration Deadline
<b>Dr. Eric Landers</b> July 7, 2025, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm July 8, 2025, 8:30 am – 11:30 am	<a href="#"><u>Recognize, Respond, and Reduce: A Data-Driven Approach to Bullying Prevention</u></a>	July 3, 2025

<b>Dates and Times</b>	<b>2025 Stronger Connections Conference Workshop Registration Links</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>
<b>Dr. Robert Stevens</b> July 8, 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<a href="#"><u>Action Planning for Successful Behavioral Initiatives in MTSS</u></a>	July 3, 2025

### III. ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT INSTITUTE

**National Dropout Prevention Center**

**July 9 - 10, 2025**

**8:30 am – 4:30 pm**

**Space is limited. No more than twenty districts or school teams of five members can attend the sessions. Select your five-member team before registering.**

The OSS will host a two-day Attendance Improvement Institute, in partnership with the National Dropout Prevention Center, for district or school-level teams. The Attendance Improvement Institute is an event that guides district or school level teams to build research-based and foundational improvement plans that have a high probability of improving attendance rates. Additionally, the Institute prepares district or school-level teams to provide professional development to sustain school-level initiatives in their districts.

During the two-day working event, district or school teams will be guided to produce and implement customized and logical plans of action. Participating teams will leave the event with workable district plans, strategies for implementation, and links to ongoing support and resources that will sustain their work.

See the included flyer for more information. To participate, please click on the link below to register by June 20.

<b>Dates and Times</b>	<b>2025 Statewide Attendance Improvement Institute</b>	<b>Registration Deadline</b>
July 9 – 10, 2025 8:30 am - 4:30 pm	<a href="#"><u>Click Here to Register</u></a>	Wait List Available

If you have any questions about registration, contact [strongerconnections@ed.sc.gov](mailto:strongerconnections@ed.sc.gov).