SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
School Board Trustees

FROM: Rebecca Blackburn Hines
Director of Policy & Government Affairs

DATE: November 10, 2026

RE: Act 191 Updates: Model Code of Ethics & Effective Board Governance; School Board Training for New & Re-Elected/Appointed Trustees

Model Code of Ethics & Effective Board Governance

On November 3, 2026, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved the Third and Final Reading of the ***Model Code of Ethics & Effective Board Governance***, pursuant to **Act 191**.

Under Section 59-19-730(B)(1), each local school board is required to adopt a local code within **three months** of the State Board of Education's adoption of the model code. At a minimum, each local code must incorporate the SBE's model code.

Additionally, Section 59-19-730(B)(5) requires local boards to submit a copy of their adopted code of ethics, along with any subsequent revisions, to the State Board of Education within **60 days of local adoption**.

Please submit local board policies to SBE Administrative Coordinator, Jess Leneave, at **jcleneave@ed.sc.gov**.

School Board Training for New & Re-Elected/Appointed Trustees

Act 191 establishes updated training requirements for school board members. Pursuant to Section 59-19-45, the SCDE is responsible for adopting and facilitating a required training program for newly elected, re-elected, and appointed school board members. The training will be delivered by the Department or its designated provider(s).

The law generally requires trustees to complete the required training within nine months of taking office. However, for 2027, all applicable training must be completed no later than **May 18, 2027**.

Districts should also be aware of the accountability provisions outlined in Section 59-19-45(B). The State Board of Education is required to maintain records of trustees who successfully complete the training within the established timeframe.

If a trustee fails to meet the training requirement, the State Board of Education must issue a letter of caution identifying a timeframe for correcting the noncompliance. If the trustee does not resolve the noncompliance within the specified timeframe, the State Board of Education is required to submit the trustee's name to the Governor for consideration of removal pursuant to Section 59-19-60.

The Department will provide additional information regarding the training program, including implementation details and scheduling, in the coming weeks.

To support implementation and ensure accurate tracking of training requirements, each district must submit the following information to the Department:

- A current list of all school board members and their respective terms of service.
- Identification of board members who are required to complete the training.
- District email addresses for all school board members.

Please submit all the required information no later than **Friday, November 13, 2027** to Jess Leneave, at **jcleneave@ed.sc.gov**.