



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District Superintendents  
District Early Childhood Coordinators  
School Administrators  
Literacy Coaches

**FROM:** Dr. Abbey Duggins  
Director, Office of Early Learning and Literacy

**DATE:** December 12, 2023

**RE:** Early Learning Office Professional Learning Opportunities for Spring 2024

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) Office of Early Learning and Literacy (OELL) supports South Carolina's districts and will offer several free professional learning opportunities (PLOs) for teachers, teaching assistants, reading coaches, instructional coaches, and administrators. Furthermore, to improve educational outcomes, Child Early Reading Development and Education Program (CERDEP) legislation requires all personnel providing instruction and classroom support to participate annually in a minimum of fifteen hours of professional development including topics related to teaching children from poverty and strategies and techniques to address the age-appropriate progress of emergent literacy.

The PLOs will consist of face-to-face experiences focused on early learning and literacy instructional strategies that directly impact student learning. This memo provides details on PLOs that will be offered during spring 2024 and summer 2024.

Please note: face-to-face full-day sessions outlined in this memorandum will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and conclude by 4:00 p.m. Participants should plan to arrive between 8:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. Participants will have a one-hour and fifteen-minute lunch break. Registration must be submitted online via the links listed with the session title. Registration for these PLOs will close at noon one week prior to the session.

**ELLEN E. WEAVER · STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION**  
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### The Pyramid Model Sessions

Beginning early in life, executive function is key for helping preschool children with self-regulation strategies. South Carolina has adopted the Pyramid framework to promote children's competence from birth to age five in the context of nurturing relationships and high-quality learning environments. The Pyramid PIECES State Leadership Team (SLT) is an interagency group of state-level partners who collaborate to plan, implement, evaluate, and sustain a professional development system that supports using the Pyramid Model in our state. As part of the SC Pyramid PIECES, the SLT has developed cohorts for educators interested in the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Cohorts include three face-to-face sessions, all with an in-depth focus on implementing and sustaining evidence-based approaches that support the learning and engagement of ALL children through concrete strategies. There are additional details about the regional cohorts below. In addition, the Pyramid PIECES leadership team secured funding to provide early childhood educators and practitioners with FREE access to online [modules](#).

### Pyramid Regional Cohorts (Three-Day Sessions)

As part of the SC PIECES State leadership work, we will provide regional cohorts where educators and practitioners will participate in **three** Pyramid sessions designed to develop executive function competence for academic success. Each participant should commit to attending **three** regional sessions and developing a plan to support executive function development within their classroom, school, or district. These three sessions will focus on implementing and sustaining evidence-based approaches that support the learning and engagement of all children. Session one will focus on developing nurturing, responsive relationships and designing high-quality supportive environments. Session two will focus on implementing and sustaining evidence-based approaches that teach strategies for developing friendship skills, controlling anger and impulse, and developing problem-solving skills. Session three will focus on developing an individualized behavior support plan with intensive intervention.

Session Title	Location and dates	Registration
The Pyramid Model Cohort: Upstate	Institute of Innovation – January 23, 2024, March 5, 2024, and April 9, 2024	<a href="#">To register, click here.</a>
The Pyramid Model Cohort: Midlands	Newberry Adult Education- January 25, 2024, March 7, 2024, and April 2, 2024	<a href="#">To register, click here.</a>
The Pyramid Model Cohort: Lowcountry	Beaufort County School District Office January 30, 2024, March 5, 2024, and April 2, 2024	<a href="#">To register, click here.</a>

**(SC-ELS) Sessions: Purposeful, Playful Mathematics in Early Childhood Education**

This training will focus participants on being intentional while nurturing and engaging each student in his/her development of mathematical thinking, reasoning, and problem solving within data analysis, geometry, and measurement. This session will build an awareness of how development occurs through counting, sorting, classifying, and later patterning as well as how to scaffold students' development of mathematical concepts through hands-on, purposeful play scenarios throughout the preschool day to build an understanding of geometry and measurement, focusing specifically on 2-D and 3-D shapes as well as weight using balance scales. Participants will leave with a goal and next steps for intentionally promoting math in everyday playful learning situations for each child in their care.

**SC-ELS Sessions: Effectively Using Assessments to Support School Readiness**

By closely observing classroom behaviors and actions, teachers can identify and gain insight into student interests, strengths, learning styles, behavior, and academic progress. The information gathered through kid-watching can be used to plan and implement class tasks, strategies, and tools tailored to students' needs and interests. During this session, participants will observe students, record observations, and plan learning experiences to support school readiness for all students.

Session Title	Location, date, and time	Registration
SC-ELS: Purposeful Play	January 16, 2024 Lexington 2 Innovation Center	<a href="#">To register, click here.</a>
SC-ELS: Assessment	March 19, 2024 Lexington 2 Innovation Center	<a href="#">To register, click here.</a>

If your school or district would like to request a book study or additional support via virtual training or face-to-face training please submit a request by clicking [here](#).

For more information concerning the OELL professional learning opportunities, please contact Wendy Burgess, Team Lead for Early Learning, at [wburgess@ed.sc.gov](mailto:wburgess@ed.sc.gov), 803-734-5858 or Sherri Evans at [sqevans@ed.sc.gov](mailto:sqevans@ed.sc.gov) 803-734-1286.