

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
Career and Technical Education Administrators
Instructional Leaders
Report Card/Accountability Coordinators
College and Career Ready DTC
School Counselors

FROM: Kayce Cook, Ed.D.
Director, Office of Career Readiness

DATE: July 15, 2025

RE: Career and Technical Education Tiered Credentialing

The S.C. Education Oversight Committee (EOC) unanimously voted to approve the SC tiered credential system to better align high school credentials with workforce priorities and employability. The new system will be implemented beginning with students who entered high school in the 2024-25 academic year.

The rationale is to offer high school students industry credentials that lead to future career options for students.

South Carolina public high schools currently use an equal-weight credential system for students. Under this existing system, students are classified as career-ready if they are a Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway completer and have earned one approved national or state industry credential. High school students who began high school prior to the 2024-25 school year will remain under the current credential system.

The new system categorizes credentials into the following tiers: Introductory (Tier 1), Intermediate (Tier 2), and Career Ready (Tier 3) allowing students to build on entry-level credentials before earning industry-valued credentials. Under this system, students must be a CTE completer and earn a minimum of three points through one of the following combinations:

1. One Tier 3 credential aligned with their career cluster.
2. A combination of one Tier 2 and one Tier 1 credential within the same career pathway.

3. A Universal Credential (e.g., OSHA 10) paired with a Tier 2 or higher credential within the student's career cluster.

As the EOC emphasized, South Carolina's business and industry leaders will have a primary role in developing and maintaining the list of approved credentials.

The implementation of the tiered credentialing system marks a significant step forward in aligning education with workforce needs and ensuring that students graduate with meaningful, industry-recognized skills. As we transition to this new model, collaboration with educators, industry partners, and families will be essential to its success.

For additional information or support regarding the new credentialing system, please contact an associate within the Office of Career Readiness or email

CareerReadiness@ed.sc.gov.